CHAPTER FIVE

READING FOR DEVOTION AND FOR ACTION

Devotional reading contributes to the development of a person's inner relationship with God. The missionary movement nurtured and altered the piety of its supporters through the reading of its literature. The missionary movement produced much religious literature in the first half of the nineteenth century, including periodicals, biography, tracts, sermons, juvenile literature, annual reports, literature of travel, geography and history, and documents such as circulars, instructions to missionaries, and policy papers. The American Board was a major producer of this literature, and cooperated with Sunday School and Tract Societies, which also produced missionary literature. This literature deepened the faith of its readers, made their piety more active, their devotion more total, and their vision more global.

I. TRANSFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS LITERATURE

Evangelical Protestants in the Reformed tradition had a rich library of devotional literature before the missionary movement began. It was literature

designed to prepare the heart and mind for meditation, and to guide a person in self-examination. For Protestants, reading began with the Bible, and included the catechism (Westminster Shorter Catechism or Heidelberg Catechism) and the hymnal. Other devotional literature widely read when the missionary movement began, and throughout this period included: Richard Baxter's (1615-1691) A Call to the Unconverted to Turn and Live, John Bunyan's (1628-1668) Pilgrim's Progress, Joseph Alleine's (1634-1668) An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners, Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest, and Philip Doddridge's (1702-1751) The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.[1] Four of these were

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[1] These were the American Tract Society's most popular devotional tracts up to 1850. The ATS had by that date published the following numbers of these works. The year in which the ATS first published them is in parentheses:

Baxter's	Call	(1832)	329,633
Bunyan's	Pilgrim's Progress	(1832)	166,916
Alleine's	Alarm	(1834)	165,427
Baxter's	Saints' Rest	(1829)	145,394
Doddridge's	Rise and Progress	(1828)	125,959

In addition to publications by the ATS, NUC, which does not claim to be complete, lists the following numbers of editions of these works published in the United States from 1790 to 1850:

Bunyan's	Pilgrim's Progress	97

the products of seventeenth century Puritanism, while Doddridge's was from the eighteenth century awakenings. This literature warned the reader of the torments of hell, pointed to the necessity of a relationship with Christ in one's heart, lifted up the cross and the atonement as the way to salvation, and advised the reader to live completely for Christ. The memoirs of persons involved in the missionary movement in this period indicate a familiarity with these five devotional guides.

Although the piety of the friends of mission had been shaped by this literature, the missionary movement produced reading material that contrasted sharply with it, and which only with difficulty can be described as "devotional." The old literature guided the pilgrim in her or his inner journey; the new literature showed the way to *duty,* which was usually expressed in *action.* The missionary movement provided action-oriented literature for an energetic nation.

Rise of the Religious Press

American religious journalism began with New York's Theological Magazine in 1795, which lasted to 1799. The dissemination of news of missions and revivals began with the New York Missionary Magazine and the Connecticut

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Doddridge's	Rise and Progress	46
Baxter's	Saints' Rest	42
Baxter's	Call	37
Alleine's	Alarm	5.

Evangelical Magazine in 1800. The rise of the religious press in the United States was closely related to the rise of the Second Great Awakening and the missionary movement.

Samuel M. Worcester, in his biography of his father, Samuel Worcester, said that it was no accident that the Awakening rose with the press. He asserted that there were revivals in many churches before this time, but,

> partly, if not chiefly, because there were no magazines or other publications, to diffuse religious intelligence,--the records or memorials of numerous and delightful visitations of the Spirit, were private rather than public, and known only to a very limited extent.[2]

The rise of the religious press created a public record of revivals of religion; the absence of such reports before the rise of the press created the inaccurate impression that there were no revivals. The press created the Awakening by giving it a public record, and also by promoting it. Reports of revivals in one place encouraged others in their prayers for revival, and had a snow-ball effect.

The religious periodicals were the first to claim that they were playing an important role in the advancement of the kingdom of God. In its first year of operation, 1800, the New York Missionary Magazine carried an article, "On the Coming of the Redeemer's Kingdom; and the Publication of Religious Magazines as the Most Likely Mean to Promote that Event."[3] The introductory editorial of

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[2] S. M. Worcester, Samuel Worcester, 1:103.

[3] Sperans, pseud., "On the Coming of the Redeemer's Kingdom; and the Publication of Religious Magazines as the Most Likely Mean to Promote That Event," New York Missionary

the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine in 1800 explained that religious periodicals inspired Christians to greater advances in love for Christ:

> And, perhaps, there are no better means for increasing the flames of Christian love still higher, than such a periodical history of the state of religion, in our own churches, and through the world as will be attempted in this work.[4]

The religious press did not perceive itself as a neutral observer: its mission was to fan the flames of religion.

Twenty-two years later, when the religious landscape of America had been transformed, the Christian Herald looked back and congratulated the religious press for its work:

> If, in political economy, the individual be counted a benefactor to his country, who makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew previous to cultivation, how much more should those persons be deemed benefactors to mankind, who, by a wise direction of the periodical press, shall elicit from the grasp of parsimony two talents for the Lord's treasury, where only one, or perhaps none, had before been contributed?[5]

By 1833 the American Quarterly Register counted thirty-eight periodicals in the United States, at least thirty of which were religious.[6] Reports of revivals and of missions were printed in the religious periodicals across the country, as

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Magazine 1 (1800): 257.

[4] "Introduction," CEM 1 (1800-01): 5.

[5] "Preface," Christian Herald 9 (1822-23): [preface].

[6] "Reviews and Magazines," AQR 6 (1833-34): 36-38.

they all felt at liberty to reproduce whatever they wished from each other.

The American Board's principal contribution to religious journalism was the Missionary Herald, which suceeded the Panoplist in 1821. The circulation of 12,000 a month through the 1820s increased to 20,000 in 1834, and peaked at 24,000 in 1841. In that year the Board began publishing Dayspring, a much briefer report of mission highlights. By 1850 the Board had distributed over 5.8 million copies of the Missionary Herald and over 5.1 million copies of Dayspring. The Board always considered the widest possible circulation of the Missionary Herald to be the best method of disseminating missionary information. Free subscriptions were granted to persons contributing or collecting certain amounts of money for the Board. In 1841 editor David Greene reported to the Board,

> Aside from the Missionary Herald, there is no vehicle by which missionary information is systematically and widely disseminated among the patrons and friends of the Board. . . . It is well received: and nearly twice as many copies of it are issued, as of any similar periodical in this country or England.[7]

The content of the Panoplist/Missionary Herald evolved from traditional devotional and theological reading, to missionary intelligence. The contents of volume six of the Panoplist (1810-11), the last volume completed before the embarkation of the first missionaries, by per cent of column inches was:

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[7] David Greene, "The Importance of a Wider Dissemination of Missionary Intelligence," AR 1841:39.

Composition of Panoplist volume 6 (1810-11)

Essays and editorials	34%
Book reviews and literary intelligence	32%
Religious biography and obituaries	15%
Proceedings of missionary societies, etc.	15%
Other material	4%

Essays and editorials included meditations on verses of scripture, discussion of theological concepts, and guidance on living a pious life.[8] The book reviews and essays revealed an interest in missions, but an even greater interest in defending orthodox Calvinism against Unitarians and Universalists.

Over the next forty years, this periodical came to be dominated by letters from missionaries, journals of missionaries, and reports of missions, in the following table called "missionary intelligence":

Proportion of Panoplist/Missionary Herald Devoted to Missionary Intelligence

Volume for:	1810/11	1820	1830	1840	1850
ABCFM	--	28%	54%	70%	81%
Other societies	15%	09%	23%	07%	01%

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Some titles include: "Dialogue on Universal Salvation," "Lectures on the Evidences of Divine Revelation," "An Address to Young Persons Who Have Lately Made a Profession of Religion," "Redemption," "On Vital Religion."

Total	15%	37%	77%	77%	82%

These figures do not include the "home proceedings" of the American Board or lists of donations.[9]

The principal content of the Missionary Herald became first hand reports from the mission field. There was a marked difference between this material and traditional Calvinist journals. David Brainerd's eighteenth century journal was primarily about his inner spiritual life, and contained very little about the Indians or his work with them. The missionary journals and letters in the Missionary Herald were vivid. They described the scenery, travel experiences, the customs of the people, their religious practices and beliefs, and their languages. Through the pages of the Missionary Herald, the reader was introduced to all classes of people whom the missionaries encountered, from kings to beggars. The missionaries observed, noted, and reported the meteorology, geology, archeology, botany, ethnology and religions of the world. There was the routine to report, whether it be planting potatoes or parsing the verbs of a new language.

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[9] The complete figures are:

Proportion of Panoplist/Missionary Herald devoted to ABCFM

Volume for:	1810/11	1820	1830	1840	1850
Missionary intelligence		--	28%	54%	70%	81%
Home proceedings		00.4%	05%	08%	07%	05%
Donations		--	09%	06%	09%	10%
Other		--	--	02%	04%	--
Total		00.4%	42%	70%	90%	96%.

But there was adventure too. Opposition from government and religious leaders had to be faced. Natives who believed the missionaries' message faced persecution and danger from the community. Like the apostle Paul before them, some of the missionaries became acquainted with jail cells, and some pleaded the Christian case to the powerful. Standing on the Word of God, the missionaries prophetically condemned both the idolatry of the natives and the exploitation of the colonial powers.

Reading the Missionary Herald was like reading an adventure story. But unlike other adventure stories, one couldn't turn to the last page to find out how the story ended. It was still going on. The missionaries were still at their stations, facing new hardships and challenges every day. Unlike the case with a fictional adventure story, readers could actually participate in the outcome of the missionary story they were reading. The reader could pray for the missionary; the reader could contribute financially to support the missionary. Never before had readers been able to participate so fully in the adventure they were reading.[10]

The missionary letters and journals gave readers a feeling of personal involvement in missions. Through letters, the missionaries became known as

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[10] For a discussion of this participatory reading, with reference to the letters of Ann Hasseltine Judson, see: Joan Jacobs Brumberg, "The Case of Ann Hasseltine Judson," in Women in New Worlds: Historical Perspective on the Wesleyan Tradition, eds. Rosemary Skinner Keller, Louise L. Queen, and Hilah F. Thomas, 2:234-48 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982).

personalities, toward whom the readers could feel admiration and affection. For many readers of the Missionary Herald, support for *missions* was support for *missionaries.* The Missionary Herald was the communication link between missionary and supporter that nourished the latter's devotion and involvement.

Foreign missions altered the piety of American Protestants through the spiritual discipline of reading. The old devotional literature guided the reader to look inward, to the spiritual relationship with God. The new missionary literature caused the reader to look outward, to see the hand of God at work in the world. The old literature moved the reader to live a Christian life in the world as a result of the devotion of the closet. With this new literature, the reader retired to the closet for self-examination, as the result of a greater awareness of how God was at work in the world.

The old reading material had emphasized the inner struggle of faith. That was still important, but it was now placed in a global context. The inner struggle between pride and surrender was taking place in the hearts of the great and the small, all around the world. The missionary literature emphasized *action*--living one's faith in the world. The nineteenth century believer did not just contemplate the saints' everlasting rest in heaven, but actively labored for the reign of Christ in

this world. *This world*--with all its beauty and exotic places--*this world*--with its barbaric cruelty and occasional surprising kindness--was the arena of the great conflict between good and evil. The believer participated in this holy war, not only in times of self-examination, but also by supporting missions.

Tracts and Their Uses

When Gordon Hall wrote from Bombay to the Society of Inquiry at Andover in 1815, he sketched a plan to arouse the missionary spirit at home. One piece of that plan was the publication of tracts:

> Small pamphlets on the subject should be prepared with the greatest care and ability; printed in great numbers and in constant succession; gratuitously distributed; put into the hands of every minister of every persuasion to be distributed in every corner of the country.[11]

Hall and his colleague Samuel Newell soon prepared a tract and mailed it to Boston. On 11 February 1818 the Prudential Committee authorized the publication of this, their first tract, The Conversion of the World: The Claims of Six Hundred Millions.[12]

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[11] Bardwell, Memoir of Hall, 135.

[12] PC 1:87. Two editions were printed in 1818. Another edition was authorized 22 Nov. 1820--PC 1:121. The New England Tract Society began publication of this tract in 1822 (tract no. 138). The ATS assumed publication in 1826, and by 1850 had issued 62,000 copies.

Within a year of the first publication of Conversion of the World, a young physician in New York City, while visiting a patient, happened to see a copy of it. The physician's encounter with the tract was described in his biography:

> Visiting professionally a Christian lady, he found in her room a tract or little book entitled 'The Conversion of the World, or the Claims of Six Hundred Millions.' He borrowed it, read it and re-read it, until it entered the very depths of his soul. It was like a lightning flash from heaven. He heard the call, 'Come over and help us!' Falling on his knees he cried, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' Silently, but emphatically, something said to him, 'Go and preach the Gospel to the heathen.' What was he that he could withstand this mandate, which day and night rung in his ear, and rolled through the depths of his soul?[13]

In this way John Scudder (1793-1855) became a missionary of the American Board, and through him the Reformed Dutch Church entered foreign missions. Conversion of the World was distributed widely by the Board's agents and friends, and caused many to become more involved in missions. It was also published in England, where LMS Secretary George Burder (1752-1832) asserted it had "helped to fan the flames of missionary zeal in England."[14]

The ABCFM produced a great variety of tracts. In 1824 they began a series of "Missionary Papers," and by 1841 they had produced 532,250 copies of twenty-three Missionary Papers. In April of 1832 the Board began producing four page "Monthly Papers," which later became "Quarterly Papers," and continued

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13 Waterbury, Memoir of Scudder, 26-27.

14 George Burder, "Letters on Missions," RI 6 (1821-22): 41.

until number twenty-four in June of 1836. Agents and other friends of mission distributed 590,000 copies of these inexpensive tracts. Some of the Board's tracts were sermons, some were biographies of native Christians, some were Board circulars, some were policy statements, some were excerpts from the annual reports. Some discussed determination of duty with regard to becoming a missionary. Some others discussed the responsible Christian use of property. They were all short, personal, emphatic appeals for support.

Jeremiah Evarts as corresponding secretary occasionally printed the conclusion of the annual report as a tract, and also began the Missionary Papers. But when the Brethren-generation came to leadership, they produced and circulated a larger quantity of Missionary Papers and began the Quarterly Papers. The distribution of tracts became a major activity of the Board's agents. They normally left handfuls of tracts with friends of mission in each place they visited. The letters of permanent agents to the secretaries repeatedly requested tracts by name, in the thousands.

In December 1832, ABCFM agent Artemas Bullard reported that members of a student missionary society at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, had proposed to distribute ABCFM tracts to every Presbyterian family in Kentucky, over their school vacation. The students would do the labor and pay one-third

the cost of the tracts.[15] Students at other schools, including female seminaries, became similarly involved.[16] The distribution of tracts became another expression of the activist piety of the missionary movement.

In the premier missionary tract, The Conversion of the World, Hall and Newell presented an argument which was both passionate and carefully reasoned. They made two important points. First, *"It is the duty of the churches to send forth preachers of the gospel in such numbers as to furnish the means of instruction and salvation to the whole world."*[17] They saw the Gospel of Christ as the remedy "for the disorders of our fallen world." But just sending Bibles was not enough--the Gospel had to be enforced by preaching. Hall and Newell calculated that to evangelize the six hundred million non-Christians of the world, thirty thousand missionaries were needed. But there were at the time only 357.

Hall and Newell then proceeded to their second point: *"The churches are able to furnish the requisite number of Missionaries for evangelizing all nations."*[18] They calculated that if each evangelical church in the United States and Europe

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15 Artemas Bullard to Benjamin B. Wisner, 16 Dec. 1832, ABC, ser. 12.1, vol. 5.

16 Artemas Bullard to William J. Armstrong, 10 Aug. 1836, ABC, ser. 12.1, vol. 5.

17 Gordon Hall and Samuel Newell, The Conversion of the World: or The Claims of Six Hundred Millions and the Ability and Duty of the Christians Respecting Them (Andover: for the ABCFM by Flagg & Gould, 1818), 5.

18 Ibid., 17.

of 150 members would put one person through college and seminary every seven years, the needed supply of missionaries would be achieved in twenty-one years. They pointed to three sources of funds as wholly adequate for the churches to support the students for ministry and the missionaries: "These are *first* a trifling increase of their industry; *secondly* a very little more frugality and self-denial, in their manner of living; and *thirdly,* by appropriating a small part of their annual income to the object."[19]

Hall and Newell had presented to all who would read, a clear, definable goal, and had demonstrated that the goal was achievable. The missionary work was closely associated with the deepest motives of benevolence and the highest conceptions of the millennium held by evangelical Protestants. Such an appeal could, and did, have an impact on serious Christians. Presented with a challenge for action deeply rooted in their faith, many were moved like John Scudder to self-examination.

Later tracts repeated and expanded on the themes in Conversion of the World, calling readers to both action and self examination. In the conclusion to the 1820 annual report, which was printed as a tract, Samuel Worcester declared that everyone could in some way participate in this cause: "No person on earth

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[19] Ibid., 20.

is in a condition too high to take part in this work--none in a condition too low."[20] When a Christian May Be Said to Have Done His Duty to the Heathen, an early Missionary Paper by David Greene, called for specific action. The private Christian should (1) keep informed, (2) "feel" for those who do not know Christ, (3) pray for them, and (4) "soberly calculate" what he or she can do.[21] This fourth point applied to financial contributions and other activity. It was not enough to do what was convenient, if one wished to do one's duty. Greene implied that missions required a person to go to one's closet in order to consider what one could sacrificially do.

Toward the end of the period under study, the tracts were not so much an appeal to support missions, as they were an appeal to do more. In The Redeemer's Last Command, John Scudder, addressing a different group in each chapter, advised mothers and Sabbath School teachers on how to promote a

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AR 1820:77. A Missionary Paper said of the Great Commission: "It is addressed . . . with equal emphasis to man and woman, to minister and people, to saint and sinner, to all who have substance to give, or influence to exert, or hearts to pray, for the perishing heathen."--Isaac Bird, The Savior's Injunction to His Disciples, Missionary Papers, ABCFM, no. 4, 5th ed.(Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 10. The ABCFM published 26,000 copies of this Missionary Paper.

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[David Greene], When a Christian May Be Said to Have Done His Duty to the Heathen, 3d ed. (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1831), 19-23. The ABCFM published at least 31,000 copies of this tract.

missionary spirit among the young.[22] A tract by the missionaries to Hawaii, written in 1836 and published in 1849, spoke prophetically and bitterly to the American church of the need for much more labor: "Missions must remove the wealth of America, lest the people die under its pressure. They must rise up and act, or they will perish of very fatness."[23] This tract was printed privately, not by the Board.

Over the years, missionary tracts presented the case for missions, and answered objections. They appealed for greater support and personal involvement in the missionary movement; they called for deeper self examination to determine one's duty. Missions were first of all a matter of the heart. and the feelings of the heart were to be expressed in action.

Children, Reading, and Missions

Children became active participants in the missionary movement, in part through reading missionary literature prepared specifically for children. The American Board did not directly produce juvenile literature, but consulted closely

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John Scudder, The Redeemer's Last Command (New York: ATS, [1846]), 10-40, 50-53. The ATS printed 17,998 copies by 1850. One chapter was also printed as Appeal to Mothers, and the ATS by 1850 produced 21,849.

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ABCFM, Sandwich Islands Mission, The Heathen Nations: or, Duty of the Present Generation to Evangelize the World, 3d ed. (Oberlin: James M. Fitch, 1849), 29-30.

with the publishers of Sunday School materials in Massachusetts, who produced books for children on the missions of the Board.

The story of the development of juvenile missionary literature begins with Artemas Bullard and his extended family. The son of a physician of the same name, Artemas Bullard was born on 3 June 1802, and grew up in Sutton, Massachusetts, where his family practiced a vital and exuberant Christian family life. Artemas' brother Asa Bullard (1804-1888) later recalled their family altar, "The influence of that daily reading of the Scripture and prayer, generally both morning and evening, and the asking of a blessing and the returning of thanks at every meal, was most indelible."[24] Each morning the father read from Scott's Family Bible, and every Sunday the family went to church. The parents were strict but loving, showing an unusual interest in their children. Asa recalled,

> Very likely many in our neighborhood thought we were brought up very strictly. But all we children knew about it was there were certain amusements that the children and young people around us were accustomed to indulge in, that our parents did not think proper for us; and so they would always provide for us some other and safer enjoyments.[25]

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[24] Asa Bullard, Incidents in a Busy Life: An Autobiography (Boston and Chicago: Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society, 1888), 15.

[25] Asa Bullard, Incidents, 43-44. For a description of these activities see 44-46. See also: S., pseud., "History of a Friend's Family," Sabbath School Treasury 2 (1829): 42-44, 65-66, 90-91, 130-31, 203-04. Although the latter family is not identified, it so closely resembles Asa Bullard's account of his family, sometimes word for word, and the identification of where the children are in education and careers, makes the identification with the Bullard family certain.

Alternative activities on holidays, and family reading on winter evenings were important memories of the Bullard children. Artemas, Asa and their brothers and sisters had been raised with devout piety, and an exuberant love of fun, in a child-centered family. Both of these brothers carried that spirit into their careers as Sunday School promoters.

Young Artemas professed his faith at the Congregational Church when he was seventeen. With his Amherst College room mate and close "Chum" at Andover Seminary Elijah Coleman Bridgman (1801-1861), Bullard joined the society of the Brethren. He later wrote of himself and Bridgman, "we had expected to spend our lives together in some heathen land."[26] But that was not to be. Bullard accepted the position of corresponding secretary with the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union (MSSU).

The MSSU was a Congregationalist-Baptist joint venture. Under Artemas Bullard's leadership, a publishing committee was organized in 1828. The Union produced a large number of books for children on the subjects of missions, the various benevolent societies, and stewardship. Artemas Bullard's wife, Anne

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[26] Elijah Coleman Bridgman, "Extracts from a Letter to the Editor, Written by Rev. E. C. Bridgman, Missionary in Canton, China," Sabbath School Treasury 4 (1831): 39 n.

Tuttle Jones Bullard, and his aunt, Sarah Tuttle,[27] produced most of the books on these subjects.

In 1832, on Artemas Bullard's initiative, the Baptist-Congregational cooperation in the MSSU ended.[28] The Baptists retained the name, and the Congregationalists became the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society (MSSS). Congregationalists felt a need for an exclusively Congregational publishing house, which the MSSS became.[29]

When Artemas Bullard became a permanent agent for the ABCFM in 1832, he continued to have close ties to the MSSS. Wisner wrote to Bullard on 6 March 1833 that the American Sunday School Union had complained about Bullard recommending the books of the MSSS.[30] Bullard replied on 10 April 1833, "I have frequently recommended the missionary books of the

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She is referred to as "Aunt Tuttle" in: Elijah Coleman Bridgman to Artemas Bullard, 1 April 1831, Artemas Bullard Papers, series 1, folder 2. Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pa.

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MSSU. Annual Report 1832:15; Minutes of a Convention, Held in the Federal Street Baptist Meeting-house, Boston, May 30, 1832, to form a Sabbath School Union in the Baptist Denomination in Massachusetts (Boston: J. Howe, 1832), 7.

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A Brief History of the Mass. Sabbath School Society, and the Rise and Progress of Sabbath Schools in the Orthodox Congregational Denomination in Massachusetts (Boston: MSSS, 1850), 8,12-13.

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Benjamin B. Wisner to Artemas Bullard, 6 March 1833, ABC, ser. 7 vol. 1, p. 63.

Mass[achusetts] Soc[iety] + have engaged several booksellers to keep them."[31] He had received 1,400 books from the Society in October 1832, and another order late in 1833,[32] mostly books about missions by his relatives.

Beginning in 1830 and over the next decade, Sarah Tuttle wrote eighteen books for children on the missions of the American Board, and nine other books on related mission themes. She wrote the books in dialogue form, as a mother talking to her children. They were sensitive to a child's short attention span, and encouraged a child's natural curiosity. For example, Letters and Conversations on the Ceylon Mission, was the story of a family whose father was a merchant on the high seas. Over a period of several days, the family read a packet of letters from their father, in which he described the ABCFM mission in Sri Lanka. These letters were, in fact, based on the missionary journals that had appeared in the Missionary Herald. The children interrupted with questions, which gave the mother opportunity to explain things. A neighbor who was not a supporter of missions, provided the opportunity for dialogue on the merits of missions. When the father returned, there were lively discussions on how children could raise money for missions.[33]

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[31] Artemas Bullard to Benjamin B. Wisner, 10 April 1833, ABC, ser. 12.1, vol. 5.

[32] Shipping orders, Bullard Papers, ser. 1 folder 14,15.

[33] [Sarah Tuttle], Letters and Conversations on the Ceylon Mission (Boston: MSSU, 1830).

In 1831 the MSSU published Louisa Ralston, by Anne Tuttle Jones Bullard. With narrative and dialogue, this book for children explained the basic principles of stewardship which were then developing in the missionary movement. Louisa Ralston was a young new Christian who asked the question, "What portion of her time and money, if any, should she devote to the cause of Christ?"[34] Louisa visited a family where the children received payment for doing jobs around the house, and allowances, and used these to support missions. Each member of the family, from the parents to the smallest child, took their turn explaining stewardship to Louisa. They introduced Louisa to relevant Scriptures, to proportionate giving, to dedicating the fruit of certain trees to certain missions, to retrenchment of expenses, and to producing things to sell in order to benefit missions. In Louisa Ralston, the support of missions was a family discipline and the source of much joy and excitement in the family.

A review of MSSU mission books in the Missionary Herald in 1830 observed, "The character of the child is affected by the objects which are presented to his mind, and kept there to excite thought, feeling, and action." Books on missions written for children broadened their horizons, and encourage

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[34] [Anne Tuttle Jones Bullard], Louisa Ralston; or, What Can I Do for the Heathen? 2d ed. (Boston: MSSS, 1833), 10.

them, "to feel a responsibility not only for being honest, industrious, and moral, but also *for benefiting mankind.*"[35]

In their 1832 Annual Report, the MSSU noted that their books on missions for children had a nationwide distribution. As a result, children were giving to missions, and some children had resolved to become missionaries. Furthermore, "In some portions of the country these publications have furnished adults with nearly all the information they have ever had respecting the benevolent efforts of the present day." Also, "Ministers frequently procure these histories for their own use while making preparation for their monthly concerts."[36] A review in Spirit of the Pilgrims in 1832 noted that the main purpose of juvenile missionary literature was to create interest among the young, and in this way create a new generation committed to missions. However, these books should not be written just for children, as they, "are carried by the children to their homes, and furnish no inconsiderable portion of the reading of parents and teachers, and other members of families."[37]

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35 "Books on Missionary Subjects, Designed for the Young," MH 26 (1830): 61.

36 MSSU. Annual Report 1832:14-15.

37 Review of Publications of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union, Spirit of the Pilgrims 5 (1832): 346.

This new literature had embraced children as children, with their "eager and playful"[38] nature, shorter attention span, limited vocabulary,[39] and interest in active stories. These dialogues modeled a learning environment in which children were free to interrupt and ask any question, and express their views. Children were challenged to take an interest in the world and to feel empathy for persons in other places. They were shown that in spite of their powerlessness and dependence in much of life, when it came to missions there was something they could do.

New Ways of Reading

Reading could be done in the closet, and during occasional moments of free time during the week, but the Sabbath was a particularly important time for reading. In a devout household, the Sabbath was a day for rest and religious duties, not for pleasing amusements. The whole day was devoted to one's relationship with God. One did not read whatever one chose on the Sabbath: worldly books and secular newspapers were forbidden. However reading that

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"Novel Tract Publication," American Tract Magazine 5 (1830): 110. These words are used in a review of an earlier work by Anne Bullard, The Stanwood Family: or, The History of the American Tract Society (Boston: MSSU, 1830).

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Sarah Tuttle's Letters on Ceylon, was written on a seventh grade reading level, and Anne Bullard's Louisa Ralston, on an eighth grade reading level, using the Fry Readability Scale.

elevated one's soul, and drew one closer to God, was desirable.[40] For hard working American Protestants, the enforced rest of the Sabbath was an incentive to read.

In 1823 Richmond's Evangelical and Literary Magazine carried a protest from one subscriber, "against the present style and manner of Missionary Journals, and the letters of Missionaries, such as are commonly published in the vehicles of religious intelligence."[41] The anonymous author's complaint had to do with the custom of reading missionary literature on the Sabbath:

> In the first place, these things are read, and they will be read on the Sabbath. . . . In general, these documents are journals of the daily work, of the ordinary secular employments of the missionaries, such as planting corn, hoeing potatoes, clearing up new ground, building houses, &c. &c. And this in general, is the *Sabbath day reading* of a great many subscribers to religious magazines and newspapers.[42]

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George Burder, On the Lord's Day, Publications of the ATS, no. 8 (New York: ATS, [1825]), 2-3; Remember the Sabbath Day, to Keep It Holy, Publications of the ATS, no. 20 (New York: ATS, [1825]), 1-2; Gardiner Spring, The Sabbath a Blessing to Mankind, Publications of the ATS, no. 37 (New York: ATS, [1825]), 1; [Hans Hamilton], Sabbath Occupations, Publications of the ATS, no. 116 (New York: ATS, [1826]), 10-11; William Nevins, Don't Break the Sabbath, Publications of the ATS, no. 334 (New York: ATS, [1836]), 7. Tracts nos. 8 and 116 were previously published by the Religious Tract Society (London). Tracts nos. 8 and 20 were previously published by the New England Tract Society in 1814. By 1850 the ATS had published 524,000 copies of no. 8, 224,000 copies of no. 20, 124,000 copies of no. 37, 164,000 copies of no. 116, and 136,000 copies of no. 334.

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Holem, pseud. "Remarks on Missionary Affairs," Evangelical and Literary Magazine 6 (1823): 78.

42

Ibid.

A rebuttal in the Religious Intelligencer conceded that missionary journals may contain some material "which had better be laid aside on the Sabbath," but added, "it does not follow, that the perusal of every secular incident is a profanation of the Sabbath."[43] This author referred to the shipwreck of the Apostle Paul, described in the Acts of the Apostles, which account included many secular matters. But being in the Bible it could be read on the Sabbath.

The rise of missionary literature had unquestionably brought about a change in the content of Sabbath reading. Young and old alike found the missionary journals and biographies to be more interesting than sermons, Bible commentaries, and advice on pious living. Although some of the missionaries' activities and observations might be called "secular," everything they did was contributing to a holy purpose. In spite of criticisms, the missionary literature became widely used for Sabbath reading.

Another setting influenced by missionary literature was the "family altar," or family worship. A series of articles in the Evangelical and Literary Magazine for 1826, described a family which gathered to study missions every Saturday night, followed by family prayer. It was described through the eyes of a visitor:

> As soon as tea was over, I observed a considerable bustle among the children, and an eagerness in their countenances, which showed expectation of promised pleasure. My friend, in explanation, observed that he was endeavoring to excite in his children an interest in the cause of

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43 "On the Journals of Missionaries," RI 8 (1823-24): 43.

> christian benevolence, and at the same time to make use of it for their mental improvement. [']I have engaged to give my Saturday evenings to this employment; and I always keep my word with children.['][44]

With a large atlas, and a number of religious magazines and newspapers on the table, a very active discussion followed, for which the older children had done some preparatory reading.

It is not known how common this kind of family activity was. Anne Bullard, in her Sabbath school book, Louisa Ralston, described a similar scene, in which an older sister was the teacher.[45] Missionary literature did place in the home a valuable instructional tool that uniquely combined lessons in religion and geography.

Missionary literature did create among American Protestants a new way of reading. The new literature presented factual information about the world, in order to move people to action. An article in the Panoplist, titled "On the Importance of Missionary Reading," had declared, "From the connection between *knowledge* and *action,* it is obvious, that an increase of knowledge must precede an increase in action."[46]

In instructions to agent William Armstrong, Wisner had directed him,

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[44] Epsilon, pseud., "Readings for Young People," Evangelical and Literary Magazine 9 (1826): 117.

[45] [Anne Bullard], Louisa Ralston, 102-39.

[46] F. Z., pseud., "On the Importance of Missionary Reading," Panoplist 15 (1819): 399.

> The great means of promoting the missionary Spirit is information, in regard to the State of the Heathen world, their prospects for Eternity without the Gospel, its indispensableness to their civilization, and salvation, the duty of Christians to live for this object, the real tendency of the Missionary Spirit and effects to advance religion in our own country, the openings in Providence for missionary operations, the Success that is given to them, &c. &c. on all these and kindred topics, the people need to be instructed in the very elements. . . . And remember that it is not abstract argument merely, however conclusive, that will produce and sustain interest and action on this great Subject, but chiefly well authenticated, well Selected, and well arranged facts.[47]

The missionary literature provided the reader with facts. They were facts selected and interpreted in such a way as to move the reader to look more deeply both inwardly and outwardly. Inwardly the reader was called to examine one's devotion to Christ; outwardly the reader was called upon to glorify God with acts of love to one's fellow human beings.

II. A FIRMER FAITH THROUGH READING

Promoters of missions consistently claimed that the more a person got involved in the missionary movement, the deeper and firmer one's faith grew. The discipline of reading missionary literature deepened personal faith in at least two ways. First, one read and contemplated the theological arguments for missions, which were intimately connected to the orthodoxy of the day. Second, the Bible became more interesting as one read holy land descriptions

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47 Benjamin B. Wisner to William J. Armstrong, 11 June 1834, CBFM Papers, box 1, folder 21. Copy: ABC, ser. 7, vol. 1, p. 218.

provided by the missionaries.

Reinforcing Orthodoxy

The doctrine of the missionary movement, implicit in its activity, was explicitly expressed in printed missionary sermons. The American Board published anniversary sermons, ordination sermons, farewell sermons of missionaries, funeral sermons, and other missionary sermons with no specific occasion. The Board usually printed from 1,000 to 3,000 copies of these sermons, but a few had much larger editions. Beginning in 1826, the anniversary sermons were reprinted in the National Preacher, giving them an added circulation of about 20,000. The reading of these sermons gave clarity to the believer's motives for supporting missions.

The anniversary sermons of the American Board and its auxiliaries presented the truths of Scripture as interpreted by evangelical Calvinists, beginning with the Great Commission.[48] Missionary Sermons also lifted high the

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Edward Door Griffin, A Sermon Preached September 14, 1826, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Middletown, Connecticut (Middletown, Conn.: E. & H. Clark, 1826), 3-5; Daniel Huntington, The Duty of Christians to the Jews: A Sermon, Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Palestine Missionary Society, in Halifax, Ms. June 18, 1823 (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1823), 14; William Allen, Freedom Conferred Only By the Gospel: A Sermon, Preached in New-York, Oct. 3, 1832, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Their Twenty-third Annual Meeting (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1832), 29; William McMurray, The Spiritual Contest of the Church: A Sermon Preached in Philadelphia, Sept. 18, 1833, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Their Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting (Boston: Crocker & Brewster, 1833), 4; Michael Osborne, A Sermon Preached at the First Meeting of the Central Board of Foreign

Cross of Christ. They pointed to the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ, through whose atonement the believer was saved, and millions of people of other races and places could be saved. The missionary participated in the self-emptying love of Christ, by leaving the familiar to preach Christ in a foreign land; the friend of mission shared in that same self-emptying love by making sacrifices in order to give to missions. The "constraining" love of Jesus was a theme of missionary sermons throughout this period.[49] The friend of missions was called to feel the

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Missions (Richmond: Thomas W. White, 1834), [15]-19; Skinner, Progress, 8.

[49] William Greenough, A Sermon, Preached January 12, 1814, at the Old South Church, Boston, Before the Society for Foreign Missions of Boston and the Vicinity (Boston: Nathaniel Willis, 1814), 18-20; Benjamin B. Wisner, The Moral Condition and Prospects of the Heathen: A Sermon Delivered at the Old South Church in Boston, Before the Foreign Mission Society of Boston and the Vicinity, at Their Annual Meeting, Jan. 1, 1824 (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1824), 2; Warren Fay, The Obligations of Christians to the Heathen World: a Sermon Delivered at Old South Church in Boston, Before the Auxiliary Foreign Mission Society of Boston and Vicinity, at Their Annual Meeting, January 3, 1825 (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1825), 23; W. Allen, Freedom, 25; John Codman, The Duty of American Christians to Send the Gospel to the Heathen: A Sermon Preached at Hartford, Sept. 14, 1836, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Their Twenty-seventh Annual Meeting (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1836), 19-20; John McDowell, A Sermon, Preached at Newark, N.J. Sept. 13, 1837, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Their Twenty-eighth Annual Meeting (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1837), 8; William R. DeWitt, "The Love of Christ the Motive of Missionary Effort," NP 16 (1842): 241-54; Mark Hopkins, Burdens to Be Cast Upon the Lord: A Sermon Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at the Thirty-sixth Annual Meeting, Brooklyn, N.Y., Sept., 1845 (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1845), 7-8; David Magie, "Our True Encouragement," NP 21 (1847): 224.

compassion of Christ for the worshipper of idols, because of the misery of both their temporal and eternal conditions.[50]

Then there was the millennium. Ideas about the millennium had evolved from the views of Edwards' Humble Attempt and Timothy Dwight's 1813 sermon to the Board.[51] Current events were interpreted as signs of the coming millennium. The signs changed with the times. First there were the Napoleonic Wars, the peace that followed, and the declining power of the Pope and Sultan.[52] Sereno E. Dwight (1786-1850) identified all progress as a sign to the Boston auxiliary in 1820, when he declared, "Every field that is cleared, every road that is

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Huntington, Duty, 13; Osborne, Sermon, CBFM, 32-36; Gardiner Spring, The Will of God Performed on Earth: A Sermon Preached at Utica, N.Y. Oct. 8, 1834, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at Their Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1835), 20; Codman, Duty, 17-19; McDowell, Sermon, 1837, ABCFM, 20.

51

T. Dwight, Sermon, 1813, ABCFM, 6-24; Samuel Spring, A Sermon, Preached at New Haven, Con. Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Their Ninth Annual Meeting, Sept. 10, 1818 (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1818), 4-6; Sereno E. Dwight, Thy Kingdom Come: A Sermon, Delivered in the Old South Church, Boston, Before the Foreign Missionary Society of Boston and the Vicinity, January 3, 1820 (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1820); Lyman Beecher, Resources of the Adversary, and Means of Their Destruction: A Sermon Preached October 12, 1827 Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at New York (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1827), 14-20; McMurray, Spiritual Contest, 32.

52

Joseph Lathrop, A Sermon, Preached in Springfield, Before the Bible Society, and the Foreign Missionary Society, in the County of Hampden, at Their Annual Meeting, August 31, 1814 (Springfield: Thomas Dickman, 1814), 10-15; S. Dwight, Thy Kingdom Come, 12-21; Heman Humphrey, A Sermon, Preached at Portland, Maine, Sept. 12, 1838, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at Their Twenty-ninth Annual Meeting (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1838), 21.

built, every tree that is felled, makes way for the coming of Christ."[53] The missionary movement itself as a sign of the coming kingdom was the main point of James Sabine's (1774-1845) sermon to the Boston auxiliary in 1823.[54] Conditions favorable to the spread of Christianity, such as improvements in navigation and increased use of English in commerce, also became signs of the times.[55] The morning light of this new age was figuratively seen on the horizon. It was to be brought about not by miracles but by means. Christians could not just sit and wait; they had to act. The millennium would be an age of the universal spread of the knowledge of the Lord, an age of peace, an age of

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S. Dwight, Thy Kingdom Come, 16.

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James Sabine, The Relation the Present State of Religion Bears to the Expected Millennium: A Sermon, Delivered in the Old South Church, Boston, Before the Foreign Mission Society, of Boston and the Vicinity, Jan. 8, 1823 (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1823), 7-14.

55

Jedidiah Morse, A Sermon Delivered Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at Their Annual Meeting in Springfield, Massachusetts, September 19, 1821 (Boston: George Clark, 1821), 16-18; Alexander Proudfit, The Universal Extension of Messiah's Kingdom: A Sermon, Delivered in the North Church, New-Haven, Con. Sept. 12, 1822, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Their Thirteenth Annual Meeting (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1822), 14-15, 24-25; Samuel Miller, "The Earth Filled with the Glory of the Lord," in The Missionary Enterprise, A Collection of Discourses on Christian Missions, by American Authors, ed. Baron Stow (Boston: Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, 1846), 154. The most thorough discussion of these favorable conditions is in: Hollis Read, The Hand of God in History; or, Divine Providence Historically Illustrated in the Extension and Establishment of Christianity (Hartford: H. E. Robins, 1857), 1:172-259. Vol. 1 was originally published in 1849.

brotherhood, and an age of Christian unity. A few preachers suggested that America had a special role in the millennium.[56]

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[56] Ernest Tuveson, in Redeemer Nation, argued that the United States saw itself as having a special mission to all of the world, to bring in the millennium--Tuveson, Redeemer Nation. William Hutchison pointed to a paradox in the early missionary movement, in that religious and nationalist motivations were blended, but the nationalism was tempered by internationalism--William R. Hutchison, Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions (Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 1987), 44. A survey of the sermons and other literature of the ABCFM in this period indicates the following: (1) Nationalism was not a frequent theme in the missionary literature. (2) When the advocates of mission did speak of nationalism, they expressed the common millennial views of their day. (3) Their nationalist views were tempered by the internationalism of the missionary movement.

The nationalist view included: "The American church occupies a vantage ground in the missionary enterprise, which is not possessed by any other portion of Christendom; and it is the special duty of its members to improve the advantages they enjoy in bringing back the revolted world to the allegiance of its rightful Sovereign."--Codman, Duty, 4-5. John Holt Rice spoke of the peculiar duty of Christians to evangelize the world, to make this country a blessing to the nations--John Holt Rice, The Power of Truth and Love: A Sermon Preached at Philadelphia, Oct. 1, 1828 at the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1828), 19-20. "Our blessed freedom, blood-bought in more senses than one, had heaven for its source, the gospel for its medium, the reformation for its atmosphere, salvation for its crown, and for its author and dispenser God alone! It was the influence of the puritan's Bible, it was the fruit of Christianity."--Samuel Hanson Cox, The Bright and Blessed Destination of the World: A Discourse Delivered at Pittsfield, Mass., on the Evening of Tuesday, Sept. 11, 1849, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (New York: John F. Trow, 1849), 41. Hollis Read described the discovery of America as part of God's plan, explaining, "Religion can thrive and expand itself in all its native luxuriance, only in the atmosphere of political freedom and religious tolerance, and where social rights are not systematically invaded, and social intercourse trammeled by aristocratic pride."--Read, Hand of God, 1:34.

Not all missionary preachers were prepared to weave together Christianity and democracy. Mark Hopkins complained, "There is evidently a kind of worship of democracy, and even an endeavor on the part of some to identify it with Christianity, without reference to the materials of which it is composed."--M. Hopkins, Burdens, 27. He then launched into a critique of democracy, with allusions to the French Revolution, the general idea being that democracy is no better than the people in it, so we had better preach the gospel. Nathan S. S. Beman made the point: "The Gospel has no necessary

Later preachers mentioned the millennium less often, and placed it at a greater distance. Samuel Miller, in his 1835 sermon to the Board did not use the word "millennium," but spoke of the "future prevalence and power of the gospel."[57] Albert Barnes (1798-1870) in 1844 advised the Board that this day of prevalence of the Gospel was not near, but would be completed only by "far-distant generations."[58]

The necessity of Jesus Christ for salvation was affirmed by the preachers of missionary sermons. In the 1820s several preachers acknowledged that it might be possible for persons to come to saving faith without knowledge of

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connection with any form of *human government.*"--Nathan S. S. Beman, "The Gospel Adapted to the Wants of the World A Sermon Delivered in Providence, R. I. Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Sept. 9, 1840," in The Missionary Enterprise: A Collection of Discourses on Christian Missions, by American Authors, ed. Baron Stow (Boston: Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, 1846), 219. See also: W. Allen, Freedom, 9-10.

The missionary preachers consistently identify with a larger entity than America, called "Zion," "Christendom," "Protestant Christendom," or "the Christian family." Hollis read declared, "It is a kingdom above all kingdoms of the earth, incorporating its subjects into a society of its own peculiar kind."--Read, Hand of God, 1:35. See also: Hutchison, Errand, 52. American missionary spokespersons consistently recognize the leadership of Britain in missions. They listed such factors as the spread of the English language and the British Navy as reasons why Britain and America had the responsibility at that time to conduct foreign missions.

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Miller, "Earth Filled," 145-48. See also: Humphrey, Sermon, 1838, ABCFM, 12-17; M. Hopkins, Burdens, 15-16, 26; Isaac Ferris, Thy Kingdom Come: A Discourse, Delivered at Boston, September 12, 1848, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Their Thirty-ninth Annual Meeting (Boston: T. R. Marvin, 1848).

58

Albert Barnes, "The Missionary Enterprise Dependent on the Religion of Principle for Success," NP 18 (1844): 232-33.

Christ, but this would be rare. Benjamin B. Wisner confessed to the Boston auxiliary of the Board in 1824,

> I am willing to admit the possibility of there being some, even in those regions of midnight darkness, so far enlightened by the Spirit of God, as to be sensible of their guilt, and their need of a propitiation for their sins; and to trust in the divine mercy to provide such propitiation, and, for its sake, to forgive and save them.[59]

In a note to the printed sermon, Wisner estimated,

> All the investigations of Christian missionaries in modern times have, so far as I have been able to learn, discovered but four individuals, who had not heard the gospel, of whom there was the least reason to hope that they were prepared for the kingdom of heaven.[60]

Others, while recognizing the possibility, estimated the numbers of those saved without Christ to be four less than Wisner's estimate.[61] Even these reservations faded as the missionary movement grew. More typical was John McDowell's (1780-1863) 1837 anniversary sermon, which listed abundant Scriptures (John

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[59] Wisner, Moral Condition, 34. See also: Jesse Appleton, A Sermon, Delivered at Northampton, September 18, 1817, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Charlestown, Mass.: Samuel Etheridge, 1817), 4; William Buell Sprague, A Sermon, Preached in Springfield, August 28, 1823; at the Annual Meeting of the Bible Society, the Foreign Missionary Society, and the Education Society, of the County of Hampden (Springfield: Journal, 1823), 16; Jeremiah Day, A Sermon Delivered in Boston, Sept. 17, 1823, Before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at Their Fourteenth Annual Meeting (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1823), 6-7.

[60] Wisner, Moral Condition, 34 n.

[61] Osborne, Sermon, CBFM, 23; ; E. Griffin, Sermon, 1826, ABCFM, 8; McDowell, Sermon, 1837, ABCFM,19-20.

3:36; John 14:6; Mark 16:15-16; 1 Corinthians 3:11; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 John 5:12) to support the assertion, "There is salvation in Christ *alone.*"[62]

The missionary movement reinforced the orthodox doctrinal beliefs of its supporters. Yet even the doctrine of the orthodox was influenced by foreign missions. As it became evident that each mission would entail decades--perhaps centuries--of long hard work, the millennium receded further into the future, and as Adventists advanced radically different views of the millennium, the orthodox followers of Edwards discussed it less. After appealing repeatedly for support on the basis of compassion for those damned to Hell for not hearing the Gospel, preachers closed the door to the theoretical possibility of salvation outside of Christ. Through the influence of the missionary movement, the doctrine of "Salvation in Christ Alone," became a virtual test of orthodoxy for American Protestantism.

Walking Where Jesus Walked

There was one place on the surface of the earth which for all Christians was special, and whose descriptions would always have a place in devotional

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McDowell, Sermon, 1837, ABCFM, 9. See also, 7-18, 21-24. Also: Philip M. Whelpley, A Sermon Delivered in the Murray Street Church, New York, in Behalf of the United Foreign Missionary Society, May 11th, 1823 (New York: J. Seymour, 1823), 21; Bird, Savior's Injunction, 3-6.

literature: Jerusalem. These sentiments were expressed in a letter to Samuel Worcester from the secretary of a missionary society in England:

> I am perhaps as little inclined to be romantic as any one; but I reject the apathy, which can stand unmoved amid the memorials of glory and divinity, which may still . . . be traced amid the ruins of Jerusalem. Nor can I forget, that . . . there first sprung up the fountain of celestial truth, and the streams of hope and consolation,--of life and healing, [which] have poured their spreading waters over our own beloved country, *beginning at Jerusalem.* Nor can I forget, that this propensity of the human mind to catch the inspiration of place, has incited not only to deeds of noble daring, but also of holy patience and exertion.[63]

Levi Parson's account of his visit to the holy city in holy week, published in the February 1822 issue of the Missionary Herald, and later in Memoir of Levi Parsons, created a new form of devotional reading. Here was a journal of distant explorations that illumened the words of the Bible around which the believer's devotions centered each day.

As the missionaries criss-crossed southwest Asia distributing tracts, they visited the Biblical sites. They wrote back home with a matter-of-factness, and yet with reverence, for these holy places. They looked for the locations of places mentioned in the Bible. They observed and reported every aspect of the geography of Palestine, for any insight it might give on the meaning of Bible passages. They scrutinized the customs and the speech of those who still lived in Palestine, for any further insights. These descriptions, through the pages of

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63 Nathaniel Elgar Sloper, "Letters on Missions," RI 6 (1821-22): 39. See also: Huntington, Duty, 5.

the Missionary Herald and other journals, gave to readers in America a greater knowledge of Palestinian geography, which made the Bible more interesting and more understandable.

In 1838 missionary Eli Smith (1801-1857) guided seminary professor Edward Robinson (1794-1863) through the holy land. Robinson wrote of his approach to Jerusalem:

> The feelings of a Christian traveler on approaching Jerusalem, can be better conceived than described. Mine were strongly excited. Before us, as we drew near, lay Zion, the mount of Olives, the vales of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat, and other objects of the deepest interest; while, crowning the summits of the same ancient hills, was spread out the city where God of old had dwelt, and where the Saviour of the world had lived and taught and died. From the earliest childhood I had read of and studied the localities of this sacred spot; now I beheld them with my own eyes.[64]

Robinson's child-like excitement was accompanied by a scholar's thoroughness and precision. With the help of Smith, he made a careful study of archeological remains, and identified the modern location of many places mentioned in the Bible. His multi-volume Biblical Researches in Palestine, first published in 1841,[65] became an important reference volume for Biblical scholars. As editor of Bibliotheca Sacra, Robinson continued to publish letters from Smith

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Edward Robinson, Biblical Researches in Palestine, and in the Adjacent Regions: A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838, reprint, (Boston: Crocker and Brewster; London: John Murray, 1860), 1:221.

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Published in Boston, New York, and London in 1841, and several times in the 1850s and 1860s. The edition published in 1874 is called the eleventh edition.--NUC.

on Palestinian geography. The study of geography and the study of the Bible had been linked, in a spirit of piety. In the scholars study, the Sunday School classroom, and the prayer closet, the old Bible stories received freshness from the geographical knowledge made available by the missionaries of the ABCFM.

III. A WINDOW TO THE WORLD

Americans learned about the world through missionary literature. Before the arrival of foreign correspondents, diplomats, or world travelers, the missionaries were there.[66] Raised in the small villages and hill farms of New England and New York state, the missionaries wrote in plain language their readers could understand. Having received a higher education, they objectively observed and analyzed the world around them. This discovery of the world through missionary literature had a significant impact on its readers. Today we might use the word "globalization" for this reflex influence. The readers gained knowledge of the world, an appreciation of differences and similarities, a sympathy for people in other parts of the world, and an identification with some of them.

Pity for the Misery of Non-Christians

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66 Phillips, Protestant America, 263.

Andover student Henry Lyman (1809-1834) in 1830 prepared the tract, Condition and Character of Females in Pagan and Mohammedan Countries. The Society of Inquiry had 6,000 copies printed, and soon authorized another printing of 20,000 copies. The American Baptist Tract Society, the ATS, and the ABCFM all soon published and distributed it.[67] This twelve page tract made a simple argument: with abundant documentation, Lyman demonstrated that the lot of woman in most of the world was miserable:

> Degraded in her condition;--exposed to continual persecution and insult;--deprived of all that is delightful in domestic or social life;--denied the blessings of education;--excluded from the knowledge of God and the hopes of heaven;--she is, in short, treated as a soulless being, whose highest aim should be to gratify the caprice, and obey the commands of haughty and unfeeling man.[68]

The cure for this misery was the gospel. Only in a society founded on gospel principles, could all persons be treated as persons of worth and value: "It is only by the prevalence of the gospel, that man learns that woman has a soul of an origin as high, a value as precious, a destination as lofty, and a duration as lasting as his own."[69]

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[67] [Loomis], Memoirs of American Missionaries, 36-37. The ABCFM had 31,747 copies printed from 1833 to 1836. For the ATS this became tract no. 13. Beginning publication in 1834, by 1850 they had produced 40,000 copies.

[68] [Henry Lyman], Condition and Character of Females in Pagan and Mohammedan Countries (n.p., n.d.), 7-8.

[69] Ibid., 11.

This could be called a "humanitarian" argument for Christian missions. The reader was motivated to support missions by feelings of love and pity for her or his fellow human beings. Most of the earlier rhetoric of missions spoke of benevolent effort to bring heavenly salvation to those without hope. Lyman called for the proclamation of the gospel in order to uplift the earthly plight of the most oppressed half of the human race.

Female supporters of missions--that is, between two-thirds and three-fourths of the supporters of missions who were providing half the funds--were encouraged to feel of solidarity with their sisters in non-Christian lands. For the rest of the century, women steadily pushed the mission boards to do more for women; and the boards learned that efforts on behalf of women encouraged even greater support from their constituency.

The condition of females was not the only aspect of non-Christian society to shock American Protestants. From the very beginning of the missionary movement, accounts from remote corners of the world filled them with feelings of revulsion and pity. The American Board's Quarterly Papers in the 1830s presented the misery of people in other lands as a motivation for missions. Judging by the publication record, this humanitarian argument was popular.

The Quarterly Papers of the ABCFM were four page tracts, the first page of which consisted of an illustration. The remaining three pages presented an appeal for missions based on the cover picture. The illustration on the Quarterly

Paper for September 1833 showed a woman wearing a crown, holding a small child in one hand, in a position where she appeared ready to place it into her mouth. In her other hand was the limp form of another child. In the background were two women, standing erect, with no apparent emotion. The illustration was titled: "A HEATHEN GODDESS DEVOURING CHILDREN OFFERED BY THEIR MOTHERS." The text quoted Baptist missionary William Ward's (1764-1823) description of Hindus sacrificing their children to the goddess Gunga:

> To the sacred Ganges, till English authorities put an end to the horrid practice, multitudes of children were offered every year: mothers might be seen approaching the stream, and casting their living offspring amongst a number of alligators, and standing to gaze at these monsters quarreling for their prey, beholding the writhing infant in the jaws of the successful animal, and remaining motionless while it was breaking its bones and sucking its blood.[70]

The Quarterly Paper drove home its point:

> And now, ye fathers and mothers, ye youths and little children, in this happy land, look again at the plate on the first page of this Paper; think again of the facts above detailed. And ask yourself, what it is that has made your condition so happily different. It is the influence of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And that gospel will have the same happy influence upon the poor heathen you have been contemplating.[71]

While the great object of the ABCFM was eternal salvation, many people were most effectively aroused to help the missionary cause from a humanitarian concern. It was not visions of brands plucked from the burning of hell, but of

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[70] The Sacrificing of Children to Devils, ABCFM Quarterly Paper, no. 15, p. 59.

[71] Ibid., 60.

babes plucked from the mouths of alligators, that moved practical Americans to support missions. This was still an argument for the proclamation of the gospel. Only the inner spiritual change of Christian faith could produce the desired social change. But this argument was based on fruit of regeneration that could be seen in this life, rather than on unseen fruit in the world to come.

About half of the Quarterly Papers described the religions of Asia. Other cover illustrations included one of Brahma, Visnu and Šiva, one of the Ten Incarnations of Visnu, one of Buddha, and one of Indra.

The missionaries of the American Board spent a great deal of time studying the native religions, and they were concerned that any information disseminated back home be accurate. Samuel Newell wrote from Bombay to a former school friend in Andover in 1816,

> The reading of the Hindoo books has hitherto been my principle employment, since I came to this country; and I shall probably continue to read them more or less through life. It is the intention of Mr. Hall and myself to compose a *Hindoo Pantheon,* and some other things of the kind, as soon as we feel ourselves qualified. At present we should be liable to commit endless blunders; and we think it needless to add any more to the blunders that have already been made by those who have written on India.[72]

The missionaries provided accurate and detailed information on other religions to the candidates for missionary labors and to the general reading public

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72 [Loomis], Memoirs of American Missionaries, 60.

back home.[73] Although they were careful observers, their interpretations reflected their jealousy for the One they knew as the true and sovereign God. They saw very little of the heart in the native religions, and even less that they could identify as morality. If people worshipped gods who committed every sin imaginable, how could the worshippers be expected to live moral lives? They believed that idolatry was the root cause of most of the human misery around them. Many of the popular tracts and sermons lacked the respect for other societies which the missionaries had to practice out of necessity, and lacked the careful observations of other religions that missionaries shared in their more scholarly publications.

The horrors of non-Christian religions were depicted, not to give the reader feelings of superiority, but feelings of compassion. The reader was reminded that these people were not so different:

> Christian reader, your British and Saxon ancestors were worshippers of Wodin and Thor, and a numerous rabble of pagan gods, as cruel and obscene as are the gods of the Hindoos. Your ancestors were delivered from their abominations, by the instrumentality of Christian missionaries. It is to their labors, under God, that you owe all your religious and social

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[73] The earliest such publication for the general public was: Samuel Nott, Jr., A Sermon, on the Idolatry of the Hindoos, Delivered Nov. 29, 1816 at the Annual Meeting of the Female Foreign Mission Society of Franklin, Connecticut (Norwich: Hubbard and Marvin, 1817). Nott did not try to sensationalize, and based his comments only on his personal observations and encounters with Hindus.

> privileges in this life, your peace in death, and your hope of future blessedness in heaven. 'Freely ye have received, freely give.'[74]

All the blessings of civilized American society were attributed to the gospel. The reader was called upon to put gratitude into action in love for others.

The Quarterly Papers, Lyman's tract, and other similar materials,[75] presented an argument for missions that persisted, and was given even more emphasis as the century progressed. The spiritual message of the gospel must be proclaimed, that people might be changed, that human misery in this life might be reduced. "This-worldly" aspects of salvation were emphasized. In a time when many movements for the reformation of society were undertaken, the foreign missionary movement was beginning in some ways to look like an organization for social reform. The Christian gospel was being promoted as the foundation of social order and public morality. The reader was informed of the misery of non-Christians, in order to generate feelings of compassion, that would lead to support for world evangelization.

Befriending the New Christian through Biography

74

[The Ten Incarnations of Vishnu], ABCFM Quarterly Paper, no. 7, pp. 27-28. The closing quotation is from Matthew 10:8.

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See also: Henry Brown Hooker, The Horrors of Heathenism (New York: ATS, [1833]). The ATS had produced 53,000 copies of this tract by this Congregational minister by 1850.

The biography of the native convert to evangelical Christianity became a specialized form of religious biography, with its own way of affecting the reading public. This form of biography first appeared in the United States in 1816, when the Prudential Committee authorized a tract on the Hawaiian youths studying in New England.[76] The result was A Narrative of Five Youths from the Sandwich Islands, Now Receiving an Education in This Country, which generated much support for the Foreign Mission School. The full impact of this literary form was felt when Opukahaia died in 1818, and the Religious Intelligencer published Memoirs of Henry Obookiah. Fifty thousand copies were quickly distributed.[77] Most of the first group of missionaries to depart for Hawaii in 1819 were influenced to enter missions by reading this book, and many, many more were moved by the Memoirs to provide the funds needed for the expedition.[78]

Such a powerful literary form was sure to be used again. Rufus Anderson told the story of the Board's first convert to Christianity in Memoir of Catharine

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[76] PC 1:62.

[77] Andrew, Rebuilding, 102. The Memoirs were republished the following year in New Haven and Elizabethtown, N.J. This work continued to be popular: The ASSU began to publish it in 1830; the ATS began publishing it in 1837, and by 1850 had issued 20,869 copies.

[78] [Edwin Dwight], Memoirs of Henry Obookiah, a Native of Owhyhee, and a Member of the Foreign Mission School; Who Died at Cornwall, Connecticut February 17, 1818, Aged 26 Years, reprint, (Honolulu: Women's Board of Missions for the Pacific Islands, the Hawaii Conference, United Church of Christ, 1968), xi.

Brown, first published in 1825.[79] In the first forty years of the ABCFM, at least seventeen biographies of native converts were produced, either as Missionary Herald articles, as Missionary Papers, or as books.

The first thing that can be said about these biographies is that they were interesting. These stories gave the reader a glimpse into a fascinating and different world. For example, the reader became acquainted with Cherokee John Arch (ca. 1797-1825), who before he could walk, went hunting, carried on the back of his father.[80] The reader experienced the fright of Opukahaia, who when he was ten or twelve years old saw his parents killed before his eyes, and his younger brother killed while being carried on his back.[81] And the reader learned what it was like to grow up as Hawaiian royalty, like Keopuolani, surrounded by attendants.[82]

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This Memoir was published in Boston and New York in 1825 (two editions), 1828, and 1829, and in Cincinnati in 1827, as well as several British editions--NUC 15:632. It became part of the ASSU regular offering in 1831.

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[Rufus Anderson], "Brief Memoir of John Arch, a Christian Indian of the Cherokee Nation," MH 24 (1828): 337. This memoir later appeared with two other Indian biographies in a Missionary Paper, then was published by the MSSU (1828, 1832) and MSSS (1836).

81

[Joseph Harvey], Narrative of Five Youth From the Sandwich Islands Now Receiving an Education in This Country (New York: J. Seymour, 1816), 8-9; [E. Dwight], Memoirs of Obookiah, 1-2.

82

[William Richards], Memoir of Keopuolani, Queen of the Sandwich Islands (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1833), 2-3. The Board produced 20,000 copies of this Missionary Paper.

Although these people lived in a world that was strange and different to the reader, the native Christian was remarkably like the reader in some basic ways, which relate to salvation. The introduction to Notices of Chippeway Converts made this connection explicit:

> It is interesting to . . . observe the analogy between the feelings of those under the influences of the Spirit, among the heathen, and of those who are operated upon by the same Spirit, in the congregations of a Christian land. There is manifested the same view of the human character, of the need of divine aid, of the guilt of sin, and of the appropriateness of the doctrines of the gospel; connected with the same change of external character, corresponding with the new light which has dawned on the mind.[83]

In all these ways, the new Christian in a foreign land was identical to the new Christian at home. This was the main point of all native Christian biography. Here was documentary proof that there was something basically similar about human nature, regardless of the society in which one lived. This similarity was in the disease and cure of the soul. The darker skinned worshipper of idols had just as great a need of the gospel as the reader, and the Holy Spirit worked in just the same way on the idolator's heart. The reader of missionary literature developed an affection for and identification with the subjects of mission. This led to greater support for missions and more. The reader who reflected on these things

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83 William M. Ferry, Notices of Chippeway Converts (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1833), 1. The Board produced 22,000 copies of this Missionary Paper. The story of one of these converts was reprinted by the ATS, beginning in 1833 as Eliza the Chippeway Woman, no. 293. By 1850, 136,000 copies had been printed.

realized that skin color was insignificant in contrast to the eternally significant condition of one's soul.

Opukahaia accompanied Rev. Nathan Perkins (b. 1776) on a fund raising tour for the Foreign Mission School in the winter of 1816-1817. Perkins' testimony to the way Opukahaia affected his hearers, quoted in the Memoirs of Henry Obookiah, could be applied in a second-hand way to the impact of native Christian biographies:

> Obookiah's visit to this part of the country was of essential service to the cause of Foreign Missions. It has silenced the weak but common objection against attempting to enlighten the heathen, that they are too ignorant to be taught. This sentiment has prevented much exertion. It has a wicked origin. We have first enslaved our fellow-beings, then degraded them by every menial service, deprived them of the measure of mental improvement, and almost of human intercourse; and because, under this circumstance, people of color are devoid of knowledge, we have hastened to the irrational conclusion that all the heathen are a race of idiots. Adopting this conclusion, multitudes are utterly opposed to making any attempt to turn them from darkness to light. Influenced by this opinion, groundless as it is, no reasonings, or arguments, or motives which can be offered, are of any avail. But the appearance of Obookiah has done much in this region to wipe off this disgrace thrown upon the heathen, and to remove the objection so often made. The proof he gave of talents as well as piety, carried conviction to many that the heathen had souls as well as we, and were as capable of being enlightened and christianized. . . . Now in the circle of *his* travels, there is no occasion to combat this objection.[84]

Before people could become genuine friends of mission, their attitude toward race had to be reformed. Discrimination, which prevented people of color from developing their native abilities, had created the impression that they were

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84 [E. Dwight], Memoirs of Obookiah, 73-74.

ignorant. Persons holding these prejudices did not give to missions, because they didn't expect any results. A living specimen of the "heathen" world, of obvious piety and talents, who preached to the people of rural New England and called on *them* to repent and believe in Jesus Christ, could convince them that persons of color had souls and could become Christians. Once the audience was "satisfied that the conversion of them [the 'heathen'] to Christianity is practicable,"[85] the people were ready to pray, and give, and exert themselves for missions. This reformation of popular views about race, begun by Opukahaia, was continued by his Memoirs, and by the series of native biographies that followed.

The biography of the native Christian was documentary evidence that foreign missions did work. Against criticism that nothing had been accomplished, the Board presented the names and stories of converts. William Richards concluded the Memoir of Keopuolani by declaring, "Let him, who thinks that the heathen will never be converted, tell, if he can, why other heathen cannot be converted, as well as the highest chief upon the Sandwich Islands."[86]

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85 Ibid., 74.

86 [W. Richards], Memoir of Keopuolani, 25. Concerning another female chief, Richards had declared, "How gladly would I present this chief to a circle of those who say this people can never be civilized, and let them account for the difference between her former and her present character."--"Biographical Sketch of Kapiolani, a Christian Convert of Hawaii, One of the Sandwich Islands," MH 24 (1828): 98. Isaac Bird had declared As'ad ibn Yusuf to be "proof, that there are noble materials for the grace of God to operate upon in Mount Lebanon."--Isaac

The American reader of native Christian biography also found encouragement in the face of conflict. The introduction to the biography of "Old Shusco, the Juggler," explained, "By contemplating the conflicts of another, we are better prepared for our own."[87] The readers knew about conflict. Whenever an individual became devout, conflict was inevitable with the less awakened members of the family. Orthodox Congregationalists in eastern New England knew the pain of being evicted from their meeting-house, with all its holy associations, and the accompanying division in the community. The benevolent enterprises spawned by the missionary movement initiated conflict, as they advocated Sabbath observance, temperance and revivals, and opposed dueling, gambling, prostitution and slavery. But the suffering caused by these conflicts sank into insignificance when one read what the new native Christian experienced.

As'ad ibn Yusuf (ca. 1797-ca. 1830) (called "Asaad esh-Shidiak" in the missionary literature), a convert to evangelical Protestantism from Maronite Catholicism, was portrayed as a reformer in the tradition of Luther and Zwingli, placing the authority of the Scripture over the authority of the Pope in Isaac Bird's

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Bird, Memoir of Asaad Esh-Shidiak (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1834), 48. See also: "The design of this Paper is to present the patrons of missions such an exhibition of what has been effected, by their contributions and prayers, in the case of a few Indian converts."--Ferry, Chippeway Converts, 1.

87 Cutting Marsh, "Old Shusco the Juggler," MH 40 (1844): 37. This was later published as tract no. 97 by the ATS, who had printed 28,000 copies by 1850.

(1793-1876) Brief Memoir of Asaad Esh-Shidiak.[88] As'ad described one of his interrogations by the Maronite patriarch:

> He called me to his presence, and began to threaten me in a most unusual manner. I said, "What do you wish of me, your reverence? . . . What is my sin, except that I conversed with some individuals, shewing them the errors of the church of Rome?'
>
> Then he requested me again to say that I believed as did that church, and said, grasping me firmly by the chin, 'See how I will take you if you do not repent.'
>
> I begged him to appoint some one to shew me the truth, by way of discussion, but he would not. . . .
>
> When I saw the patriarch breaking out in an exceeding loud and unusual voice, I . . . rose to depart. When I reached the door, I turned and said to him, 'I will hold fast the religion of Jesus Christ, and I am ready for the sake of it to shed my blood; and though you should all become infidels, yet will not I,' and so left the room.[89]

As'ad was later lured away from the missionaries by his family, and betrayed to the hierarchy. Taken to a remote monastery, he was interrogated, and this time, *"kept in close confinement, in chains, and daily beaten."*[90] Four times he escaped and was recaptured. Then for three years the missionaries could learn nothing about his condition. They published his story, and he received the prayer support of Protestants in America and England. Finally, in 1832, they were told that he was dead.

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[88] This Memoir appeared first as an article in the Missionary Herald in 1827, then in expanded form as a Missionary Paper. The ABCFM produced at least 31,000 copies of this Missionary Paper.

[89] Bird, Asaad Esh-Shidiak, 14-15.

[90] Ibid., 34.

The story of As'ad inspired readers to have courage in the face of conflict. When his younger brother, Phanes, began reading the New Testament and in the face of family persecution fled to the missionaries, As'ad wrote him a letter that indirectly spoke to every reader who faced persecution for the faith:

> Your departure caused me great grief. *First,* because you were impatient when trial and persecution came upon you. It is a thing we are regularly to expect, that if we hope in God in this world, we shall give universal offence. But we have another city, for which we hope. Do not lose your courage, for ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Remember, we cannot share in the glory of Christ, if we share not also in his sufferings. Therefore rejoice whenever you are tried; rejoice, and never be sad, for our faith is sure.[91]

Persecution, from family, community, or religious authorities, was usually part of the native Christian's experience in these biographies.[92]

The Hawaiian noble woman, Kapiolani Nui, had the courage to take the initiative in challenging a god. She was the first Hawaiian to enter the crater of the volcano where the god Pele was said to dwell. To those who tried to talk her out of it, for fear she would be destroyed, she declared, "If I am destroyed, then

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[91] Ibid., 30.

[92] See also: Hollis Read, The Christian Brahmun; or, Memoir of the Life, Writings, and Character of a Converted Brahmin, Babajee (New York: Leavitt, Lord, 1836), 1:19-21; Miron Winslow, ed., "Account of Catheraman," MH 26 (1830): 233; John Scudder, "Notices of Native Converts at Panditeripo, in Ceylon, " MH 21 (1825): 233-34, 236; Elijah Coleman Bridgman, "Brief Memoir of the Evangelist, Leang Afa," MH 30 (1834): 356-57. Not all native converts faced such severe persecutions. Missionaries Goodell and Dwight described an Armenian Church open to evangelical reformation--William Goodell and Harrison G. O. Dwight, Account of Armenians at Constantinople (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1835), 18. The ABCFM printed 10,000 copies of this Missionary Paper.

you may all believe in Pele; but if I am not, then you must all turn to the *palapala."*[93] She intentionally violated tabus by eating berries consecrated to Pele, and throwing stones into the crater, and left the crater unharmed.

Besides these outward conflicts, each native Christian experienced inner conflicts similar to those known to the readers--conflict between pride and surrender, faith and infidelity, self condemnation and grace. The biographies of native Christians inspired readers to stand firm for the principles of the Gospel. But one could not stand against such trials without faith, and such faith could be sustained only by frequent prayer. So such stories encouraged devotion, which was a source of courage.

IV. SERVANTS OF THE CROSS

When Harriet Newell lay dying on the island of Mauritius in 1812, she asked her husband to send to her brothers and sisters in America a last message from her. "Tell them, from the lips of their dying sister, that there is nothing but religion worth living for."[94] Over the next thirty-eight years, the biographies of American Board missionaries drove that message home.

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93 "Biographical Sketch of Kapiolani," 98. The *palapala* was the teaching of the missionaries.

94 Mr. N. to Mrs. A., 10 Dec. 1812, [Woods], Harriet Newell, 243.

Edwards' Life of Brainerd continued to be published throughout this period,[95] both inspiring readers with a life of devotion to Christ, and setting the pattern for missionary biography. Missionary biography[96] presented a life of consecration to Christ--a life worthy of not just admiration, but imitation. James Richards, one of the original Williams College Brethren, wrote in his journal.

> If Jesus was willing to leave the bosom of his Father, and expose himself to such sufferings here below, for the sake of them [the 'heathen'] and me, with what cheerfulness should I quit the pleasures of refined society, and forsake father and mother, brothers and sisters, to carry the news of his love to far distant lands; let me never consider any thing too great to suffer, or any thing to dear to part with, when the glory of God and the salvation of men require it.[97]

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[95] Jonathan Edwards ed., An Account of the Life of the Late Reverend Mr. David Brainerd, Minister of the Gospel, Missionary to the Indians, from the Honourable Society in Scotland, for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and Pastor of a Church of Christian Indians in New Jersey (Boston: D. Henchman, 1749). The journal of Brainerd was published in a number of forms and under several titles, in America, Britain, and Germany, from the time of his life through the first half of the nineteenth century. In America, Edwards' Account was republished in 1793 (Worcester), and 1811 (Newark), and with all of the collections of the Works of Edwards. John Styles' abridgment of Edwards' work, titled The Life of David Brainerd, Missionary to the Indians . . ., had American editions published in Boston in 1812 and 1821. Sereno Edwards Dwight's edition was titled, Memoir of the Rev. David Brainerd, and published in New Haven in 1822. ASSU publications, titled Memoir of David Brainerd, are dated 1826, 1827, and 1830. The ATS abridgment was: The Life of Rev. David Brainerd, Chiefly Extracted from His Diary (New York: ATS, [1833]); 58,570 copies had been published by 1850. The Presbyterian Board of Publication version, published in Philadelphia in 1843, was titled, The Missionary in the Wilderness, or Grace Displayed Among the Heathen.

[96] For a description of the formal structure of religious biography in this period, see: B., pseud., "Religious Biography," Christian Herald 10 (1823-24): 321-23.

[97] [Meigs], "Memoir of James Richards," 242.

When Myra Wood (1800-1831) accepted the invitation to marriage and missionary labor from David O. Allen (1799-1863) in May of 1827, she wrote in her journal,

> And now I am decided. Yes, I will offer myself a living sacrifice, to assist, so far as he shall give me ability, in the arduous labors of extending a knowledge of salvation to the heathen. And in making this surrender, I feel most happy. Yes, I will bless my covenant God and Savior for the high privilege of enduring hardships and privations for 'him, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor.'[98]

Sarah Huntington (1802-1836), of Norwich, Connecticut, was a grand-daughter of General Jedidiah Huntington (1743-1819), a charter corporate member of the ABCFM. She was criticized for acting beneath her "station" and "rank" when she chose to live and teach school in a nearby Indian community.

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98 "Memoir of Myra Allen," 138-39. Some other examples of consecration to Christ in missionary biography: (1) Before her marriage to Adoniram Judson, Nancy Hasseltine made the words of Mary the mother of Jesus, her words, *"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."* (Luke 1:38)--James D. Knowles, Memoir of Mrs. Ann H. Judson, Late Missionary to Burmah: Including a History of the American Baptist Mission in the Burman Empire, 3d ed. (Boston: Lincoln & Edmands, 1829), 41. (2) Levi Parsons wrote to his parents in 1814, "The sacrifice of our little all should be disregarded, when the glory of God, and the joys of heaven are brought into view. I have already given myself away to God, I hope, without reserve. Nor do I wish to make any reserve as to my future life. Where his spirit directs, I feel bound to follow. Should infinite mercy grant me a crown of glory, how pleasing the consideration to have it sparkle with heathen souls. Nay, farther, how pleasing to labour, to toil and suffer for him, who, through infinite condescension and boundless grace, endured the pains of Calvary!"--Morton, Memoir of Parsons, 2 (see also: 12,124). (3) In February 1823, seven years before she would leave as a missionary wife, Elizabeth Smith wrote her prayer in her journal, "O let me feel an ardent, constant, unconquerable desire for the prosperity of thy kingdom, and for the advancement of thy glory. Let me omit no opportunity of doing good. Use me as an instrument in promoting thy cause."--"Brief Memoir of Mrs. Elizabeth H. S. Hervey, Wife of Rev. William Hervey, American Missionary at Bombay," MH 28 (1832): 171.

She wrote in her journal in 1830: "I should like to ask Mr. ---- if the Saviour had any regard to *his* 'station,' when he left his throne for a dwelling among our wretched race? Our rank is that of *Christians,* if we would follow him."[99] Three years later she sailed to Syria as the wife of missionary Eli Smith.

When David Abeel, ABCFM missionary to China and vicinity, visited England in 1834, he made a strong impression. One woman later recalled,

> He had no sympathy with a hollow, half-hearted attachment to the cause of Christ. His had never been the 'middle walk of Christianity;' having himself forsaken all for Christ, he could, and did insist in every case, upon the same surrender.[100]

The following year found Abeel in the United States, trying to recover his health, and promoting missions. One person recalled his visit to Union Theological Seminary in Prince Edward County, Virginia:

> In laying down the duty of Christians in respect to missions, he placed the foundation in radical principles. He urged especially, the obligation of an entire consecration to the cause of Christ, as involved in the Christian profession itself.[101]

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Edward William Hooker, Memoir of Mrs. Sarah Lanham Smith, Late of the Mission in Syria, Under the Direction of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Boston: Perkins & Marvin; Philadelphia: H. Perkins, 1839), 116. The ATS began publication of this Memoir in 1845, and had produced 13,000 copies by 1850.

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George Rogers Williamson, Memoir of David Abeel, D.D., Missionary to China (New York: Robert Carter, 1848), 144.

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Ibid., 152.

The reader of missionary biography was challenged by these words of Harriet Newell, James Richards, Myra Wood Allen, Sarah Huntington Smith, and others, and the description of David Abeel. Every missionary biography challenged the reader to join the missionary in emulating the self-emptying love of Jesus Christ--to be a "living sacrifice"--to *live* their religion. From beginning to end, missionary biography was about total consecration to Christ. The example of the missionary inspired the reader to live the missionary spirit at home. The missionaries demonstrated that the Christ-like life could be lived, and many of them did not hesitate to declare that it should be lived--must be lived--by the Christian at home.

Four early missionary biographies whose influence was often mentioned in later biographies, articles, and letters, were the lives of David Brainerd, Harriet Newell, Henry Martyn (1781-1812), and Samuel Mills.[102] With the exception of the memoir of Mills, who had destroyed his diaries, these biographies were primarily extracted from personal journals. These were "internal" biographies, exploring the person's inner spiritual life. As the "external" activity of the

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Henry Martyn was an Anglican who travelled in Asia. A Memoir of the Rev. Henry Martyn, B.D., by John Sargent, was issued by publishers in Boston (1820-two editions, 1831, 1832, 1835, 1836), New York (1821, 1824, 1831, 1844), Hartford (1828) and Philadelphia (1831)--NUC 521:4-5. The ASSU began publishing it in 1832. The ATS began publication in 1835, and by 1850 had produced 51,870 copies. The Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel J. Mills, by Gardiner Spring, was published in 1820. The Society of Inquiry at Andover Theological Seminary prepared an extensive revision, which was published in 1829 and 1842--NUC 562:660; [Loomis], Memoirs of American Missionaries, 36.

missionary was only incidental, it was not necessary for the subjects of missionary biography to have accomplished much. Many, like Harriet Newell, had very little time in service as healthy missionaries.

As the years passed, and the accounts of missionary activity in the Missionary Herald grew in popularity, there was a tendency to include more "external" biography in the missionary memoirs. However, the "internal" material persisted. David Abeel's biography, published toward the close of the period under study, alternated the two styles. Each chapter began with a narrative of events as described in his letters, and ended with his inner personal struggles as described in his journal. The first half of the nineteenth century was the age of *action,* but the missionary biography was one of the last institutions to yield to that trend.

These biographies reminded the reader of the importance of what people could do at home. Gordon Hall's biography contained an 1815 letter to the Society of Inquiry at Andover, in which he presented a strategy for promoting the missionary spirit. Through this letter, an ideal Christian spoke directly to the reader of missionary biography advising her or him that a person who did not support missions was not a real Christian:

> For what is it to be a Christian? Not merely to bear the name of Christ, but to have his divine image impressed on our souls and manifested in our lives. Jesus had a heart, which embraced every human being with a love, that made him willing to suffer poverty and disgrace, anguish and death, for their salvation. And how can *his* heart be like the heart of Jesus,

> how can *he* be a Christian, who does not love all mankind, with a love, which makes him willing to suffer the loss of all temporal things, and even to lay down his life if thereby he can promote the salvation of his fellow men?[103]

As Pliny Fisk watched his colleague Levi Parsons approach death in 1822, Fisk recalled his days as an agent for the Board, the parsimony of many, and wrote bitterly,

> A missionary ought unquestionably to labor contentedly, and be grateful for whatever support the churches may afford him. . . . But is it a *duty,* is it *right,* while so many are living at home in ease and affluence, that missionaries should bring themselves to an early grave, by cares and labors, which might be relieved by a little pecuniary assistance?[104]

In these missionary biographies, the friend of mission was addressed by exemplary Christians, whose sacrificial embarkation to distant shores, and removal through death to yet more sacred shores, gave to their words a strong moral force. The reader was told that support for missions was not optional, but an essential discipline of the Christian faith. Although a foreign missionary movement had not existed in the United States a few short years before, now no serious Christian could stand apart from it. The American Christian was told that reluctance to give could contribute to the suffering of the beloved servant of Christ in a foreign land.

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103 Bardwell, Memoir of Hall, 126-27.

104 Alvan Bond, Memoir of Rev. Pliny Fisk A.M., Missionary to Palestine (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1828), 178.

Female readers especially were advised by female missionaries of the importance of mission activity at home. Some of these subjects of biography had made a commitment to missions, and for many years before they received a marriage proposal from a missionary, they applied that commitment in their church and community. They saw missionary activity at home as an extension of the work overseas. Harriet Lathrop (1796-1833), before her marriage to Miron Winslow (1789-1864), helped found a society for the relief of poor women and children, taught in a school for poor children, and helped organize a Sabbath School in her church.[105] Sarah Huntington, before her marriage to Eli Smith, was active in a "Charity Warehouse" which sold items and used the profits for the poor, and helped to fit up a "Missionary Room" in her church. Beginning in 1827 she took an interest in Mohegan, an American Indian community about six miles from her home. She taught Sabbath School there, eventually started a day school, visited in the homes, and solicited funds for a church, a school, and a pastor. She personally petitioned ABCFM secretaries Evarts and Cornelius, the Connecticut state legislature, and the United States government for aid in this mission.[106]

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105 M. Winslow, Memoir of Harriet Winslow, 28,29,49. The ATS began publishing this Memoir in 1841, and by 1850 had produced 15,874 copies.

106 E. Hooker, Memoir of Sarah Smith, 106-26.

The missionary biographies published accurate information about missionary life.[107] Mission board executives desired to have this realistic view presented in order to counter romantic notions of missions. Nancy Hasseltine had been told by critics that foreign missions was a "wild romantic undertaking,"[108] in 1810. The movement continued to be perceived as romantic by both foes and friends. Persons considering a missionary career were told the truth and challenged to self-examination. The missionary work had as much routine and drudgery as any work at home. Miron Winslow declared in his memoir of his wife, Harriet,

> It is time that the *romance* of missions was done away. It has been of use, perhaps, in exciting attention to the subject, but no attraction from its novelty, no impulse from its moral dignity, will bear up and carry forward any one, amidst long continued labors of almost uniform sameness.[109]

In spite of these criticisms of *romance,* missionary labor was perceived as romantic. Missionary work was a heroic--idealistic--undertaking, and an encounter with exotic people and places. The point Winslow and others were making, was that the missionary needed a deeper commitment; romantic interest was not enough. Only a firm and constant faith could sustain the missionary

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107

Rufus Anderson, "Letter from Rev. Dr. Anderson," American Tract Magazine 17 (Jan. 1842): overleaf 4.

108

Knowles, Memoir of Ann Judson, 39.

109

M. Winslow, Memoir of Harriet Winslow, 42. See also: [Loomis], Memoirs of American Missionaries, 130-31; Bardwell, Memoir of Hall, 198.

through drudgery, discouragement, and danger. The result was a mixed message. The reader of missionary biography was enchanted by exotic places and inspired by the missionaries' heroic idealism, and then advised that an even more heroic character was needed to persevere through drudgery and discouragement.

The missionary biographies unquestionably idealized the missionary vocation. When Levi Parsons wrote to his parents of his plans in 1814, he exulted, "Become a missionary--O blessed thought! May I indulge it! Labour, toil, suffer and die for souls--O the honour is too great! 'Tis an angel's trust."[110] James Richards declared during his rare periods of good health, "I consider the employment of a humble and faithful missionary, who is engaged in actually *preaching the Gospel among the heathen,* the most noble, the most important, and the most desirable employment on earth."[111] Elnathan Gridley (1796-1827) in his farewell sermon imagined future generations of Christians in the mission lands gathering around the grave of the missionary and gratefully declaring, "HERE LIES THE MAN, WHO LEFT ALL TO BRING THIS GLORIOUS GOSPEL TO OUR SHORES."[112]

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110 Morton, Memoir of Parsons, 29.

111 [Meigs], "Memoir of James Richards," 246.

112 Josiah Brewer, "Farther Particulars Respecting Mr. Gridley," MH 24 (1828): 110.

Readers were enchanted and inspired by biographies of persons like them, from the farms, villages and cities of the northeastern United States, who had gone to the ends of the earth for the sake of the glorious gospel. Most of the readers were not able to do that. But they could participate in "the most noble, the most important, the most desirable employment on earth," without leaving their familiar valleys and villages, through their participation in the domestic aspects of foreign missions. Even such drudgery as hoeing potatoes or knitting suspenders could acquire *romance* when the profits were promised to the most noble of causes.

The missionary movement both nourished and altered the piety of its supporters through the reading of its literature. Missionary piety became less contemplative and more active. Promoters did not see this as a problem, because activity reinforced convictions, and orthodox faith was strengthened. The friends of mission desired to *know* more about the world, and then they compassionately took action to make the world different. They became part of a community of the "friends of Zion," which included the devout of all colors and tongues, and they longed for the latest news from missionaries and native Christians who had become their friends through reading. Through missionary biography the reader looked deeply within the soul of a model Christian, and found inspiration to live a more Christ-centered life--to live the missionary spirit--wherever she or he might be.