

CONVOCATION.

THE BACCALAUREATE SERMON.

A LARGE audience assembled in Convocation Hall on Sunday afternoon, April 28th, to listen to the Baccalaureate sermon by Dr. J. Frazer Smith, our missionary in China. He naturally chose a missionary theme, based on Psalm lxxii. 19, "Let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen and Amen."

The most significant fact in the last quarter of a century in the history of the Christian church, is the revival and continued growth of vital piety in nearly all the universities and colleges throughout the land. So powerful has this movement been that the whole sentiment, aim and life of those whom we are proud to regard as the flower of our young manhood, has completely changed. Of 80,000 students in the colleges of the country, 55 per cent. are professed Christians, while 35 per cent. of the remainder are in full sympathy with Christian enterprises. This encouraging state of affairs is largely due to the efforts of the Intercollegiate Y. M. C. A. The International Y. M. C. A., too, has stretched its helping hand across the broad Pacific, and in its foreign work has received valuable help from the students' volunteer movement for foreign missions. In view of these facts, our text is an appropriate motto for the graduating classes of this university, whose alumni and students were the first in this country to decide to send out a representative to the foreign field, and become responsible for his support.

This Psalm shews how powerfully the Psalmist felt for the honour of Jehovah, and how intensely he desired the well-being of his fellowmen, both near and far. His faith rises higher and higher, till it reaches a climax in the short prophetic prayer of this verse. The same idea is expressed in one of the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come." Every true Christian will admit that God has called us by His Spirit and blessed us, that we, in our turn, may become channels of blessing to others. The cramped and narrow life of many Christians is due to their not fully comprehending the personal responsibility involved in this, and to their not living up to its accompanying opportunities. The Christian's work, duty and responsibility are clearly brought out in the last command of our Saviour, which has been well called the "Marching orders of the Church," "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." If we admit that this work is the one supreme duty of the Church, we are forced to one of two conclusions, either the Church has all along misunderstood the plain command of its Lord, or else it has been culpably negligent. Great advance has been made

in the last few years, and yet we are forced to admit that much of the ambition and effort of a large majority of our Church members is intensely selfish.

Let us take a hurried glance at some of the different heathen countries and see how much remains to be done before the ideal state of our text will be realized. If the members of even a dozen of our congregations were thoroughly in earnest, they could, in a few years, carry the gospel to every Indian of the few thousand there are in our own North-west. Mexico has 12,000,000 souls, and, notwithstanding the noble efforts of the last twenty years, we find only a few thousand Christians. Central America has a population of millions, and scarcely a good beginning has yet been made to evangelize its people. South America, our sister continent, has 35,000,000 millions of its people still unreached. Their moral and spiritual condition is dreadful, and our duty to them at the present time is great. There have been great missionary achievements on the Islands of the Sea, and it would be well if Christians in North America had some of the enthusiasm which characterized the first converts to Christianity from among the cannibals of the Fiji Islands. Look at Japan, that land of mighty change and mighty progress, which, during thirty years, has been stirred from centre to circumference by the influence of Christian civilization, and has had every part of its national life transformed, so that the nation is now permitted to take its stand on an equal footing with the civilized nations of the world. Christianity is still, however, far from being a dominant power in the land. There are only 40,000 nominal Christians in a population of 41,000,000. As far as the human eye can see, the present is the Church's glorious opportunity in Japan. Corea, the down-trodden peninsula, has been for years the battle-field for China and Japan, and, besides this, its lower orders have had all ambition to better their condition crushed out of them by the oppression of their own officials. To-day it has only a few score of Christians in 12,000,000 of a population, and is surely a worthy object for the sympathy and prayers of the Christian world.

It is with somewhat of a feeling of sadness that I turn to speak a word for China, that vast conservative empire, which for so many centuries effectually barred its gates to the entrance of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Notwithstanding its boasted ancient civilization, the fundamental substantiality and worth of its people, the lofty moral quality of its ethical code or cult, and its many and varied natural resources, China is to-day the laughing stock of all civilized nations, because of its apathy, due to the rottenness of its whole social fabric. Turn which way you will, the same thing confronts one; paralyzed energy; obstinate ignorance; intense pride