THE MODERN MISSIONARY

▽

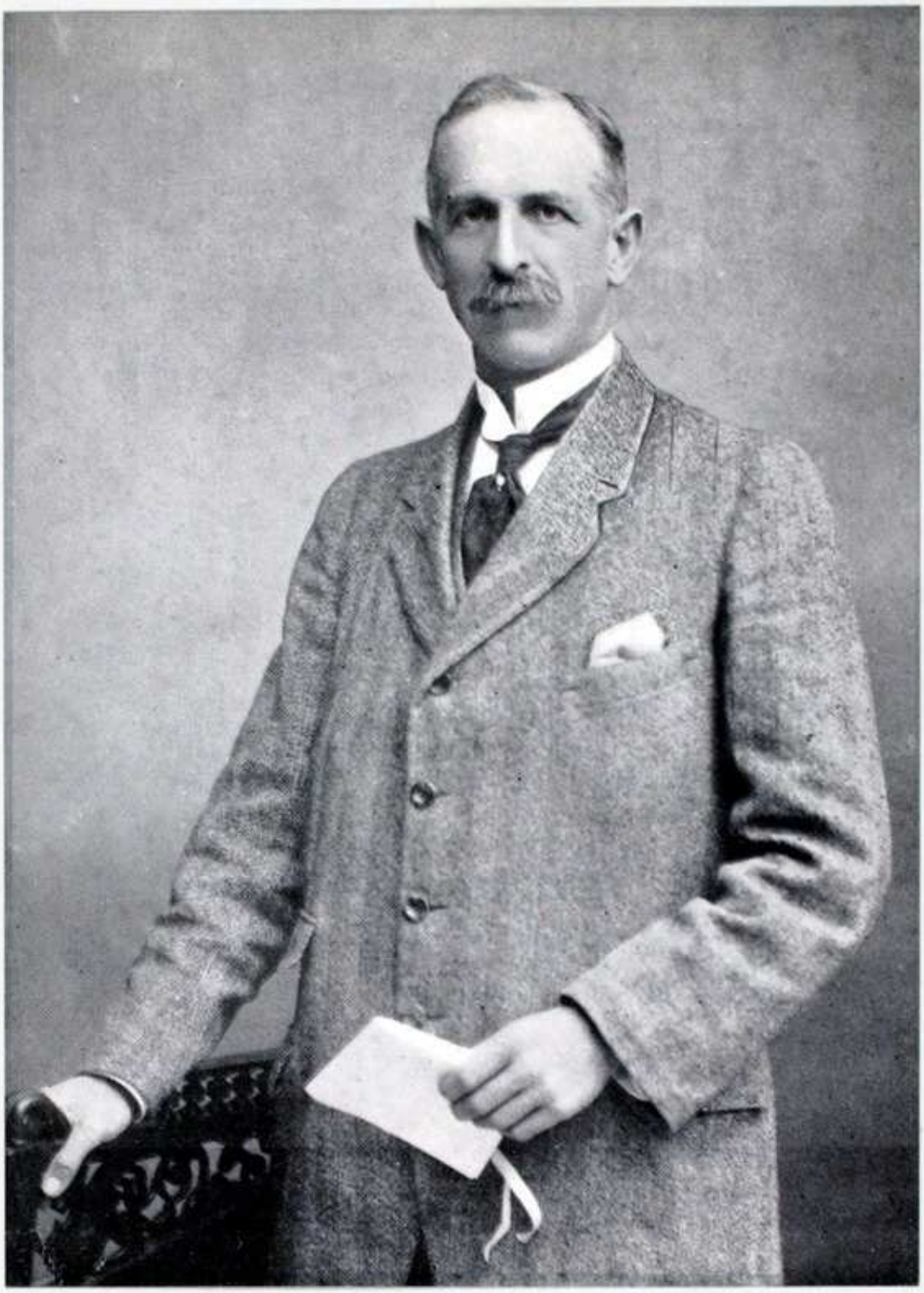
HOWARD S. BLISS

Thou art no more! In far-off land and clime,
In distant places where thy quickening words
Were felt by hearts o'erborne, shall many grieve
For thee, O man of God!

And yet thou art not gone! Still do we hear thy voice
Bidding us walk the paths of right. Down all the years
The currents of thy life and love shall flow,
Till time shall be no more!

▽

Published by
THE TRUSTEES OF THE
SYRIAN PROTESTANT COLLEGE OF BEIRUT



HOWARD S. BLISS

President, Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, 1902-1920

FOREWORD

MEMORIAL services in honor of President Bliss were held in every important center of the Near East. Tributes came from the graduates and friends of the college in Damascus, Aleppo, Sidon, Tripoli, Haifa, Jerusalem, Bagdad, Alexandria, Cairo, and even from Khartoum in the Soudan.

Lord Allenby, the High Commissioner for Egypt, General Gouraud, the High Commissioner for Syria and Cilicia, Feisal, the prominent Arab leader, the Patriarch of Antioch, the Mufti of Beirut, and many others—men of every faith—sent messages of sympathy to the college and to the family.

Alumni and friends of the college in America held a service in memory of their beloved President at the Central Y. M. C. A. in Brooklyn on the evening of June 11th, 1920. Dr. Kheiralla, one of the oldest graduates of the college, Dr. Talcott Williams and Dr. Stanley White were the principal speakers.

Plymouth Church in Brooklyn and the Christian Union Congregational Church of Upper Montclair arranged special services.

At the opening session of the Annual Convocation of the Board of Regents of the State of New York on October 7th, glowing tributes were paid to the man who made such a deep impression as a speaker at the previous Convocation, by Regent Herbert L. Bridgman, Dr. Philip Hitti, a graduate of the college, Dr. Henry van Dyke, and the Archbishop of Baalbek of the Greek Orthodox Church. The Minute passed by the Board of Regents closed with the following words: "For more than half a century Dr. Bliss and his emi-

nent father and predecessor kept alive and aflame at their college in Beirut, 'the Light of Asia,' radiating into other lands and continents, and in memory of both the Board commits itself to support within its proper sphere and jurisdiction, the continuance and enlargement of their work."

Tributes and editorials appeared in all of the leading periodicals in this country and in the Arabic press of the Near East. Appropriate resolutions were passed by the faculty of the college, the members of the Syrian Mission, the various college organizations and alumni associations.

The Board of Trustees of the Syrian Protestant College believe that the greatest tribute that can be paid to Howard Bliss is to have the final message which he gave to the world placed in the hands of his friends. The article, "The Modern Missionary," which appeared in the May issue of the Atlantic Monthly, was an unconscious portrayal of his own life. He was himself its very incarnation. His faith in the Kingdom of God ruled his statesmanlike vision, and left room for the faith of others however this differed from his own. The timeliness of his utterance in an age seeking to develop unity of purpose among all who seek "to follow the gleam" is singularly significant.

"The Modern Missionary" is reprinted in the interest of the Howard Bliss Memorial Fund. The college itself—now a university in the scope of its work—will always be a worthy memorial to the founder and to his illustrious son under whose direction it has had a remarkable development. It is our present task to free the institution from the financial burden caused by the war, so as to enable it to continue its important work of training leaders in increasing numbers for the new Near East.

▽

HOWARD S. BLISS

Born in Syria, December 6, 1860. Died in America, May 2, 1920

"WE have been listening to one of the great men of this generation"—so spoke a metropolitan preacher as Dr. Bliss finished an intense address on the problems of the Near East.

"He belonged to no time and is in men's thoughts the forerunner of a new era for East and West alike," wrote an eminent editor.

"More than any man I ever knew," said one of his classmates, "he taught me how precious a thing true friendship is. When I visited Beirut I saw the opal mountains and the sapphire seas and the fine college campus with its noble buildings, but I came away thinking not so much of these as of the stature of this man, my friend."

These spontaneous tributes suggest the place of Howard Bliss in the life of our time. He had the gift of an exceptional personality. Over six feet in height, erect, alert, vigorous, with a fine, strong, winsome face, a keen but kindly eye, a singularly magnetic spirit, he was imbued with the optimism of a great faith in God and man, and radiated light wherever he went. In his veins flowed the blood of the Christian pioneer. He never forgot that he was born in Syria on the slopes of glorious Lebanon, and that marvelous mountain range was a fitting symbol of his hope for the land of his birth. His father, Daniel Bliss, with fine prescience and rare creative spirit, six years after this son was born, opened the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut, and the boy in his early years breathed an atmosphere impregnated with the loftiest intellectual and spiritual ideals.

After graduating from Amherst in 1882 with high

honors in scholarship and public speaking, he taught for two years at Washburn College, Topeka, Kansas; graduated from Union Theological Seminary, New York, in 1887; received the Fellowship for highest rank and continued his study at Oxford University, 1887-88, and the following year at the Universities of Göttingen and Berlin. Returning to America in 1889, he married Amy Blatchford, a daughter of Eliphalet W. Blatchford of Chicago, an eminent man of business and for many years vice-president of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

In the year of his marriage he became the assistant pastor at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn. In an appreciative editorial in the "Outlook," Dr. Lyman Abbott, who had invited him to become associated with him in the pastorate, expresses his admiration for Dr. Bliss and analyzes his qualities as intellectual courage, open-mindedness, utter democracy, and a personal winsomeness which opened all hearts to him. He was the beloved and efficient pastor of the Christian Union Congregational Church of Upper Montclair, New Jersey, 1894-1902, where the memory of his ministry, after the lapse of nearly twenty years, is cherished with unspeakable gratitude.

Then came the opening of the greater career for which all before had been the providential preparation. In 1902 his father, full of years, felt the time had come when he should relinquish to younger hands the leadership of the college at Beirut and the son was chosen to succeed him. The call gave him a field in which all that was best in his endowment found royal development. The college had been founded as the culminating feature of a program of progress for a people living in ignorance and mediaeval provincialism. It has developed until it now occupies forty-seven acres of land magnificently located, with more than a score of buildings on its campus and approximately a thousand students—Moslems, Jews, Bahais, Druzes, men of the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, and

Protestants. The man was ready for the task and the task, as so often is shown in the field of foreign missions, made the man.

What the war meant where the Turk held sway only those who lived there can fully realize. This man was as the shade of a great rock in a weary land as he stood among a beleaguered people and saved the precious college from pillage and destruction. He thus drew the picture of it: "The Turkish officials were at the start suspicious, hostile, and eager for our downfall. The Germans were even more angry, bitter, and malicious. Our friends were timid and powerless. The possibility of deportation was always before us. Starvation stalked through the land. The cries of the dying ever rang in our ears. It became increasingly difficult to secure money. Medicine and hospital supplies diminished at an alarming rate. The consular officials were withdrawn. We were under martial law. A single false step might have precipitated us into unspeakable suffering. The daily drain upon our sympathy knew no limit." What an achievement that amid these turbulent cross-currents the college held steadily to its course, kept its doors open, and came through the struggle crowned with splendid prestige.

The marvelous inner strength of the man is shown by the fact that in all that period he never lost a night's sleep. But there was a profound, unavoidable, subconscious strain. Vigilance must be unremitting. Occasions of inflaming hostility must be avoided. The watchwords were, "Do not linger on that ugly point." "Keep sweet and move on." The principle in dealing with the foe was, "Frankness and good-will." Through all those weary years he kept his head. He refused to retail rumors. He paid no attention to the insinuation that he was pro-German or pro-Turk. He found good even in the worst of men. He won the respect of the enemy and saved the day by his fearless but tactful statesmanship. His name is written high on the roll of honor of the heroes of the war.

His crowning service was to plead at Paris before the representatives of the Allies, met to frame the treaty of peace, for his beloved Syria, basing his plea on his faith in the people and their ability, under the self-development of freedom and a wise co-operative service by the strong nations, to work out their own salvation. We who had the privilege of his companionship as he returned from that experience will never forget his burning zeal for his cause and his illuminating interpretation of international diplomacy seen at first hand.

On his return to America his friends were shocked to see in him the indelible marks of the anguish he had endured. Deep lines furrowed his face. He had lost much in weight and strength. His health was seriously impaired. Yet he would not spare himself. Aflame with his message, he moved from place to place telling with powerful effect the story of need: declaring with the ardor of a prophet the principles of international righteousness as God gave him to see the right. But the strain was too great. Suddenly there came unmistakable indications of a breakdown, which, on May 2, 1920, caused his death. He was willing to pay the last full measure of devotion on the altar of liberty. When he knew that his days were numbered, he accepted the issue with brave heart and forward-looking spirit.

On March 8th he wrote to his colleagues in Syria as follows: "My doctor has just told me that the x-ray examination clearly indicates that I have tuberculosis. Of course this is very serious, and whatever the disclosures of the coming days may be, they will affect all my future, but whether that future be long or brief the news finds me undisturbed and solicitous only in the use of the time that remains in promoting the welfare of our beloved College. I am very grateful for having lived as long as I have. I am rich, as few men are rich, in friends, and I have a great and abiding faith in the College."

For many years Dr. Bliss had dearly loved the little town of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, nestling at the foot

of Mount Monadnock. To this rural retreat he always made his way in his rest days when in America. Upon the summit of the mountain he had often stood. Over its pine-clad slopes he had loved to ramble and as he lay stricken with fatal illness he requested that, if possible, his body might be laid at its base. He was a mountain man. Born on Lebanon, buried by Monadnock, he exemplified in his life the abiding strength and lofty aspiration the mountain symbolizes. The remembrance of his triumphant spirit made the funeral service, with the May sunshine flooding the earth, like a bit of heaven itself. As his family and his classmates laid away the precious form, they heard from the fibre of his life the challenge of immortality.

THE MODERN MISSIONARY

BY HOWARD S. BLISS

I

IT was during the war. Ahmed Djemal Pasha, Viceroy of Syria and Minister of the Marine in the clever but infamous Ottoman Cabinet, had been visiting the American College at Beirut. For some time previous he had been taking note of the record of our graduates, and he made this request: 'I want to send to your College, for a period of six weeks, Jamil Bey, whom I have recently appointed Director of the newly established Saladin University in Jerusalem. I wish him to live among your teachers and students, to study your methods, and to discover, if possible, the secret of the success which your graduates have attained.'

Jamil Bey came. He did not stay six weeks, but he made good use of his brief sojourn. He was a man of intelligent, alert, and serious mind. His first survey of our campus, our buildings, our equipment (and they are not insignificant), brought him almost to despair. 'How can we hope,' he exclaimed, 'to compete with all this?'

I assured him that the growth of the College had been slow; that it had taken fifty years to reach our present strength. 'But we are here,' I continued, 'not as rivals: we are here to share with the people of the East the best things we have in the West, or rather to exchange the best things that East and West have received. For the whole world needs the whole world. We wish, moreover, to promote and not retard the native educational enterprises in the Near East. In fact,' I added, 'it is our

Reprinted from "The Atlantic Monthly" for May 1920, by permission of the editor.

purpose to render ourselves, not indispensable, but, as soon as possible, *dispensable*, and we shall go elsewhere just as soon as the ideals of education and of life cherished by us are adopted here.'

In my study, a little later, we reached deeper things. His eagerness to get at the hidden roots of our success became increasingly apparent. He especially asked about the religious problem—for he knew of the astonishing variety of religious sects represented in our student body. I told him that our motto was: 'Frankness and good-will;' that every student's theological and religious opinions were sympathetically respected. I illustrated our attitude in these matters by telling him how the College—missionary and Christian as it is—joins every year with its Moslem, Druze, and Bahai students in their religious celebration of Mohammed's birthday.

The scene is, indeed, impressive. I have in mind the last celebration: a great throng of reverent students—Sunnis and Shiites; white-turbaned sheiks scattered through the audience; the low chanting of the Koran; the serious and restrained orations—previously censored by the Moslem students themselves and thus rendering almost unnecessary any further censoring by the College authorities. In the closing address, given by a responsible officer of the College, the speaker makes it clear that, as a representative of the Christian religion, he is glad to have a sympathetic share in all efforts to strengthen the forces of righteousness in the world. Praising the splendid democracy that obtained in early times among Moslems themselves,—no rights withheld because of color, poverty, or social status—and commending Omar's massive declaration upon becoming Caliph: 'By God, he that is weakest among you shall be in my sight the strongest, until I have vindicated for him his rights; but him that is strongest will I treat as the weakest, until he complies with the laws,' he pleads that this spirit should not only be maintained among Moslems today, but extended by them so as to embrace all mankind. He bids them retain the sense of the

nearness of God asserted in the Koran's memorable line, 'God is closer to you than the great artery of your neck.' He urges that they should remain true to their Book's injunction as to intoxicating liquors, at just this epoch when Western peoples are grappling with the evils of alcoholism. Characterizing as a stroke of genius the Moslem custom of calling men to prayer through the matchless human voice, rather than by means of bells, beautiful as these are, he begs all the students, Christian as well as Moslem, to turn their thoughts God-ward at the summons of the muezzin. And, finally, he pleads for an ever deeper, richer interpretation of the word *Islam,* until everywhere it shall connote an active, personal, intelligent submission to the Will of God in body, mind, and spirit, and thus stand for a true and a sound conversion.

To all this, and to the recital of other illustrations which I gave of the attitude of the College toward his own and other non-Christian beliefs, Jamil Bey listened with wondering and deepening interest. He opened his heart. 'We need your help,' he cried, 'all along the line, but especially in the training of our Moslem religious leaders. We are groping in the dark and we need a helping hand.'

It was stretched out to him. In the earnest conversation that followed, I referred to the difficulties which the Christian Church had experienced and was still experiencing in adopting the scientific method of studying the Bible as represented by the principles of the Lower and the Higher Criticism, and I dwelt upon the final necessity confronting every religion of vindicating its truth by an appeal to the inner authority of a spiritual experience rather than to an external and mechanical norm. Sympathetically, but frankly, I pointed out to him that, as the orthodox Moslem belief concerning the inspiration of the Koran was more mechanical and rigid than any of the current theories regarding the inspiration of the Bible, his task would not be a light one.

The subject was renewed at other interviews. I hope

he got some help. At least he took with him, for detailed study in his Theological School at Jerusalem, the latest catalogue I had of a leading American theological seminary, with its noble programme of up-to-date theological discipline, with its outlook wide as truth, with its sympathy for all religious aspiration.

Well, the Saladin University of Jerusalem has disappeared and disappeared forever; and Jamil Bey has disappeared (I hope not forever: he was a charming and earnest gentleman); but the episode just related serves to indicate the spirit in which many a modern missionary in all parts of the world today is working out his task. *Missionary*, I repeat, for this College of which I have spoken, the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut, is a distinctly missionary institution, typical of other missionary colleges and missionary enterprises. It has not, to be sure, the earmarks of the traditional missionary project. But while bending every endeavor to give its students a sound, modern education that shall make them efficient doctors, dentists, pharmacists, teachers, merchants, engineers, trained nurses, it does not consider its task as really begun—certainly not as ended—until it has made known to its students that which it holds to be of supreme worth in life: the adoption of the Christian Ideal as the best means of fitting a man to play a worthy part in the great drama of life.

Just what this expression—the Christian Ideal—connotes to the modern missionary will be indicated later; but just now I wish to make it as clear as possible that so deeply, nay, so passionately, does the College believe in the value of its conception of the Message of Jesus to the World, that it would fain persuade its students to absorb and assimilate, on the athletic field, in the classroom, in their social and religious life, in the communities in which they live, in their temples, synagogues, and mosques, in the forum, the counting-house, everywhere, this Ideal. That way lies the fullest life, the deepest joy, the sweetest peace, the truest success.

This, then, in the last analysis, is the *raison d'etre*

of the College's foundation. Its classic expression took form in the words of Daniel Bliss, the first president, when, at the laying of the corner-stone of College Hall fifty years ago, he said, 'The College is for all conditions and classes of men, without reference to color, nationality, race, or religion. A man, white, black, or yellow, Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, or Heathen, may enter and enjoy all the advantages of the institution for three, four, or eight years, and go out believing in one God or many gods or no God; but it will be impossible for anyone to continue with us long without knowing what we believe to be the truth and our reasons for that belief.'

II

HE Modern Missionary has been privileged to live in an age in which a flood of light has been thrown upon God's processes of creation. Trained in the scientific method, he has risen from his studies in the broad aspects of Evolution, in Comparative Religion, in the history and the philosophy of religion, in the history of civilization, in the Lower and Higher Criticism, convinced as never before that a man's religious belief powerfully affects that man's happiness, usefulness, progress and salvation. He has scant sympathy with the superficial view which declares that so long as a man is honest it makes no difference what he believes. He is persuaded that Christ's message is a definite and distinct message, founded upon the knowledge of facts as facts. Christianity respects all that is good in Buddhism; but Christianity is not Buddhism. Christianity is not Brahmanism, it is not Mohammedanism, however near these religions may come in some of their teachings to the teachings of Christ. It is a Christian message, based upon a particular attitude to the universe, explicit, precise and unique. Men may reject it, but in rejecting it, they must reject something that is a definite interpretation of the great mysteries surrounding us.

Moreover, while painfully aware of the glaring defects

of Christendom, and with every disposition to be fair and generous in his judgment, he is convinced as never before that the influence of the best of other religions upon the individual, the home, the state, has been incontestably far less benign than that exerted by Christianity. He is certain that the Christian view of the world is so superior to all other views as to make it infinitely worth while to proclaim this view to the uttermost parts of the earth.

In these beliefs he is in full accord with his predecessors. But his studies and his observation have forced him to a further conviction. He does not believe that Christianity is the sole channel through which divine and saving truth has been conveyed. And this persuasion he admits ungrudgingly and gratefully. For it at once enlarges his spritual fellowship. All men who are themselves seeking God and who are striving to lead others to God become his companions and his fellow workers.

Our missionary has a new conception of the brooding of God's spirit over the soul of man, the soul which ever retains traces of the divine image, in which the light 'which lighteth every man that cometh into the world' is never wholly quenched. Reverently he dares to apply to himself Jesus' pregnant discovery: 'My Father worketh hitherto—*and I work.*'

Thus seeking and thus working, he discovers with a new humility that, with very much to give, he has not a little to receive from men of other faiths: the mystical element so prominent in Eastern religions; a becoming reticence in the presence of the great mysteries of life; a sense of the nearness of God; a recognition of the importance of religion.

This widened conception of the work of God in the world has a profound effect upon the missionary's method of presenting his own Christian message. He is not content to combat the error which looms so large in the creeds of other men. He is anxious to find the kernel of truth of which so often that error is but a dis-

torted expression. He comes to supplement, not solely to create. He prays for all men with a new sympathy—for all mosques and temples and synagogues as well as for all churches. He will preach wherever he is invited. He speaks the truth, but he prunes his vocabulary of harsh phrases. He realizes that such words as 'heathen,' 'infidel,' 'heretic,' 'pervert,' are not brotherly words. The mere word 'crusade' makes some of my Moslem students white with anger. I have known men who are separated indefinitely from the gospel's influence just because of these infelicitous, these poisonous words. On the other hand, how richly beautiful is Christ's vocabulary in this connection: the seed, the light, the leaven, the spring, the life!

I shall never forget how close we came to having a riot at the College because of a supposed insult leveled at the Koran. For thirty years a slurring reference to Confucius was remembered against a veteran worker in China. The modern missionary, profiting by these warnings, rejects epithets however telling if they are not quite just. He withholds arguments which, the tables turned, he would not think fair or generous if applied to his own belief. He seeks to practice, with a new sense of its importance, the Golden Rule.

Coming in contact with men who are as convinced of the truth of their own faiths as the missionary is of his, his appeal to them must be upon the common basis of absolute fidelity to truth. He must strive to be unflinchingly, scrupulously honest in his own intellectual processes and habits. Our students at Beirut are repeatedly reminded of Coleridge's great aphorism, applicable to all religions as well as Christianity: 'He who begins by loving Christianity better than truth will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity, and end by loving himself better than all.' In all our classes, and especially in our Bible classes, there is a tradition of absolutely untrammeled inquiry; and woe be to the teacher who gives the impression that he is suppressing or fumbling question and answer, however

blunt, embarrassing, or indiscreet the inquiry may seem to be. Indeed, a chief advantage which a college offers the missionary as a rich field for his activity lies in the fact that here he has as his constituency a picked body of youth, the future leaders of their lands, singularly responsive to the presentation of new moral and religious ideas and ideals, provided the appeal is made in as straight and honest and rational a way as other ideas are taught in laboratory and class-room.

III

LIKE his predecessor, the modern missionary finds in the Bible the Great Book of Religion; but, spared the burdensome obligation of attempting to defend as errorless everything found in the Bible, whether in the realm of events, of science, of ethics or of religion, he is free to concentrate his attention upon its spiritual appeal. As it echoes God's voice speaking in the souls of men and of peoples, and awakening re-echoes in his own heart, it gains a new authority over him as a man of reason, of conscience, of intellectual and spiritual responsibility. Credible history he finds there, but still more matchless illumination and inspiration. Its cumulative wisdom, its profound devotion, its compelling eloquence, its mounting passion, its yearning appeal—all this has 'found' him, to use Coleridge's quite adequate expression.

And he has gained something more. For while convinced of its incomparable superiority, he does not look upon the Bible as the sole body of literature that God has used as the vehicle of divine expression. Authentic echoes of God's voice he finds in other books.

Influenced by these views, and unhampered by a tradition based upon a more mechanical view of the inspiration of the Bible, which attached undue value to local habits of mind and to fleeting words and phrases, the modern missionary finds himself conceiving of the Gospel of Christ in simpler fashion than in earlier days. He has, indeed, scant respect for the pop-

ular cry against dogma, against theology, against metaphysics. He does not discourage the formulation of doctrine. He would destroy no historic creed. He would not tinker them. Back of every statement of belief, œcumenical or of narrower acceptance, he believes that there was some great truth seeking, with whatever success, to express itself, and that it was this element of truth which gave vogue to the creed in question. But to him the gospel of Christ is a thing so vital, so dynamic; words and phrases are in so great danger of becoming static ('polarized' was Oliver Wendell Holmes' word); the traditional distinction between the natural and the super-natural is so misleading and even mischievous —all this compels him to believe that the Everlasting Gospel can get itself expressed in an ever-changing world only in the ever-changing terms of personal experience and in today's phraseology; and hence he attempts to restate his interpretation of the Faith in modern language.

IV

HAT then is the missionary's message?

It is the proclamation of the Religion of Jesus as disclosed in his teaching and as exemplified in his career. Christ's religion is a world-religion because it deals with a craving elemental, instinctive, universal—man's craving for life. Christ claimed that He knew how men can live adequately, overflowingly. His message to mankind is a message that is astonishingly simple in its statement, naive in its claims, ample in its outline, self-evidencing in its application. It is couched in terms that relate to universal human experiences, and hence that all men can understand. 'If you wish to live,' said Christ, 'really to live, —not a life of mere animal existence, but a life human, divine, victorious, eternal, a life whose quality gives in itself the surest hope that it will survive the dissolution of your physical forces,—you must think of God as your Father, loving, righteous, wise, strong; and you must reverence and love Him and live with Him as such.

You must think of yourself as God's child, docile, obedient, trustful; and you must love yourself and live with yourself as such, with a self-reverence that insists upon a standard of unstained conduct maintained at whatever cost; loss of goods, loss of hand, loss of eye, loss of life itself. You must regard your fellow man as your brother and love him and serve him and live with him as such. Thus living, you will live in such peace as the world cannot give and in such joy as nothing can destroy.'

This is the message which Christ proclaimed in word and in life, and proclaimed with the unshakable conviction that all men needed it and that any man following in his steps would find his elemental craving for life richly satisfied. Christ's religion involves complete submission to the Will of God in filial, loving obedience. It links in indissoluble bonds creed and deed. As it regards the doing of God's will as that which brings Heaven upon Earth, so it looks with fear and with loathing upon sin as that which separates man from God, constitutes its own hell whether here or hereafter, and corrupts the very being of the soul.

Though possessed by a joy that nothing can destroy, life is not a comedy. Though passing through tragic experiences of suffering, sorrow, and sin, life is not a tragedy. Life is the unfolding of the Father's plan for the child's body, mind, and soul—with *perfection* as the ever-present, ever-receding goal. The pathway will not be an easy one, even as it was not easy for the Master—loving service always costs, whether it be God or man who extends the helping hand. Suffering and sacrifice will be inevitable. 'Working out the beast' is no holiday jaunt: the 'ape and the tiger' do not readily die. You cannot truly love God and self and man; you cannot really put righteousness, justice, mercy in the very forefront of life, without a willingness to give up ease and comfort and popularity and power. But the victory is sure: all the forces of righteousness in the Universe are on your side.

Much remains implicated in the Religion of Jesus

that is not formally expressed: a Home beautiful and radiant; a spiritual and ministering Church; a just and benign social and industrial order; a truly democratic state. All these must inevitably follow when once the Christian Ideal has been adopted. Perfection, moreover, upon which Jesus insists as the goal of man's striving, will bring with it a due development of his intellectual and æsthetic nature.

Many details might, indeed, be added; but they are details—splendid details, but still details. Of course, it is absolutely inevitable, as it is absolutely proper, that Christ's message should be subjected to intellectual restatements as varied as is the mind of man; restatements more closely articulated in their various parts than this simple statement from the lips of Jesus. For his Message deals with the greatest and the deepest things in the world, the most mysterious, the most baffling; and it is natural that man should wish to explore more closely and explain more minutely and justify more completely the Message. But the plea must always be made, with full recognition of the perennial honor in which the theologian should be held, that Christ's essential Message must remain on the lips of his messengers simple in its assertions, ample in its outlines, universal in its terms. Faith in a loving, wise, righteous, and holy God; faith in self; faith in mankind; faith in truth, in love, in righteousness—this fulfills the conditions of the Catholic faith, *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.*

V

AS a consequence of his belief in the vital character of Christ's Message, involving a personal relationship between the soul of man and the soul of God, the modern missionary rests the final proof of its authenticity upon the inner experience of the recipient: upon the personal satisfaction of the universal spiritual cravings and aspirations of humanity. 'Taste and see!' is the first and the last appeal.

Do these values of the x's, the y's, and the z's, in the complicated problems of your life solve your equation? Substitute these values and establish the proof for yourself!

Does this key open the doors that lead to the 'life that is life indeed?' Put the key in the lock and try it for yourself! And the missionary out of his own experience offers with confidence this key as the master-key that will unlock, in other hearts as well, the doors of Peace and Joy and Life and Power. Peace and Joy and Life and Power—these are the divine sanctions, these are the final tests; not a belief in this miracle or that, not a belief in any miracle at all, is the *sine qua non* of Christian discipleship,—is that which brings certitude in Christian belief,—but only the doing of the Will of God as interpreted by Christ!

VI

THE missionary's views upon theological questions are of course to him of importance, and he imparts them freely to those to whom he preaches; but he does not do this dogmatically.

He strives never to forget that he is working among peoples whose mental habits and points of view differ from his own. Here there must be perfect liberty. Each temperament must be given its full freedom for speculation, for inference, for conjecture, for elaboration. The missionary does not shun discussion, controversy even, if the purpose is manifest that the real object is to clear the darkness, and not to gain the barren victory of party or of school.

His first concern, however, is always for something deeper, something more vital, than questions of theological and metaphysical speculation relating to the Person and the Work of Christ; to the Virgin birth (in which, together with other miracles, he may or may not believe); to the fine distinctions between the humanity, the divinity, the deity of Christ; to the nature of the

Trinity, to the atonement. Upon just one thing he insists: that which touches, not the *bene esse* of the Christian faith, but its *esse:* the personal assimilation in the disciple's life of the teaching and the spirit of Jesus. It is this deliberate purpose, it is this passion that counts. Other questions may be important, but they can wait. What Christ put first, he would put first.

God is still a jealous God, but God is jealous about *things* and not about words and phrases and formulas. Christ was never concerned about the outward honor paid Him. He did not yearn to be admired; He yearned to be followed. He wished men to come to Him, not as a shrine, but as a door; not as a goal, but as a highway; not as a memorial tablet, but as a window through which they could see God and Self and Man and Life and Opportunity.

And so our missionary bids his hearers formulate their thoughts of Christ in their own way, provided they retain the authority of his leadership.

Does He save you from your sin? Call Him Saviour!

Does He free you from the slavery of your passions? Call Him Redeemer!

Does He teach you as no one else has taught you? Call Him teacher?

Does He mould and master your life? Call Him Master!

Does He shine upon the pathway that is dark to you? Call Him Guide!

Does He reveal God to you? Call Him the Son of God!

Does He reveal man? Call Him the son of man!

Or, in following Him, are your lips silent in your incapacity to define Him and his influence upon you? Call Him by no name, but follow Him!

Oh, how our divisive names—Armenian, Socinian, Calvinistic, Trinitarian, Universalist, Roman Catholic, Greek, Protestant, Orthodox, Liberal—shrivel up and disappear in the presence of actual discipleship and under the realities of personal experience!

VII

THE modern missionary, while delivering the Christian Message in its great outlines, must, furthermore, expect and encourage the age in which he lives to work out in its own way the details of the meaning and the implications of these great simple statements, so few in number, but which go down into the deepest things in the universe. In every department of Christian thought and Christian organization,—theological, ecclesiastical, liturgical,—as well as in the larger circles in which the Christian spirit is dominant,—the home, the school, the state,—full scope must be granted for local development. Of course, the missionary will be ready with counsel, but he will be very careful how he attempts to legislate or coerce. In the history of his own church he has had ample warning of the danger of crystallizing non-essentials into permanent elements in the Church's creed, and he is on his guard lest he forge heavy chains upon the necks of those whom he would fain make free.

I have already emphasized the necessity laid upon the missionary of pruning his vocabulary in the interests of brotherly kindness; he must also be careful of his language from this standpoint of theological progress. He must not transmit words and phrases, or their equivalent, however much such transmission would free him from intellectual effort, if thereby he runs the risk of confusing the minds of the coming generations.

The missionary must approach his constituency intelligently. He must not underrate the task before him. He is not merely dealing with a sinful man; he is dealing with an ignorant man, or with a prejudiced man, or with a bigoted man, or a fanatical man; or he may be dealing with a man of great and profound intellect; and he must take these men seriously, he must acquaint himself with their religious creeds, and patiently and steadfastly must he strive to put himself into their minds and learn their logic.

If he feels the need of all available wisdom in order to

understand the Eastern mind, he must try to realize that his own mentality is often just as perplexing to the Oriental.

If Jesus had been born in Labrador, it is as inconceivable that He would have conveyed his message in the language He used in Palestine as that He would have clothed his body in the garments of that land. Parables, similes, and formulas would all have been changed—the permanent abiding element would have been his message about God as Father, man as brother, self as child of God, all linked together in the kind of love with which He loved the world.

Had Paul been born a Confusianist instead of a Jew, or a Buddhist or a Brahman, and had still yielded his allegiance to Jesus in those far-off lands, epistles might still have been written by him, but in how surprisingly changed a form the everlasting gospel which he preached would have been presented! What strange omissions of arguments which we have been led to think of as indispensable, or as all but indispensable! What strange additions in historical allusions! What a new world of illustration and simile and metaphor!

The Master has given the only standard by which to measure all vocabularies, all phraseologies, indeed, all beliefs—*his own included:* 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life!' Only thus measured are they binding upon us.

VIII

AS he has found that the Message of Christ carries within itself its own proof of authenticity, so the modern missionary finds in the message itself his own sufficient credentials: Christ's Message is Christ's commission. The Message creates the Messenger. By its very terms it belongs to the whole world, and the man who has received it at all must in common honesty receive it as a message to be transmitted to the last man in the world. He too is 'a debtor to the whole world.' He too is in the grip of an

Apostolic Succession! From him, too, escapes the cry, 'Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel!'

Geographical boundaries do not count either this way or that: the missionary spirit is the decisive thing. The decisive thing: for he has had a vision which gloriously haunts him: the vision of a man made in the image of God and rising into his great inheritance from the kraals of Africa or from the huts of the Fiji Islanders. He has seen a Christian home displacing in a few short years a household of warring elements. He has faith in a coming state permeated with the purpose to make justice and righteousness and service its dominant insignia; he has beheld the City of God descending from the Heavens upon the Earth. And so he goes forth, not because he believes that the operation of God's merciful and saving grace is confined to the span of a man's earthly existence. But loving pity for the sufferings of his brother men; anxiety for those who have lost their way in the mazes of ignorance and error; solicitude for those who are enmeshed in sin and guilt; a chivalrous compulsion to share with all mankind a spiritual dynamic which belongs to all mankind—these are the motives that compel him to carry the comforting, enlightening, merciful, life-giving Message of Christ to all the world.

His task is not an easy one. He must realize that his message will have no meaning unless he himself is the product of the message, representing and living the life which he asserts is the true life. Never were Emerson's words more true than of the missionary: 'What you are speaks so loud I cannot hear what you say.' And here is found the reason why, nineteen hundred years after its proclamation, hundreds of millions of people do not yet know that God is their Father, that man is their brother. The reason, I say, is that our own lives have not kept up with our own words. 'Speak *things*,' cried Emerson, 'or hold your tongue.'

So far as they will permit him, the missionary works in co-operation with all men of missionary spirit—living and letting live, respecting where he cannot share their

religious and theological beliefs. He is often misunderstood by friend and by foe. The globe-trotter thinks him a fool; the zealot a weakling; the fanatic a traitor. But he is not thereby deterred from his work. He thinks indeed that he may learn much that is useful from each one of them.

Realizing that the result of his work must be in its very nature destructive of much that is venerable, he seeks to be as constructive as possible. He is hopeful. For, though he may see few results of his labor, he believes 'that God cannot use a discouraged man,' and 'that things are never settled until they are settled right.' If at times he is appalled when some dreadful and unspeakable perversion of human nature suddenly confronts him, he is, on the other hand, surprised and comforted at the discovery of how fair a thing this same human nature may become.

IX

 OW does the modern missionary measure his success? Certainly not by ecclesiastical statistics: he believes profoundly that 'the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation.' How then is progress estimated? Much as their work is measured by serious men at home.

Take the work of this American College at Beirut, as one example among many. The briefest sojourn on its lovely campus, among its two dozen noble buildings, with its superb views, eastward and northward, of opalescent Lebanon, and westward of the great blue sea; with a visit to its museums, its laboratories, its observatory, its library, its athletic fields, its hospitals, its Students' Building; interviews with its ninety teachers; contact with its thousand students of many races (Syrian, Turk, Tartar, Persian, Indian, Egyptian), and of many religious (Moslem, Druze, Jewish, Bahai, and all the Christian sects), as they study, as they play, as they worship—a visit, I say, of this kind establishes the irrefutable conviction that here has been created a 'psy-

chological climate' from whose influence no student can escape. He is not, indeed, always aware of the changes in himself. With perfect sincerity he would probably deny that he is being affected so powerfully by his environment. The fruitage of this seed may not come till long after he has left the College campus. But a change is being wrought, and he is daily learning, not merely, not chiefly, from his books, lessons in fairness, in honesty, in purity, in respect for labor and learning and culture, in reverence, in modesty, in courage, in self-control, in regard for women, in the many forces which make for civilization. And wherever this man goes, he makes it easier to foster education, to overturn tyranny, to soften fanaticism, to promote freedom in state and church. The story of Bulgaria and Turkey and China and Japan and India amply attests this.

Few are the students from among the thousands who have studied at the Beirut College during the past fifty years who have not received a distinguishing stamp upon their lives which makes them to a greater or lesser degree marked men. And it was really this mark that Djemal Pasha was anxious to trace to its origin when he sent Jamil Bey to visit the American College at Beirut. It was because of this stamp upon our men that this same Turkish official declared that he considered the College as one of his 'most precious instruments' in carrying out his plans for the educational development of Syria. And it was this mark upon the College as an institution—the habit of straightness, frankness and good will—that kept the College open during the difficult years of the war. And all this our missionary believes is very worth while.

But he is seeking something more definite than these more or less unconscious influences, valuable as they are. For among those thousand students—all worth educating—he has his eye upon a smaller group: the eager, earnest future leaders of the Near East. These he is training to become teachers, doctors, merchants, pharmacists, dentists, engineers, nurses: men and wo-

men who are responding more consciously and more readily than their companions to the 'psychological climate' of the College, and at the same time are being disciplined in a definite way to become centres of light and leading all over that region. Their professional standing will make it certain that many a 'cup of cold water' will be proffered by them to a thirsty world. And it is these graduates—there have been twenty-eight hundred of them—whose services are in such demand. It is of these that Lord Cromer and Lord Kitchener and Sir Eldon Gorst and Sir Reginald Wingate and Field-Marshal Lord Allenby have spoken in such warm and generous praise for their splendid work in Egypt and the Soudan. It is for such men that Prince Feisal, son of the King of the Hedjaz, has recently made a personal demand; men of integrity, of trained skill, of the spirit of 'the helping hand.'

For all this our missionary is profoundly grateful. He thanks God and takes courage. But his chief hope is concerned with a still smaller group, whose size is unknown to him, but for whose enlargement he daily strives and daily prays—the company of those who have made a decision, intelligent, deliberate, whole-hearted, a decision to live their lives as sons of the Great Father in the spirit of Jesus Christ. 'Conversion,' 'regeneration,' 'surrender,' 'consecration' were the old words, and they were, and they are, good words. But the *thing* back of them is better than the words and than the particular way in which this thing is brought about: the dedication of body, mind and soul to the Will of God as interpreted by Jesus Christ. For when a man so commits himself, with or without a resulting change in his ecclesiastical affiliation, the missionary is assured that a force has been started which will work miracles in that man's world—his world of personal, domestic, community, political relationships. This is leaven hid in three measures of meal: the whole will be leavened. This is the 'cup of cold water' *at the well itself*. This is the religion at its source: human thirst quenched at the exhaustless Fountain of God.

X

HAS the Modern Missionary any contribution to make to the church at home? He surely ought to have, with the advantage in perspective which his foreign residence gives him; with his daily opportunity of estimating the real strength of Christianity as compared with other religions; with his first-hand realization of the spritual needs of other peoples; with a knowledge of the impression—so often painfully unfavorable—that nations, Christian in name, have made upon nations outside of Christendom.

He would, of course, reiterate the familiar protest, and cry out against the shameful waste of men, energy, time, and money involved in the hectic strife of sectarian rivalry at home. He would still more strongly deprecate the loss of good temper and of fairness, the jealousy, the meanness of spirit, and the narrowness of opinion involved in such conflicts.

He would bid the Church cease this ignoble strife, not by disregarding differences of conviction in matters of theological belief or ecclesiastical procedure, but by subordinating them to a more spacious, to a simpler conception of Christianity, as a world-religion. Deep, broad, strong, the foundations must be laid, for a *world* must stand upon them!

He would urge the Church to remember that 'Christianity is nothing unless it is universal,' and therefore he would plead with her to set forth the essential things in her faith in terms that all races, all temperaments, all mentalities can apprehend—reserving local terms for non-essentials. He would charge her to be bolder in making a direct appeal to man's spiritual nature; to have greater faith in truth, in reality; to be assured that a response will be forthcoming when the challenge is the outcome of the personal experience of the advocate. He would bid her rehabilitate in the vocabulary of religion the noble words *reason, rational, free-thinking, natural.*

Living among peoples where the blighting effect of dead formulas is so shockingly and almost incredibly

manifest, he would warn his fellow Christians at home against the danger of repeating creeds which have ceased to mean for them the things that they meant for their framers, nay, have ceased, in some of their articles, to have any real meaning at all. The supposed gain in the direction of the preservation of 'continuity with the past,' of 'catholicity' (both admirable things), is offset in his opinion by the loss of frankness, of the sense of reality, and even of plain common honesty.

Finally, he would beg the Church to send to the foreign field only men of intellectual, social, and apostolic power: godly men, world-men, modern men, resourceful men, moulders of civilization, who can get abreast of the width of the opportunity in these coming days of reconstruction in the world—men worthy of the weighty and glorious responsibility lying before them.

Of course, when all is said, the modern missionary is, in many things fundamental, not modern at all. He has not surpassed—in many cases he may not have reached—the zeal, the wisdom, the passion, the fearlessness of his predecessors. He has not overtaken St. Paul on Mars Hill, and his Master is always far in the lead with his method, 'inwardness;' with his secret, 'self-renouncement;' with his atmosphere, 'sweet reasonableness'—to use Matthew Arnold's inimitable characterization. But he follows after 'without haste and without rest.' He is sure of his message; he is sure of ultimate success,—

> . . . gazing beyond all perishable fears
> To some diviner goal
> Beyond the waste of years.

▽

TRUSTEES

SYRIAN PROTESTANT COLLEGE OF BEIRUT

D. STUART DODGE, D.D. - - - - President
ARTHUR CURTISS JAMES - - - Vice-President
WILLIAM M. KINGSLEY - - - - Treasurer

WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN
MISS ELEANOR DE GRAFF CUYLER
M. HARTLEY DODGE
FRANKLIN A. DORMAN, M.D.
V. EVERITT MACY
ALFRED E. MARLING
WILLIAM FELLOWES MORGAN
JAMES HOWELL POST

▽

AMERICAN HEADQUARTERS
18 EAST 41st STREET
NEW YORK CITY

Telephone, Murray Hill 1992

ALBERT W. STAUB
Executive Secretary

Contributions to the Howard Bliss Memorial Fund may be sent to the Executive Secretary