

Address

Annual Meeting - President
Cong. Home Missionary
Society

No 13 Vol 8

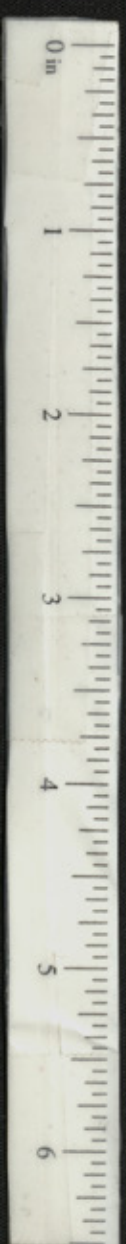
Subject

President Address on
Home Missions

Received of
General Manager
of the
Company

STATE
BOND

for the sum of
Five hundred
dollars



Annual Meeting

Cong. Boone Missionary Soc

Dear Brethren:

The anniversary of our beloved Society has come again. The year seems to us a short one, for it has been one of some anxiety and on the part of our active workers one of privation and labor equal to any in the past history of our organization. Our anxiety probably ought not to exist; however hard it may be for us to see the whitened fields increasing in extent and ripening for the harvest with an insufficient number of laborers in the harvest field. ^{worrying is out of place} It is the Lord's work and we are willing and ready to do his bidding; and he ^{has} left word for us to cast our burdens of anxiety upon him. ¶ It does, however, become us at this anniversary to examine well the extent of the fields and make inquiry as to why we cannot send forth laborers in sufficient number and with adequate strength to harvest the crop and bring it to the granery. There is a cry from ^{some of} those who usually bring tithes into the treasury, something like this: "Your organization is not as economical as it might be." "Your salaries are not as low as they should be; for ^{the} workers could eke out a living with less." "You should not have ^{so large} the expenses of anniversaries, ^{more} so that ~~that~~ that is contributed could go straight to the employment of the field laborers." We scrutinize these objections in a prayerful spirit, and exercise all the good sense men can command, and after all this, conclude that very little if anything ^{offsetting the cost of} ~~could be saved by any change.~~ ^{anniversaries} ~~could be saved by any change.~~ If the truth, the story of the situation the need of the Lord's vineyard, be not brought to the people of the churches, the churches will not remain in sympathy and in healthfulness. If we diminish the ^{our leading} salary of working men, already too small, they must leave us and seek employment and wages which their talents will command

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anywhere else in the market; and as to the anniversary, it is the only point where the society itself comes in direct contact with the workers and their representatives. Without the anniversary which God always blesses there would be no longer unity, coherence, information, sympathy, and essential support. No missionary society ever lived or could live without some conference correspondent to this yearly gathering. All excepting a few people who never see things as others do, will agree to this. It of course will cost something for the representatives of the churches ^{to be allowed to} look into the faces of the workers who come from far off fields; but, it is needful for the churches, to so gather ^{from them} inspiration and as needful for the ^{field} workers to have the relief of change, and this ^{gracious} source of help and courage; but I do not intend to delay your deliberations with ^{longer} these ^{objections} ~~as trivial, and which answer themselves.~~

For some years, there has been a falling off of contributions to the missionary societies! Pray, what has been the cause? The ^{Surface} answer at once is: "the times have been hard in business centres from which the main contributions come, and men naturally diminish the amount given to benevolent work, the first". Undoubtedly, this allegation is true - true to some extent; but to my mind this excuse ^{for the depletion} for not giving is insufficient. It is not a good one. It hardly seems to me to be an answer of a good conscience toward God. The probability is ^{strong} that there has been a change in the feeling of the vast majority of our Christian people toward missions themselves. Whenever a famine comes, even in India, our people give generously to relieve the starving. Whenever a fire sweeps up villages, or burns a city, the sympathy of the people far away from the scenes of devastation is intense, and help promptly offered. Whenever the waters and spring-freshets overflow the

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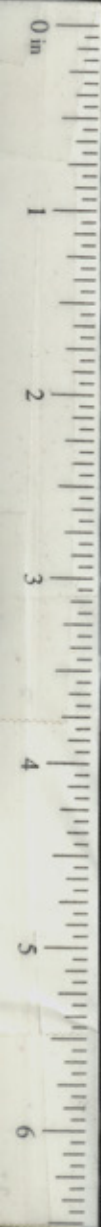
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river banks and cover a whole region with inundation, destroying property and life, helping hands are extended from every quarter, the suffering people are rescued and promptly provided for. When war and desolation touch any part of the known world, and consequent suffering arises, to the verge of starvation, Red Cross societies fly on the wings of the wind to give Christian sympathy and generous succor. Hard times exist, hard times limit the means of individuals; but the times never are so hard that when the news of these woes of humanity are brought to our people by the electric flashes ^{that} they do not immediately bestir themselves, and divide, if need be, with the suffering ^{ones} near or far, the last crust of bread. From these plain facts I make the inference that Christian people have changed their mind as to the veritable condition of sinners unsaved. In other words, that salvation somehow has lost ~~it~~ its meaning, or changed its meaning - perhaps changed its intensity. Even Orthodox men, ~~even~~ ^{often} cry out to me that the old idea - the idea taught by our fathers of perdition has passed away. My own uniform answer is this; put in the form of another question: "What was the idea of our fathers concerning perdition, which has passed away? The usual answer is: "Why, the idea that there is a literal lake of fire and brimstone, and that the resurrection body of him who perishes is so fashioned as to burn in it forever and ever." I answer to that: I am nearly seventy years old - have heard more than two thousand clergymen, and never heard that literal doctrine enunciated by one of them. I do not believe that it was that sort of fear - fear of literal perdition in a literal gulf of intense fire which animated our missionaries who obeyed the Master's call and went into every part of the known world to carry glad tidings of salvation; but, nevertheless, there was a real peril, and that same

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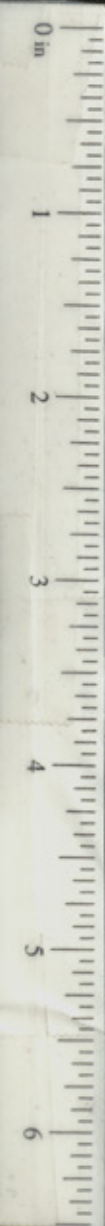
peril exists to-day. It is the peril of ^{unto} not attaining life - spiritual life - eternal life. Individuals are without it, ~~hosts of them~~ ^{hosts of them}. If they will repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, they may have it. Communities are without it. There are communities where there is a little start - where a few have found the way, and I ^{liken it} to the little leaven in the measure of meal. A few children, there, ^{who} are being led in the way of life; but the many have not yet been reached, and it is the duty of Christians to show them the way; but, a friend says, "if there be no perdition, where is the danger;" but there is perdition, a man without life, is without life; a man without spiritual life is without spiritual life; a man without a contented soul has a discontented soul, and no figures used by our Lord and his apostles have sufficient intensity in them to describe the wretchedness that actually exists in every part of this country, and in every part of the known world, and will exist until it is relieved by a knowledge and reception ^{on the part of individuals} of the truth. I mean the truth of God. Men come to us now a days with all sorts of nostrums and fanciful remedies, but there is really no remedy from the attendant misery of a man astray from God, but the conversion of his soul, and its complete renovation by the spirit of the Almighty. There is no method so plain and so simple for the change of humanity, for the relief of humanity, for the salvation of humanity from acknowledged and actual perdition as that given by Him who said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

I think ^{that} every member of our churches who loves Christ ^{fundamental truth} will agree with me in this: What I, then, urge upon ^{every one} ~~him~~ is, not to be mystified by too much intellectuality, too much hyper-criticism of the divine word. ^{too much argument pro or con.} Let our great men, our superb scholars and thinkers

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continue their work of scientific search. In the end it will do no harm, for they can never be greater than God, nor succeed in ^{blotting out} ~~quenching~~ God's own word! Therefore, let us humbler men come straight to the Word itself and drink more and more deeply from the teaching's of Christ. Let every Christian - I mean every common, every-day Christian, return to his first love - get his soul filled with it till he consciously loves his Savior with all his heart, and mind and strength, and his unsaved neighbor in New England, in the Mississippi or Missouri Valley or on the Pacific Coast, as he loves himself. Could this take place, could this revival come into each soul, in each Congregational church throughout our land, there would be no more trouble about the debts of the Home Mission Society. There would be no more want of workers reasonably supported in the fields of labor. The fields now white for the harvest would be reaped and the precious grain gathered in.

O Lord wilt Thou not draw very nigh to us who are here assembled and fill our souls with Thy Presence, and quicken our love for our Master into a blaze which shall burn out every every vestige of sin & selfishness.

And wilt Thou not go before us to every Christian in every congregational church and inspire the soul of that Christian with Thine own self-denying love - that Thou, our Lord, mayest be the first ^{in our} ~~joyous~~ love & fellowship, and that Thou mayest be seen & followed, seeking & saving the lost, the lost; and showing the way to those who are yet in blindness & darkness. Oh, fill, fill us, and all thy people with knowledge, ^{of actual perils and} & appreciation of thy salvation.

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I have arranged to have the first of the following
series of lectures given at the University of Vermont
on the subject of "The History of the State of Vermont"
by Mr. J. W. Alden, of the University of Vermont.
The first lecture will be given on the 1st of October
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The second lecture will be given on the 8th of October
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The third lecture will be given on the 15th of October
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The fourth lecture will be given on the 22nd of October
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The fifth lecture will be given on the 29th of October
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The sixth lecture will be given on the 5th of November
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The seventh lecture will be given on the 12th of November
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The eighth lecture will be given on the 19th of November
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The ninth lecture will be given on the 26th of November
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.
The tenth lecture will be given on the 3rd of December
at 7 o'clock P.M. in the Lecture Hall of the University.