

## CHAPTER ONE

### REFLEX SIDE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

#### I. HARRIET ATWOOD NEWELL

Harriet Atwood Newell died on 30 November 1812, on the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. The life and death of this nineteen year old American girl reveals to us an important characteristic of the American missionary movement.

Harriet Atwood was born on 10 October 1793, in Haverhill, Massachusetts, where her father was a merchant. When she was twelve years old, Harriet attended a girls' school in nearby Bradford.<sup>1</sup> A revival swept through the school that year, and affected Harriet. In her words, "I was brought to cast

When she was fifteen, Harriet heard a sermon that moved her deeply. She dedicated herself to

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<sup>1</sup> Bradford is now part of the city of Haverhill.

<sup>2</sup> "Summary Account of Her Religious Exercises, 27 Aug. 1809," in A Sermon Preached at Haverhill, (Mass.) in Remembrance of Mrs. Harriet Newell, Wife of the Rev. Samuel Newell, Missionary to India, Who Died at Isle of France, Nov. 30, 1812,

Christ, and on 6 August 1809, she was received into the membership of the Congregational Church of Haverhill. Harriet entered fully into the evangelical culture of her day--reading its literature, going to its meetings, practicing its piety.

The next year Harriet received a visit from a friend, Nancy,<sup>3</sup> with exciting news. Nancy, then twenty years old, had been a student with Harriet at Bradford Academy, where they had shared in the "anxious inquiry and heavenly peace" of the revival. Four young men from nearby Andover Seminary had announced to the representatives of the Trinitarian Congregational ministers of the state that they intended to be foreign missionaries, and challenged their elders to organize to support their work. Nancy's exciting news was that one of these young men, Adoniram Judson (1788-1850), had proposed marriage to her. More important than the proposal of marriage, was the proposal to share in a missionary life of consecration, sacrifice, and adventure to the glory of God.

No Americans had ever gone overseas as missionaries before. As with any new idea, there were many who thought it was a bad one. Among the religious people, some questioned the undertaking's theology, more questioned its practicability. Those who were less pious ridiculed it as foolishness and questioned the individuals' motives. But for devout evangelical Christians, the

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Aged 19 Years, to Which Are Added Memoirs of Her Life, [ed. Leonard Woods], (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1818), 68.

<sup>3</sup> Ann Hasseltine, later Mrs. Adoniram Judson (1789-1826).

conversion of the heathen had been the subject of prayer for some time. Harriet Atwood recorded in her journal.

October 20 [1810]. A female friend called upon us this morning. She informed me of her determination to quit her native land, to endure the sufferings of a Christian amongst heathen nations--to spend her days in India's sultry clime. . . . Is she willing to do all this for God; and shall I refuse to lend my little aid? . . . What can I do, that the light of the gospel may shine upon them? . . . Great God direct me! Oh make me in *some* way beneficial to their immortal souls.<sup>4</sup>

Three days later, one of the other would-be missionaries, Samuel Newell (1785-1821), called at the Atwood home. More visits followed, and Harriet was soon troubled by the thought of how she would respond if she received a proposal like Nancy's.

The following April, while staying with a sister in Boston, Harriet received a letter from Samuel with the challenging proposal. She wrote, "This was not a long wished for letter,--no, it was a long dreaded one, which, I was conscious, would involve me in doubts, anxiety, and distress."<sup>5</sup> This seventeen year old girl was pulled in different directions by her love for her mother and her friends, her evangelical duty, the "strong attachment" she felt to Samuel, the fear of the unknown, the known dangers, her lack of confidence in her own ability, and her sense of adventure. Ultimately, only one opinion was important. She resolved, "I

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<sup>4</sup> Journal, 20 Oct. 1810, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 93.

<sup>5</sup> Journal, 17 April 1811, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 105.

go to God, and with an unprejudiced mind, seek his guidance."<sup>6</sup> Next she resolved to seek her mother's advice; if her mother said "no," that would settle it. Mother said, "If a conviction of duty, and love to the souls of the perishing heathen, lead you to India, as much as I love you, Harriet, I can only say *Go!*"<sup>7</sup> Harriet concluded,

Here I was left to decide the all-important question. Many were the conflicts within my breast. But, at length, from a firm persuasion of duty, and a willingness to comply, after much examination and prayer, I answered in the affirmative.<sup>8</sup>

On 6 February 1812, five missionaries were ordained at Salem, Massachusetts. Adoniram and Nancy were married on the fifth; Samuel and Harriet were married on the eighth. Farewells were said, and on the nineteenth the *Caravan* set sail from Salem, with Harriet and Nancy, the two products of the school-girl revival at Bradford, and their missionary husbands.

The long journey to India was a honeymoon for the newlywed couples.

Harriet wrote to her mother,

Among the many signal favors I am daily receiving from God, one of the greatest is a most affectionate partner. With him my days pass cheerfully away--happy in the consciousness of loving and being beloved. With him contented I would live, and contented I would die.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>7</sup> To Miss C. F. of Boston, 29 June 1811, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 115.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Journal to Mother, 1 May 1812, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 177.

They arrived at Calcutta on 16 June 1812, and were confronted by a British East India Company intent on excluding missionaries from its territory. The two couples stayed with the Baptist missionaries at Serampore while they wrote appeals to anyone with influence. When all appeals were exhausted, the Newells left on 4 August for Mauritius, which was then called "Isle of France."

The journey to Mauritius was one of troubled hearts and discouraged spirits. Harriet wrote in her journal,

August 17 [1812]. Dear Mr. N. is much tried and perplexed in mind. It is a season which calls for close self-examination and earnest seeking to know the will of God. Where is the path of duty? Which way does it lead? Lord, what wilt thou have us to do? 'Guide us, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrims through this barren land.' . . . Are we to consider the opposition of the East India Company to the spread of the gospel an intimation of Providence that we are to give up the mission? Or are we to fight our way through all opposition, and attempt to do something for these wretched pagans around us?<sup>10</sup>

It was a difficult time of sickness, of contrary winds, and a leaking ship. It was also a time of birth and of death. On 8 October Harriet gave birth to a daughter. The baby caught cold and died on the thirteenth. Harriet also caught cold, and when they arrived at Mauritius she was seriously ill with consumption.

Harriet died, and in December Samuel Newell wrote to her mother,

Yes, my dear friends, I would tell you how God has disappointed our favorite schemes, and blasted our hopes of preaching Christ in India, and has sent us all away from that extensive field of usefulness with an intimation that He has nothing for us to do there. I would tell you how he

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<sup>10</sup> Journal, 17 August 1812, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 227-28.

has visited *us all with sickness*, and how he has afflicted me in particular, by taking away the dear little babe which He gave us, the child of our prayers, of our hopes, of our tears. Come, then, let us mingle our griefs and weep together, for she was dear to us both; and she too is gone. Yes, Harriet, your lovely daughter, is gone, and you will see her face no more! My own dear Harriet, the wife of my youth and the desire of my eyes, has bid me a last farewell, and left me to mourn and weep. Yes, she is gone.<sup>11</sup>

A year later, he recalled in another letter to Harriet's mother,

In a strange land, without one friend to weep with me, I followed her, a solitary mourner, to the grave. She was interred in a retired spot, in the burying ground in Port Louis, under the shade of an evergreen. I often visited the spot with mournful satisfaction, during the three remaining months of my residence in the Isle of France.<sup>12</sup>

One might think that the story of Harriet Newell would end here--in the shade of an evergreen, watered by the tears of someone broken-in-heart and broken-in-spirit. But it didn't.

When the news of Harriet's death reached New England, a memorial service was held in Haverhill. Leonard Woods (1774-1854), a professor at the seminary at Andover, and a supporter of missions, gave the sermon. Woods' sermon was published afterwards, along with Memoirs of Her Life. As was the custom of the time, "Memoirs" consisted of excerpts from her journal and her letters, with almost no connecting material.

The sermon by Woods and the memoirs were published in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia in 1814. By the end of the year, the Boston publisher had

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<sup>11</sup> Mr. N. to Mrs. A., 10 Dec. 1812, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 236-37.

<sup>12</sup> Mr. N. to Mrs. A., 9 Nov. 1813, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 251.

issued four editions. Another edition was issued in Boston each year until the one in 1818, which was published in both Boston and Utica. "Ninth" editions were published in Baltimore in 1830, with no location mentioned in 1839, and in Exeter, New Hampshire in 1842; another edition was published in Cooperstown, New York in 1846. The memoirs were published without Woods' sermon, but with a missionary sermon by Timothy Dwight, in 1815 in Boston and Lexington, Kentucky.

The two principal publishers of religious literature in America included Harriet's memoirs in their initial offerings. In 1825 the American Tract Society (ATS) published a twenty-four page abridgment of her memoirs. The American Sunday School Union (ASSU) offered them, without a sermon, in 1831, and a revision with more narrative and letters in 1832. These memoirs were advertized in the Sunday School Union Catalogue into the twentieth century. Several editions of the memoir of Harriet Newell were also published in the British Isles, and in Paris.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Publishing information is from NUC: 417:91-93; 673:46; 748:268; American Bibliography, [vols. 14-19] (New York: Scarecrow, 1963); American Imprints, vols. 1-24 (New York: Scarecrow, 1964); and A Dictionary of Books Relating to America, by Joseph Sabin (New York, 1868; reprint, Amsterdam: N. Israel, 1961-62). Also, Catalogues of Books, etc., 1826-1908, American Sunday School Union Papers, Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., microfilm. None of these references claims to be

Preachers and writers often referred to Harriet Newell. A tract of the ATS, published in 1826, on Female Influence and Obligations, mentioned four examples of female influence: Hannah More, Harriet Newell, Mary Norris, and Isabella Graham.<sup>14</sup> Leonard Bacon (1802-1881), preaching on "The Example of Christ," in 1828, referred to the brotherhood of eminent saints--"Brainerd, Martyn, Parsons and Harriet Newell."<sup>15</sup> Daniel Eddy, author of a collection of eleven biographies of missionary women in 1855, said of Harriet, "she set an example to the church in every land and age."<sup>16</sup> For half a century after her death, the leaders of the missionary movement praised her as a model, and the supporters of missions devotedly loved her.

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exhaustive.

<sup>14</sup> [Nathan S. S. Beman], Female Influence and Obligations, Publications of the ATS, no. 226 (New York: ATS, [1829]), 11. The ATS had published 61,000 copies of tract no. 226 by 1850.

<sup>15</sup> Leonard Bacon, "The Example of Christ" NP 3 (1828-29): 13.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel C. Eddy, Daughters of the Cross (Boston: Dayton and Wentworth, 1855), 42. His first biography was of Harriet Newell. For other praise of Harriet Newell see: John Codman, Idolatry Destroyed, and the Worship of the True God Established: A Sermon Delivered in the Old South Church, Boston, Before the Foreign Mission Society of Boston and the Vicinity, Jan. 1, 1818 (Boston: Lincoln & Edmands, 1818), 26.

Harriet Newell never saved a soul, never converted anyone, never taught a class of non-Christian children, never shared her faith with non-Christian women, never learned a language, never became a legal resident of a foreign land. By any objective standard of measurement, Harriet Newell was a failure. Why was she lifted up as a model? If she wasn't a successful missionary, of what was she a model?

Harriet Atwood Newell modeled a missionary's dedication to Christ. Yet this "proto-martyr" of the American missionary movement was as ordinary as any girl-next-door. In the journal and letters of this American teenager, people saw a faith that was simple but deep. Believers could follow her example of faith, and not necessarily have to go overseas. People in America could become more consecrated to Christ, more holy in their lives, as they participated in the domestic phase of foreign missions.

The foreign missionary movement challenged Americans to look more deeply into their souls. The reading of missionary literature, praying for missions, contact with those who committed themselves to foreign missions, and giving to missions involved many Americans in a system that moved them to live more consecrated lives.

Leonard Woods, who had anonymously edited the Memoir, wrote to his publisher in July of 1814, "Every now and then I hear of persons awakened to

serious considerations by the perusal of it."<sup>17</sup> Perhaps typical of the readers of the Memoir was Thomas Davies Stewart, a young man in Connecticut. After reading the Memoir, he wrote in his journal for 20 December 1815:

May I not learn an interesting and useful lesson from her life and death? Her early piety, her example as a disciple of the blessed Saviour, and the joy she expressed . . . exhibit incontestable proofs of the reality of religion, and the necessity of a change of heart. May I live more devoted to the cause of my divine Master. May I experience more of his love in my heart, that I may feel more interested in the salvation of my fellow creatures.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Leonard Woods to Samuel T. Armstrong, 12 July 1814, ABC, ser. 40.

<sup>18</sup> Maltby Gelston, Obituary: Thomas Davies Stewart, Christian Spectator 1 (1819): 498. For similar responses see: Rufus Anderson, Memoir of Catharine Brown (London: John Mason, 1828), 21; Benjamin B. Wisner, Memoirs of the Late Mrs. Susan Huntington, of Boston, Mass., 3d ed. (Boston: Crocker and Brewster; New York: J. Leavitt, 1829), 76-77; Daniel O. Morton, Memoir of Rev. Levi Parsons, First Missionary to Palestine from the United States, 2d ed. (Burlington, Vt.: Chauncey Goodrich, 1830), 29; "Brief Memoir of Mrs. Myra W. Allen, Wife of Rev. D. O. Allen, American Missionary at Bombay," MH 28 (1832): 135; [Harmon Loomis], ed., Memoirs of American Missionaries Formerly Connected with the Society of Inquiry Respecting Missions at Andover Theological Seminary (Boston: Pierce and Parker, 1833), 89, 130; Miron Winslow, Memoir of Mrs. Harriet Wadsworth Winslow, Combining a Sketch of the Ceylon Mission (New York: Leavitt, Lord, 1835): 26-27; Edward Door Griffin Prime, Forty Years in the Turkish Empire; or, Memoirs of Rev. William Goodell, D.D.

Harriet Atwood Newell was a failure as a foreign missionary. But her influence on American Christians to "live more devoted to the cause of my divine Master," and to "feel more interested in the salvation of my fellow creatures," would succeed for a century. Her life demonstrated the "reflex influence" of missions.

At the memorial service for Harriet Newell, Leonard Woods used as his text Matthew 19:29: "And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold; and shall inherit everlasting life."<sup>19</sup> Woods asked rhetorically where such people could be found, and answered, "*in every place, and in every condition of life, where we find true religion.*"<sup>20</sup> He went on to describe how this commitment to Christ was found among all classes of people. He began with the poor:

The *poor cottager* . . . gives himself and all he has to the Lord. He loves Christ above his cottage, his food, and his rest, and is ready to part with them all for *his sake*. . . . In his heart often burns as pure a flame of love and zeal, as in the heart of an apostle. . . . His prayers are animated by fervent affection for God and man. And when he contributes his *mite* for the

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(New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1876), 46.

<sup>19</sup>

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version, the version of preference of the time being studied.

<sup>20</sup> Sermon, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 13.

advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, he does it with a heart large enough to part with millions.<sup>21</sup>

Woods then spoke of the rich:

Though he does not *literally forsake* houses and lands, he uses them for the glory of Christ. . . . To *use* riches for Christ, and to *forsake* them for Christ, evince the same elevation above self-interest, and the same devotedness to the cause of God. He, then, who values his estate for Christ's sake, and uses it for the advancement of his cause, has the same disposition and character with those, who for the same object actually do suffer the loss of all things.<sup>22</sup>

Then Woods dealt in turn with ministers, Christians in persecution, missionaries, and missionary wives. He summed up:

Multitudes now on earth, have that supreme love for the Lord Jesus, which leaves little of the heart for anything else. . . . In the very act of *faith*, there is an implicit forsaking of all things for Christ. So that when the trial comes, and they really forsake all things on his account, they only do in open act, what they did in heart before.<sup>23</sup>

At the memorial service for the first American foreign missionary to die, Leonard Woods chose to talk about the ordinariness of her faith. Or perhaps one could say he chose to talk about the extraordinary faith of hundreds of thousands of evangelical Christians, a faith whose strength could be seen in the life and death of this one representative young Christian, Harriet Newell. In the years ahead these ordinary/extraordinary Christians of every place and every walk of

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 13-14.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 18.

life would be called to self-examination and to sacrifice for the same cause for which Harriet had died. The missionary movement would have a profound influence on the religious practice and devotion of those who would support it in America.

In the story of Harriet Atwood Newell, especially the story of what was done with her story, we see that an important dimension of America's missionary movement was the motivation of people to glorify God. The hearers of the missionaries in foreign lands were not the only persons so motivated.

## II. STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS OF THIS DISSERTATION

The leaders of the first foreign mission board, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), believed that missions had two results. First, the "direct influence" of missions, was eternal salvation to those who accepted the gospel proclaimed by the missionaries. Second, the "reflex influence" of missions, was a deepening of faith among those in the home country who sent and supported the missionaries.

The reflex influence of foreign missions is the subject of this dissertation. How did the foreign missionary movement influence its supporters in America? Specifically, how did it influence their piety?

The word "piety" is no longer a popular word with American Protestants, and is not well understood.<sup>24</sup> *Piety* can be understood as including (1) the inward cultivation of a relationship with God, (2) the outward discipline of religious observances for nurturing that relationship, and (3) disciplines of moral and social behavior which express that relationship.

Four disciplines of religious observance (number two above) will be examined for reflex influence: prayer, reading, vocation, and consecration of property. We will note how these disciplines were generally understood and practiced by American Protestants at the time of the rise of foreign missions. But our main concern is the reflex influence of missions on these forms of pious observance. How was the piety of American Christians influenced by the foreign missionary movement? How did this piety form part of the missionary movement? While studying these four disciplines of religious observance, we will always keep in view the other two aspects of piety--the inner relationship with God and the outward moral and social behavior.

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"Popular piety involves certain inner religious experiences and outward observances which contribute to spiritual growth."--Bill J. Leonard, "Piety: Popular Protestant," in Dictionary of Christianity in America, ed. Daniel G. Reed (Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity, 1990), 907. Piety, "has denoted qualities and exercises of the Christian life today often associated with 'spirituality.'" Besides "doing good," "Its broader meaning includes the cultivation of faith and godly knowledge, religious experiences both intensely mystical and more routine, and the varieties of personal devotion and corporate worship exercises that foster experiences of the divine."--Charles F. Hambrick-Stowe, "Piety," in Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith, ed. Donald K. McKim (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 278.

The missionary movement had many reflex influences on its supporters, not all of which were anticipated. Closely related to the movement's piety was the promotion of Christian unity, racial equality, and orthodox Christian doctrine. Under the influence of the missionary movement and the spirit of the times, American Protestant piety became more action-oriented. It also developed patterns of participation for persons of both genders and all ages and classes.

Before examining these four forms of religious observance, we will review the social, theological, and ecclesial context in which the foreign missionary movement arose. We will also review the history of the ABCFM in this period. After examining these four forms of religious observance, we will look at criticisms of the missionary movement, and the movement's responses, and will review the specific claims of the reflex influence of missions.

This study is limited to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and its constituency. The ABCFM was the first foreign mission board in the United States, and until the 1870s the largest. A number of the other foreign boards were begun by persons who first participated in the foreign missionary movement through the American Board. This includes the Baptist, old school Presbyterian, and Dutch Reformed Boards, and the American Missionary Association (AMA). The ABCFM set the pattern, which the others followed. The constituency of the American Board consisted at various times of Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Dutch and German Reformed.

Because the ABCFM united in 1826 with the United Foreign Missionary Society (UFMS), which had earlier absorbed the New York, Northern, and Western Missionary Societies, these institutions will be included in this study.

We will examine the reflex influence of missions up to 1850. This includes all of the formative period of the Board's domestic history, the period in which the basic patterns were established which continued with minor changes for the rest of the century.<sup>25</sup> The fifteen years of missionary promotion that preceded the formation of the ABCFM in 1810 is also of interest to us.

By examining the reflex influence of missions in the American Board, we will become aware of how the foreign missionary movement has shaped the life and piety of the Protestant church in America. We will also discover the role missions has played in the spiritual vitality of the church.

But first, we need to look at the actual claims for reflex influence made by the ABCFM. What did the Board, its representatives, and its friends, believe to be the influence of missions on the sending church?

### III. "REFLEX INFLUENCE"

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1850 is a "round figure." In the period 1832-1846 leaders of the same generation as the first missionaries shaped the policies of the Board. one died in 1846, a second retired in 1848. The third continued in office until 1866, but with younger associates. The agency system was revised in 1848. The publication of prize essays in 1850 on beneficence marked the end of a period of development of a theology of giving. The year 1850 is also used to divide two periods in: William Ellsworth Strong, The Story of the American Board (New York: Arno, 1969).

Spokespersons for the ABCFM were fond of retelling an anecdote from the debate over incorporation of the Board, in the Massachusetts Senate in 1812. Jeremiah Evarts (1781-1831) first described this debate in the Board's "Address to the Christian Public," of 1813:

When it was objected on the floor of the Senate of Massachusetts to the act for incorporating the Board in whose behalf we speak, that it was designed to afford the means *of exporting religion, whereas there was none to spare from among ourselves*; it was pleasantly and truly replied, *that religion was a commodity, of which the more we exported, the more we had remaining.*<sup>26</sup>

Where did this idea come from? The leaders of the American Board believed in the reflex influence of missions on the basis of, (1) Scripture, (2) the experience of missions in Britain, and (3) the experiences of small city and state missionary societies in America.

Supporters of missions read their Bibles carefully, and found many texts to support reflex influence. The 1813 "Address," followed the above anecdote with reference to Proverbs 11:24,25, and Acts 20:35:

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

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<sup>26</sup> Jeremiah Evarts, "Address to the Christian Public: October, 1813" FTR, 76-77. The Address was signed by Jeremiah Evarts, Jedidiah Morse, and Samuel Worcester, but authorship is attributed to Evarts in Ebenezer Carter Tracy, Memoir of the Life of Jeremiah Evarts, Esq. (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1845), 99. For a thorough discussion of the context in which this statement was made, see Rufus Anderson, Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Boston: ABCFM, 1861), 76.

Somehow, in God's government of the universe, the miser will become poor, while the generous person will be blessed. Advocates of missions also quoted Ecclesiastes 11:1: "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." Also, Isaiah 32:8: "But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand."

The "Address" of 1813, mentioned the reflex effects of missions on the churches of England. The London Missionary Society (LMS), organized in 1795, was the acknowledged model and inspiration for American advocates of missions. The London Society faced the same objection when it began: ministers should not be sent abroad when there are not enough at home. The Address observed, to the contrary,

The number of evangelical preachers and professors of Christianity has been increasing in that country, in an unexampled manner, during the whole time since the first missionaries sailed from England. The increase of faithful preachers alone has more than twenty-fold exceeded the whole number of missionaries sent abroad.<sup>27</sup>

The early literature of the LMS mentioned four aspects of reflex influence. First, at the deeply moving annual meetings, large multitudes from different denominations joined in a common holy purpose, and went home with a new vision and renewed enthusiasm. Second, the ultimate goal of missions, the saving of souls, caused persons to examine the state of their own souls. Third,

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<sup>27</sup> Evarts, "Address, 1813," 76.

the awareness of the need for missions abroad, caused persons to look around them in their own land, and see needs requiring missionary labor. Fourth, the many other societies soon established--for distributing Bibles, distributing tracts, etc.--were seen as spin-offs of the missionary movement, which would not have been established on their own.<sup>28</sup>

The experiences of the several state and city missionary societies established in the United States in the enthusiasm following the founding of the LMS, also demonstrated a reflex influence. In March of 1812, the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine and Religious Intelligencer contained an interesting anecdote to illustrate the point, that, "Liberality to the cause of religion, doubtless brings to the giver, spiritual blessings of infinite value."<sup>29</sup> There was a man, whose religious observance was superficial. After being reprovved by a poor pious neighbor, he decided to contribute to the annual collection for the Missionary Society of Connecticut, to send preachers to the frontier settlements. This led to consequences he had not anticipated:

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For (1) the deeply moving annual meetings, see: Joseph Hardcastle and George Burder, "Letter from the Directors of the London Missionary Society to the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut," CEM 7 (1806-07): 227. For (2) people examining their own souls, see: London Missionary Society, Reports of the Missionary Society, from Its Formation in the Year 1795, to 1814, Inclusive (London: J. Dennett, n.d.), 21-22. For (3) seeing needs at home, see: Samuel Greatheed, "To the Editor," EM 5 (1797): 277. For (4) the creation of other societies, see: Charles Silvester Horne, The Story of the L.M.S. (London: LMS, 1904), 14. For another list of reflex influences see: John Eyre, "An Address from the Directors of the Missionary Society," EM 9 (1801): 247-50.

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Philochristos, pseud., "On Christian Liberality," CEMRI 5 (1812): 112.

When his children inquired the reason of this change, he explained to them the importance of having the gospel preached to the destitute. One of them instantly replied, if this was a matter of such importance, they must all be guilty for not more punctually attending the worship of their own parish. From this time the whole family were constant attendants on public worship, and religious reading and conversation was introduced. One year after, several of his children became deeply impressed with the necessity of true religion. The work spread in the family, and was the beginning of a revival in the town.<sup>30</sup>

Several years later, two sons of the family, who had moved to the frontier, experienced religious rebirth through the instruction of missionaries. The subject of this story concluded his narrative, "O see how faithful a pay-master the Lord is! but we must give to his cause, not to make a bargain with him, that we may receive as much again, but for his honour and a love to the souls of men."<sup>31</sup>

Like the subject of the above story, the leaders of the ABCFM believed that reflex influences were not the fundamental motive for missions. Missions were undertaken in obedience to Christ's command, to give glory to God, and to express one's love for one's fellow human beings by sending them the means of eternal salvation. Nevertheless, the reflex influence argument rebutted criticisms of the missionary movement, and encouraged supporters to greater efforts in the cause.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

The reflex influence was explained in many ways. However, most of the arguments intimated that an inner change took place within the heart of the mission supporter; that this inner change involved a closer walk with God; that this inner change was both expressed in and cultivated by certain outward observances; and that this inner change would be expressed in more active love for one's neighbor. In other words, the central reflex influence was a deepening of piety. Even such measurable influences as an increase in clergy and in benevolent societies, implied that inner transformation was taking place. Through sermons and journal articles, the friends of the American Board defined the reflex influence of missions.

Horatio Bardwell (1788-1866), on 22 October 1815, the night before he left America as a missionary, in his farewell sermon on Proverbs 11:24, explained that when Christians supported missions they strengthened their feelings of benevolence. To become more benevolent--more active in good works--was to imitate Christ, our example of benevolence, and to become more Christ-like:

My brethren, do you desire to be delivered from a selfish, worldly spirit--do you wish for that consolation which results from a likeness to the blessed Jesus? Turn not a deaf ear to the cry of misery. Engage actively in the pleasing work of extending the borders of the Redeemer's kingdom.<sup>32</sup>

An anonymous article in the American Board's Missionary Herald in December 1824, titled "The Influence of the Spirit of Foreign Missions on

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<sup>32</sup> Horatio Bardwell, The Duty and Reward of Evangelizing the Heathen (Newburyport, Mass.: William B. Allen, 1815), 11.

Domestic Plans of Benevolence," declared that support for missions could free a person from selfishness: "To liberate the mind from the control of selfishness, an object must be presented . . . which will carry away the man from the neighborhood of his own interests."<sup>33</sup>

Beriah Green (1795-1874), a local pastor, in a sermon before the organizing meeting of a Rutland County, Vermont, auxiliary society to the ABCFM, preaching on Proverbs 11:25, advocated presenting to the people, "so truly a *common* object, that selfishness cannot appropriate it; . . . an object, whose accomplishment requires the labors of life. *Such is the object of missionary effort.*"<sup>34</sup>

Bardwell also asserted in his sermon, "The more you exert your influence to spread the knowledge of the Redeemer, the more highly you will prize this blessed volume, which brings life and immortality to light."<sup>35</sup>

In order to demonstrate the reality of this inner change, the advocates of missions presented two kinds of evidence. First, the mission supporter *felt* better. Feelings of joy, excitement, unity, closeness to God, all witnessed to the reality of this spiritual change. The Missionary Herald article asserted,

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<sup>33</sup> G., pseud., "The Influence of the Spirit of Foreign Missions on Domestic Plans of Benevolence," MH 20 (1824): 385.

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Beriah Green, A Sermon Preached in Poultney, June 29, 1826, at the First Annual Meeting of the Rutland County Foreign Missionary Society (Castleton, Vt.: Ovid Miner, 1826), 12-13.

<sup>35</sup> Bardwell, Duty, 9.

As you walk abroad, under the influence of the missionary spirit, the chains of selfishness will fall from your limbs. Your whole soul will exult in its emancipation. Your heart will be warmed, expanded, refined. New principles, with a delightful energy, will subdue you to their control. New motives will touch the springs of life.<sup>36</sup>

Bardwell argued that support for missions led to feelings of Christian unity, mutual love, and joy and excitement in the church.<sup>37</sup> The anonymous article claimed that the supporter of missions felt closer to God:

You will feel, that 'you are not your own,' and may 'not seek your own.' You will rise to labor for the welfare of others, with a zeal and an energy, which your own interests could never command. And every step, you take in the course, will bring you nearer the vision of the Savior.<sup>38</sup>

Second, the reflex influence's effects on the heart of the believer were made manifest in the prosperity of the church. Pastors were paid; churches were revived and flourishing; and a whole constellation of benevolent enterprises were supported. Beriah Green claimed in his sermon, "Efforts to promote the cause of foreign missions, are fitted to advance the interests of the church at home."<sup>39</sup>

Green explained to his audience, which included many pastors, how support for foreign missions could make it possible for a congregation to support its own minister:

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<sup>36</sup> G., "Influence of the Spirit," 386.

<sup>37</sup> Bardwell, Duty, 11, 13-15.

<sup>38</sup> G., "Influence of the Spirit," 386.

<sup>39</sup> B. Green, Sermon, 1826, Rutland FMS, 4.

You wish to form an association in your parish, auxiliary to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. . . . You collect your people together, and direct their attention to the condition . . . of pagan men and women. You hold up to view the . . . affecting contrast which prevails between the heathen and christian community in the privileges and blessings of this life, and in the hopes and expectations of the future. . . . You plead with them to do something to send the Gospel to the pagans. . . . Your words are heard--your plea is felt. One individual after another comes forward and gives something to promote the cause of foreign missions. . . . One and another will retire from the missionary meeting, moved with reflections, like the following . . . Is it true, that I am indebted to christian influence for the best blessings of this life, as well as for the hope of a happy immortality beyond the grave? And have I this day made *an effort*, to dispel the darkness which broods over the poor and pagan--to enrich him with the privileges and hopes, with which I myself am blessed? Let me, then, henceforward feel more deeply than ever my own obligation to the Gospel. I will bind it to my heart. I will think no exertion,--no sacrifice too great to be made, to perpetuate and sustain its institutions. While I make efforts to send messengers of mercy to the perishing heathen, I will love, honor, and support the christian minister, who is exhausting his strength and expending his resources to advance *my* religious interests.<sup>40</sup>

Green concluded from this hypothetical story, "The efforts which any christian community may take to promote the cause of foreign missions, cannot fail to elevate and enlarge their views of the unutterable worth of the institutions of the Gospel."<sup>41</sup>

The Missionary Herald article contended that promotion of foreign missions led to support for domestic missions:

Our own churches have done something to evangelize the heathen. And what in regard to *domestic* objects of distress has been the consequence? In one city, an asylum . . . of the deaf and dumb has been

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 6-7.

erected. In another, the doors of a refuge for penitent, abandoned, helpless *Magdalens*, has been opened. In a third, a retreat for those, who are subject to the nameless horrors of insanity, is provided. In all our large towns, efforts . . . are made, to enrich the minds, and cultivate the hearts, of the children of the poor. Here and there, a house of worship for the religious instruction of mariners has been built. The interests of domestic missions have been cherished and promoted. And Christian kindness has found tears to shed over the wretchedness and wrongs of the poor African; and a hand to lead him to the shores of his own beloved country.<sup>42</sup>

What was the connection between foreign missions and these domestic benevolences? The article asserted that these institutions grew out of a new "order of things," of which foreign missions was the fountain, seat of life, and main spring. Also, the supporters of foreign missions were the strong supporters of these other benevolences. This increased support for the home church and domestic missions was a sign of the central reflex influence: growth in the individual believer's relationship with God.

The reflex influence of missions was a generally understood and frequently discussed subject in nineteenth-century American Protestantism. Its reality was acknowledged even by critics of foreign missions,<sup>43</sup> and it continued to be discussed into the twentieth-century.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> G., "Influence of the Spirit," 383-84.

<sup>43</sup> J. Q. D., pseud., Review of A Sermon on the Present Crisis in the Missionary Operations of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, by Rufus Anderson, Christian Examiner 3d ser., 11 [29] (1840-41): 53.

<sup>44</sup> World Missionary Conference, 1910, Reports, vol. 6, The Home Base of Foreign Missions (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 258.