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### **The Missionary Spirit**

Earl Clement Davis

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The Missionary Spirit:  
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~~The account of the interest developed~~  
~~in that side of missionary~~  
~~activity Burma.~~ During the past  
week a series of meetings of  
great importance have been  
held in the neighboring  
towns of North Bhamo & Milltown:  
town. This is a meeting of  
the ~~the~~ American Board of  
Foreign Missions celebrating  
the hundredth Anniversary  
of the famous Hoyalok prayer:  
meetings. ~~The number of~~  
The importance and success of  
these meetings was to derive

to speak upon the general subject  
of the missionary spirit.

If you stop to think of it  
Christianity is fundamentally  
a religion of missionary activity.  
The missionary work of the  
Christian church is not new  
and never has been based  
upon any specific saying of  
the founder of Christianity, or  
his followers. It is not because  
Jesus said "go preach the word"  
nor indeed because Paul  
actually did go and preach  
the word, and establish the  
Gentile church, and inculcate

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the entire Roman world with  
the gem of religious truth, which  
~~is~~ was the spirit of Jesus  
teaching.

It may be that every a man  
and every a religious enthusiast  
has given as the ostensible reason  
for his missionary activity, the  
command of Jesus or the warrant  
for his zeal, and example of  
Paul as the stimulus for his  
sacrifice, and hardship. But  
far deeper than that one must  
seek ere he comes to the foundation  
stone upon which rests the activity  
of the Christian Church in its attempt  
to extend the influence of the  
teaching of Jesus.

Christianity is a religion of Idealism  
It was conceived and born in  
Idealism. Tracing its ancestry back  
over the Jewish line of descent  
we see thence the growing flout  
of an idealistic conception of the  
world towards which it is  
growing and for the realization  
of which it is working. Whatever  
way have been the forms in  
which the suffering Jew of  
the exile expressed his hope  
in better days, and a broader  
justice, and a fairer and  
more peaceful life, at the  
bottom of ~~all that~~ the great  
hope in the coming of the  
messiah, is the idealism

of a nation of Idlers, to dream  
dreams, and to see visions, and  
to feel that where there is not the  
fuel of dreams and visions, this  
the fire, the worth of life goeth  
out. that has been predominant  
atwoyfare of Jewish life  
since the days when it first  
came to its national self  
consciousness.

But Christianity is not alone  
Jewish. It is the progeny of  
the marriage of the Jewish  
Genius, and the Greek Genius.  
Christianity was born of the  
the ancestry of Plato and  
Aristotle. Here again we trace

its origin to a nation that at its <sup>16</sup>  
best made all things according  
to the Pattern, the ideal, of  
which particular events, and  
things were but the mani-  
festations. ~~A~~ world  
of justice, a world in which  
murder, cruelty, and oppression  
shall obtain, is not alone the  
thought of the Greek Philosopher,  
but it is a part of the Greek  
mind, ~~and~~ ~~from~~ <sup>in</sup> this nation  
of idealists, and dreamers, Christianity  
has its roots.

~~Whether~~ Whether we trace it to  
its Jewish or its Greek source

we find the stream of the Christian religion taking its origin high of on the mountain sides of Jewish and Grecian Idolatry, where the human soul sees not alone the rough and forbidding rock earth beneath his feet, but can look up, and feast his being upon the infinite expanse of the deep blue heavens. In Jesus the prophet of this new dispensation heathed, both this spiritual Idolatry of the Jewish race, and the worldly and ~~the~~ intellectual Idolatry of the Greek.

In the menage of the carpenter prophet, the fusion of these



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Idealist forces became the  
voice of God speaking through  
is prophet, saying Repent ye.  
For the Kingdom of God is  
at hand.

But the furor of these forces  
took place in the midst of  
the Roman world, and Jesus  
lived and preached at a time  
when the Roman world was  
great, and its arm of authority  
extended into all countries, and  
its great city of the seven  
hills, became the centre for  
all inflowing, and outgoing  
tides of human thought and

activity. While Christianity<sup>9</sup>  
was born in the  
the dreamer land of the  
East, it was educated, and  
grew into its maturity, amid  
the atmosphere of administrative  
and executive ability of Rome.  
Rome could not dream, could  
not think, could not see  
visions, but it could organize  
notions, and build a great empire.  
guided not so much by its  
idealism, as by its keen sense  
of the inherent force of living  
realities. To build from the  
bottom up, from facts to theories,  
from facts to the whole. from

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the seen to the unseen, that  
was the Genius of Rome. When  
we see in the Christian church  
the beginning of that organization  
of a spiritual community into  
a complete, and perfect system,  
we are reaching the hard winter  
of the Roman Genius upon the  
world of human history. It  
is a winter not to be sneered at,  
nor to be looked down upon. Looking  
it the Jewish Messianic life still  
remained a dream, and still  
the Jew looked back over the  
of history to the days of David  
and longed again the greatness  
of Israel. Looking it the  
Grecian Idealist still lived

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in the night of an Eficureon  
Greece. You have few both  
having it, the world blossomed  
into the glory of the new  
dispensation, endowed not  
only with the will to believe  
in idols, ~~but to~~, to dream, dreams  
and to see visions, but also  
endowed with the power to  
act.

Miss finished.  
Preached Oct. 11 1906

## The Missionary Spirit

Earl C. Davis

Pittsfield, MA

October 14, 1906<sup>1</sup>

During the past week a series of meetings of great importance has been held in the neighboring towns of North Adams and Williamstown. This is a meeting of the American Board of Foreign Mission celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the famous Haystack prayer meetings.<sup>2</sup> The importance and success of these meetings {???) to desire to speak upon the general subject of the missionary spirit.

If you stop to think of it Christianity is fundamentally a religion of missionary activity. The missionary work of the Christian Church is not now and never has been based upon any specific saying of the founder of Christianity, or his followers. It is not because Jesus said, "go preach the word," nor indeed because Paul actually did go and preach the word, and establish the Gentile church, and inoculate the entire Roman world with the gem or religious truth, which was the spirit of Jesus's teaching.

It may be that many a man and many a religious enthusiast has given as the ostensible reason for his missionary activity the command of Jesus as the warrant for his zeal, and example of Paul as the stimulus for his sacrifice and hardship. But far deeper than that one must seek ere he comes to the foundation stone upon which rests the activity of the Christian Church in its attempt to extend the influence of the teaching of Jesus.

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<sup>1</sup> At the end of the manuscript there is a note, "{???) finished. Preached Oct. 14, 1906." The notation before "finished" might be "Un"; the sermon does have an unfinished feel to it.

<sup>2</sup> The Haystack Prayer Meeting was held in Williamstown, Massachusetts, in August 1806. Prompted by five Williams students who wanted to discuss the spiritual welfare of people in Asia, the result of the meeting was the creation of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

Christianity is a religion of Idealism. It was conceived and born in Idealism. Tracing its ancestry back over the Jewish line of descent, we see there the growing plant of an idealistic conception of the world towards which it is growing and for the realization of which it is working. Whatever may have been the forms in which the suffering Jew of the exile expressed his hope in better days, and a broader justice, and a fairer and more peaceful life, at the bottom of the great hope in the coming of the messiah, is the idealism of a nation of Idealists. To dream dreams, and to see visions, and to feel that where there is not the fuel of dreams and visions there the fire, the worth of life goes out, that has been [the] predominate atmosphere of Jewish life since the days when it first came to its national self-consciousness.

But Christianity is not alone Jewish. It is the progeny of the marriage of the Jewish Genius, and the Greek Genius. Christianity was born of the ancestry of Plato and Aristotle. Here again we trace its origin to a nation that at its best made all things according to the Pattern, the ideal, of which particular events, and things were but the manifestations. A world of Justice, a world in which wisdom, courage, and obedience shall obtain, is not alone the thought of the Greek Philosopher, but it is a part of the Greek mind. In this nation of idealists, and dreamers, Christianity has its roots.

Whether we trace it to its Jewish or its Greek source find the stream of the Christian religion taking its origin high up on the mountain-sides of Jewish and Grecian Idealism, where the human soul sees not alone the rough and forbidding earth beneath his feet, but can look up and feast his being upon the infinite expanse of the deep pure heavens. In Jesus the prophet of this new dispensation {??}, both this spiritual Idealism of the Jewish race and the moral and intellectual Idealism of the Greek.

In the message of the carpenter prophet, the fusion of these idealistic forces became the voice of God speaking through his prophet, saying "Repent ye. For the Kingdom of God is at hand."

But the fusion of these forces took place in the midst of the Roman world, and Jesus lived and preached at a time when the Roman world was great, and its arm of authority extended into all countries, and its great city of the seven hills became the

center for all inflowing, and outgoing tides of human thought and activity. While Christianity may have been born in the dreamers land of the East, it was educated, and grew into its maturity amide the atmosphere of administrative and executive ability of Rome. Rome could not dream, could not think, could not see visions, but it could conquer nations, and build a great Empire guided not so much by its idealism, as by its keen sense of the inherent power of living realities. To build from the bottom up, from the facts to theories, from parts to the whole, from the seen to the unseen, that was the Genius of Rome. When we see in the Christian Church the beginning of that organization of a spiritual community into a complete and perfect system, we are reading the hard {???) of the Roman Genius upon the {???) of human history. It is a power not to be sneezed at, nor to be looked down upon. Lacking the Jewish messianic hope, still remained a dream, and still the Jew looked back over the history to the days of David and longed anew [for] the greatness of Israel. Lacking it the Grecian Idealist still lived in the midst of an Epicurean Grecian. Greek and Jew both having it, the world blossomed into the glory of the new dispensation, endowed not only with the will to believe in ideals, to dream dreams and to see visions, but also endowed with the power to act.