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BENJAMIN MOSBY SMITH AS SEMINARY PROFESSOR—THE EARLY YEARS (1854-1866)

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Three articles have already appeared in THE REVIEW on the life of the Rev. Dr. B. M. Smith, Professor of Oriental Literature in Union Theological Seminary in Virginia from 1854 to 1889. The first article, in the issue for November, 1943, dealt with his childhood and youth, closing with his graduation from Hampden-Sydney College, Virginia, at the age of 18, in the year 1829. The second article, in THE REVIEW of November, 1944, covering his first teaching experiences in Milton, North Carolina, and his years as a student and assistant instructor at Union Seminary, was chiefly concerned with his year of study and travel in Germany and other European countries and was based on the very full records in the diary which he began to keep at that time. The third article, in THE REVIEW of August, 1945, gave an account of his work as pastor at Danville, Tinkling Spring and Waynesboro, and Staunton, all in Virginia, from 1838 to 1854.

I. SERVICE WITH THE BOARD OF PUBLICATION

As has been mentioned in the preceding article in this series, Dr. Smith, during several months in 1853 and 1854, served as Corresponding Secretary and General Agent of the Board of Publication of the Presbyterian Church. He accepted this position

at first with the understanding that he might not necessarily hold it longer than June, 1854, when the Board would be able to hold another election. Hence he obtained leave of absence from his duties as pastor of the Staunton Church, and his family continued to reside in the manse of that church. He did the larger part of his work for the Board at the central offices of the Church in Philadelphia. But he made frequent and extensive journeys to meetings of presbyteries and synods in various parts of the country for the purpose of presenting the cause of the Board and of giving information regarding its work. He visited college campuses to confer with students who intended to engage in colportage during vacations. He visited and preached in many churches as the representative of the Board. He attended the meeting of the General Assembly of 1854 at Buffalo to present his official report. According to his successor as Corresponding Secretary, "he was everywhere most kindly received and his appeals elicited many warm expressions of approval for the plans and objects of the Board."

This work seems on the whole to have been very congenial to Dr. Smith. In spite of the fact that the hardships of travelling appear to have been a drain upon his health, he nevertheless derived great satisfaction from it, as has been seen from the accounts of his extensive journeys in earlier periods of his life.¹ He enjoyed to the full the opportunity to see parts of the country in which he had not previously travelled and he filled his diary with appreciative descriptions of the scenery in such beautiful regions as central New York and the valley of the Susquehanna. He enjoyed the widening of his contacts with churches and church leaders throughout the country. He found satisfaction also in the use of his great ability in public speaking for advancing one of the major enterprises of the Church.

In June, 1854, Dr. Smith was elected Professor in Union Seminary, then located at Hampden-Sydney, Virginia. There appears to have been objection to this action on the part of some members of the Board of Directors of the Seminary, but the

¹THE UNION SEMINARY REVIEW, November, 1944, vol. LVI, pp. 5, 6, 15, 16; August, 1945, vol. LVI, pp. 474-5.

Electoral College which made the final decision in the matter acted by a unanimous vote. After some hesitation Dr. Smith accepted this position. He afterwards gave the following reasons, among others, for doing so:

The service to which I am called is of the most vital importance in the training of ministers. A Seminary can dispense with the services of any other instructor with less injury than with those of the instructor on Biblical Literature. It is in that department that the basis of all Theological Education is laid, and in that a teacher is indispensable to the success of a student in acquiring rapidly and substantially the knowledge which he needs. . . .

God in his Providence at an early period in my life turned my attention in an unusual degree to the studies suited to prepare me for just such a service and made it my duty to spend more than double the usual period devoted to the studies of a theological student. Subsequently my tastes have induced me to give continued attention to those studies; and what is more remarkable, about three years ago, with no purpose or plan having reference to this service, I was led to increase very greatly, and according to fixed and regular plans, my attention to the study of the scriptures in the original languages. . . .

There occurs to me a peculiarly solemn and impressive view of this whole matter, in the fact that I am summoned to fill a vacancy which God not man has made. I am asked to step into the relief of the Seminary, at one of the most important crises in its history, when perhaps failing of such relief, it may sink past all hope of recovery.

In August, 1854, Dr. Smith requested the final dissolution of his relations with the church of Staunton. In his letter to the congregation he acknowledged the "kind and tender love" shown by the people to him, and said:

There has been nothing in our relations which has led me to desire a change, and much—yea, almost everything to effect the very reverse, and I have known no congregation of which I preferred to be pastor, no section of our country in which I would rather live.

The congregation agreed to interpose no objection to this request and left the matter to the Presbytery:

The kind sentiments expressed in the letter of our beloved Pastor, [declared the resolution adopted by the congregation], are fully reciprocated. His ministry of seven years among us of eminent ability and great faithfulness, claims our gratitude to God, and our esteem for the

minister. We may not feel at liberty to withhold a sacrifice required at our hand by the Providence of God and by the great interest of our church. We surrender a faithful Pastor, but we will not regard him as lost to us while he lives to pray and to labor though in another part of the field. He who has given takes away, and He who take away can still give, and we will trust Him.

II. WORK AT UNION DURING THE PRE-WAR YEARS

On November 1, 1854, Dr. Smith ended his period of service with the Board of Publication, "greatly to the regret of the Board," as his successor testified, and shortly thereafter entered upon his work as Professor of Oriental Literature in Union Theological Seminary, the title of his professorship becoming in 1861 that of "Oriental Literature and Biblical Criticism." His courses as specified for the session of 1856-57 were as follows: for Juniors, (1) Hebrew Language and (2) Theory of Interpretation; for Middlers, (1) Prophets and Epistles and (2) Chaldee; for Seniors, (1) Prophets and Epistles and (2) Exercises in Interpretation. This would appear to have been his general program of work throughout this period of his professorship, though small changes of detail were made from time to time. Thus, in 1860 his courses were listed as: Hebrew Language and Exposition; Exposition of Gospels and Epistles; Bible Criticism; Introduction, Theory of Exposition; Hermeneutics; Chaldee. In addition to his duties as professor, Dr. Smith also acted as Librarian, a post he had occupied when an assistant instructor in the Seminary in early manhood. In March, 1858, Dr. Smith and Dr. Dabney were elected co-pastors of the College Church at Hampden-Sydney and acted in this capacity until 1875. Thus they were responsible for ministering to the spiritual needs not only of the Seminary and College students but also of the entire community, the membership of the church at this period being approximately 120.

Dr. Smith's objectives in his teaching were well set forth in his inaugural address as Professor. One of the chief forms of training for prospective ministers, he said in this address, should

be a very extensive course in Biblical Study for the purpose of giving the student an accurate knowledge of the original languages of the scriptures:

As the ultimate appeal, on all controverted topics, is to the word of God, as he revealed it, and not to a version, however generally faithful, the Christian teacher should be able to make that appeal understandingly. He ought also to be capable of forming an adequate apprehension of the nicer shades of meaning, of weighing the value of idiomatic expressions, often only palpable in the original language, and of testing the truth of expositions, offered by commentators on the authority of a critical knowledge of the scriptures.

Dr. Smith then proceeded to show the advantages of such study to the young minister who has followed it:

As earnest in seeking as in imparting knowledge, with a heart fired with love and zeal, he needs no arts of rhetoric, and fears no exhaustion of matter. Keeping pace with the demands of his people, and prepared for every exigency, he will grow in knowledge and grow in power in the pulpit. With clear perceptions and fulness of scriptural thought, and a style enriched by scripture language and imagery, its history, biography and description supplying illustrations, he will be at no loss for language.

Dr. Smith closed by declaring that "the great need in our Theological Seminaries is some efficient mode to secure diligence in study," and that "the aspect of the times in which we live demands a ministry unusually well versed in the scriptures."

It was the custom among the Seminary professors that in case of the absence of any one of them, his classes would be conducted by one of his colleagues who would be in residence. Though, whenever possible, the extensive journeys carried on by Dr. Smith were made in the long summer vacation, there were occasions when he had to take them during the academic year and so had to turn over his classes to Dr. Dabney or one or more of the other professors. He likewise had to take the classes of his colleagues during their absences.

The Faculty of the Seminary, in addition to Dr. Smith, consisted in 1854 of Drs. Samuel B. Wilson and Robert L. Dabney, with an "Assistant Teacher," one of the senior students. In 1856,

the Rev. William J. Hoge, brother of Dr. Moses Drury Hoge of Richmond, was added to the staff as a fourth professor, and after his resignation in 1859 to become co-pastor of the Brick Church in New York City, he was succeeded in 1860 by the Rev. Thomas E. Peck, then pastor of the Central Church of Baltimore.

During his early years at the Seminary, Dr. Smith was compelled to do as much travelling as during the period of his pastorate. He, like other Seminary professors, served several churches in the neighborhood of Hampden-Sydney which were without regular pastors. This necessitated journeys in all kinds of weather in an open buggy or on horseback; and the resultant exposure and fatigue was a serious drain upon his health, which was in several respects defective at this as at earlier periods of his life. He visited the Valley of Virginia frequently to preach in the churches of that region where he was so well-known, especially in Tinkling Spring, Waynesboro, and Staunton, his former charges. He also continued to attend regularly the meetings of the Boards of Washington College, Lexington, and Augusta Female Institute, Staunton, and to make public addresses at these and other educational institutions in the Valley and Piedmont areas of Virginia. He continued, as during his earlier life, to attend his presbytery and synod with great regularity. He attended four meetings of the General Assembly from 1854 to 1861. Consequently he had to undertake journeys which in some cases were very long. Thus in 1854 he went to Buffalo, and in 1855 to Nashville by way of Wilmington, Atlanta and Chattanooga. In 1859 he went to Indianapolis by way of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Columbus, and in 1860 he attended at Rochester the last Assembly before the tragic controversy of 1861 produced the schism which has never yet been healed.

In the Assembly discussions Dr. Smith was frequently very active, taking part in the debates and serving on important committees. Thus in the Assembly of 1859, he helped to guide through that body the measures necessary to carry out the plan of his friend Cyrus McCormick for the establishment of the Theological Seminary of the Northwest in Chicago, and he served as chairman of a special committee to work out a plan for the adjustment

of the chairs in this seminary. As chairman of the Committee on Systematic Benevolence, he presented a report with several resolutions, which were adopted, designed to bring about better cooperation of presbyteries, churches and Sunday schools in the support of the national activities of the Church. He also presented resolutions, to be submitted to the Assembly of 1860, providing for the reorganization of the national Boards of the Church together with the Committee of Church Extension. Reorganization these bodies badly needed. The Board of Domestic Missions, for example, consisted of about one hundred members, with several hundred "honorary members," who obtained this position by the contribution to the Board's work of \$50 apiece and had the right to "engage in the deliberations" of the Board, though not the right to vote. Dr. Smith's motion provided that the membership of each of the several bodies should be reduced to sixteen. His resolutions were adopted, and he was appointed, as representing the Board of Publication, upon a small committee to draft further proposals for reorganizing the Boards. When the Assembly of 1860 met, he was appointed chairman of a committee of fifteen to prepare the whole scheme for final action. But the forces of conservatism were too strong. Opposition to the plan had developed. A motion that no organic changes should be made in the Board of Domestic Missions was carried after protracted debate, by a vote of 248 to 59. Consequently, when Dr. Smith presented to the Assembly the plan of the committee of fifteen, it was laid on the table and a resolution adopted which did little except to exclude "honorary members" from taking part in the discussions of the Boards.

Dr. Smith did useful service during these years in raising funds for the Seminary. Thus in June, 1855, during a general campaign for increasing the endowment, he went to the Presbytery of Concord, North Carolina, where he made addresses and visited a number of "prospects" for the purpose of collecting contributions. From an Englishman whom he approached, he received \$20. A "wealthy and kind but non-Christian man" at first "hemmed and objected," but "P. [Dr. Smith's companion in the tour] was quite pressing and he finally gave \$25 in his subscription." Then, Dr. Smith continues,

we went to M's. where P. expected something handsome, but he [M.] was out and his wife evidently did not want us to find him. . . . We then went to J. H's. who lives in a positively mean and dirty place with every mark of decay around him. After a short chat he went to his bag and to my great surprise brought out two fifty dollar notes.

His neighbor, "a rich old bachelor, a portly, florid man but wretchedly and even raggedly dressed. . . . gave \$50 quite good-naturedly." When the rounds were concluded, a fairly large amount had been collected. Again, at the close of the session of 1858, Dr. Smith spent three weeks in and around Charlotte, North Carolina, and succeeded in obtaining very many small gifts, several of approximately \$100 and one of \$500, the total amount being over \$1100.

Dr. Smith, however, found evidences on these journeys of great "lack of interest" in Union Seminary among the Presbyterians of North Carolina, in spite of the fact that the North Carolina Synod shared in the responsibility for the institution. One explanation of this was the great prestige enjoyed at this period by the Presbyterian Seminary at Columbia, South Carolina, chiefly, it would appear, because of the reputation of the able scholar Dr. Thornwell, who was one of the professors. In an attempt to revive interest in Union, Dr. Smith in 1858 spoke at the Synod of North Carolina and pointed out that only three students from the state were in attendance at the Seminary, that this and other facts indicated a want of loyalty to the institution and that the Synod, as long as it was in part responsible for the Seminary, ought to give it real support. The Synod by its vote seemed to endorse this position. In Virginia, also, Dr. Smith worked for the Seminary. For example, he spoke in its interest at the Synod of 1855, and in the same year in the church at Nottoway Court House he preached a sermon of one hour and twenty minutes, "applying the subject to Seminary interests." Yet he thought that during these years the Church in North Carolina and in some parts of Virginia still remained largely indifferent to the welfare of the institution which both synods had agreed to support.

In his early years at the Seminary, Dr. Smith was several times asked to accept positions in other fields of work. In 1855 he received from the Central Church of Baltimore a call which

was presented with urgency by the officers of that church, particularly by Dr. Smith's close friend, Mr. Harmon Brown. Dr. Smith was thus induced to accept an invitation to preach in the church. He was received with the utmost cordiality, very large congregations attending both morning and evening. He was urged not only by members of the church but by ministers in Baltimore to accept the charge but found himself unable to make up his mind to leave Hampden-Sydney. In 1857 the Central Church again asked him to be its pastor and he was again strongly drawn to accept. "The Central Church," Dr. Smith wrote in his diary, "is full of having me and me above all others. . . . Here there is a good opportunity to build up the great cause of evangelical religion in families and among people heretofore destitute."

Furthermore, Dr. Smith was in doubt about the value of his work at the Seminary. He thought that certain members of the Seminary's Board of Trustees, some other influential ministers and a portion of the students were hostile to him. He feared that the Seminary had no great prospect of future usefulness, because of the decline of its influence in North Carolina and Virginia. Hence in May, 1857, he formally resigned his professorship. But the Board refused to accept his resignation. Dr. Dabney, Dr. Moses Hoge and other friends urged him to remain at Hampden-Sydney and assured him that the feeling against him was of small consequence. Resolutions of the Presbyteries of Lexington and West Hanover together with other expressions of the attitude of the churches in Virginia, had already indicated a strong desire that he remain. Accordingly, he finally decided to do so and again declined the call to Baltimore.

In 1858 he was asked to preach in the First Church of Louisville in circumstances which indicated that a call was under consideration. He was much inclined to go, but finally decided that he would not wish to accept the call if offered, and hence declined the invitation. In 1859, while at the meeting of the General Assembly at Indianapolis, Cyrus McCormick asked him to consider a position at the new Presbyterian Seminary of the Northwest, later McCormick Seminary, but Dr. Smith for various reasons was unwilling to consider this change of work.

Dr. Smith's life was now, as might be expected, more studious than previously. He prepared in his early years at the Seminary a number of serious works. In 1859 he published, in cooperation with the Rev. A. R. Fausset, an English scholar, an edition of the Poetical Books of the Bible, with a critical and explanatory commentary, Dr. Smith preparing the sections on Psalms and Proverbs. This work was published in England, and after the Civil War it was brought out in the United States. In 1859 also his prize essay, *Family Religion*, appeared in book form under the imprimatur of the Board of Publication of Philadelphia. This was chosen from sixteen manuscripts written in a contest for a prize offered by "a Southern Gentleman" for "the most approved treatise on the obligation imposed by religion on the family."

Dr. Smith experienced a considerable amount of difficulty in finding time for this work among the manifold duties and distractions of his life at Hampden-Sydney. In addition to the great amount of travelling which he was forced to do, he was frequently called upon to counsel the Seminary students on their scholastic, religious and personal problems. The college students also sought his aid and advice. The social customs of old Virginia were hardly conducive to scholarly investigation. Frequent visits were exchanged among the families on "the Hill." Out-of-town guests were constantly appearing at Dr. Smith's hospitable home in spite of the merciful obstacle presented by the six miles of bad road between Hampden-Sydney and the nearest railway station at Farmville. For example, a young cousin arrived in 1855 for a visit and soon invited to the house, against Dr. Smith's wishes, a number of her friends. As the visit was drawing to an end, the harassed professor recorded in his diary, "The crowd begins to break up and I breathe more easily."

Nevertheless, Dr. Smith came in time to love the life he had chosen. He complained of the frequent interruptions to his scholarly work. He spoke at times of the "deadly" and "killing" monotony of the place. But after all he did get a fair amount of time for productive intellectual pursuits. Without abandoning pastoral work and preaching, he was able to devote himself primarily to education, to which he always had had a strong inclina-

tion and to which he was drawn by his great interest in young people. His position also afforded him increased opportunities for taking an active part in the larger work of the national Church. He enjoyed country pursuits, the preparation of his garden in the Spring, the setting out of fruit trees and the trimming of the raspberry bushes. So after three years as a seminary professor, he writes:

All in all, no mode of spending my time is more congenial than that pursued here.

III. PERSONAL LIFE AND IDEALS

Since Dr. Smith, during the years preceding the Civil War, continued to keep his diary, it is possible to give some account of his daily life, his thoughts and his ideals during these years, though the picture must be much less complete than that which it was possible to make of his personal and inner life at an earlier period, since after 1854 he wrote in his diary less fully than previously,² and after 1858 generally made weekly rather than daily entries.

Dr. Smith's circle of friendships had now widened to include a large number of the more prominent ministers and laymen in the Church. He remained on terms of close friendship with Dr. Moses D. Hoge, who was becoming more and more a power in the Presbyterian Church. Another Richmond friend was Mr. Samuel Pierce Hawes, whose wife was Dr. Smith's cousin and whose daughter, Virginia, married the Rev. Edward Payson Terhune and as Marion Harland became an authoress who was well known and much beloved, especially in the South. She and Mr. Terhune were frequent visitors to Hampden-Sydney before and after their marriage, and in 1860 Dr. Smith visited them in Newark, New Jersey, where Mr. Terhune was a Presbyterian pastor. With Dr. Robert L. Dabney, Dr. Smith had of course long been intimate, since Mrs. Dabney was his wife's sister and Dr. Dabney had been pastor of Tinkling Spring Church when Mr. Smith was at Staunton. Now the two brothers-in-law and Seminary colleagues in

²THE UNION SEMINARY REVIEW, August, 1945, vol. LVI, pp. 376-379.

the little world of Hampden-Sydney were thrown into even more intimate association. There was between them a mutual feeling of respect, admiration and affection. Yet their views of church and public policy at some points were quite antithetical, and, strong-minded men as they both were, they never hesitated to oppose each other. Consequently, sharp words were often exchanged between them in private and public debate.

Dr. Smith had many good friends in the North, especially in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, if the last-named can be regarded as a northern city. He had pleasant visits to Princeton Seminary, where Dr. Hodge and the two Alexanders were among his close friends. Another friend of long standing was Cyrus McCormick, whose family in Rockbridge County throughout Cyrus's childhood and youth had been closely associated with their pastor, the Rev. James Morrison, afterwards Dr. Smith's father-in-law. This friendship, which was renewed at the General Assembly of 1859 at Indianapolis and during a visit in 1860 to the inventor in Washington, was to have important consequences at a later crisis in the history of Union Seminary. Indeed, when that crisis came in the days after the Civil War and the Seminary was in such great need of aid, Dr. Smith was able to recall to the attention of Mr. McCormick his promise made seven years earlier, in response to his Virginia friend's request, that after establishing the new seminary at Chicago he would then "do something" for Union. Dr. Nathan L. Rice, Mr. McCormick's friend and ally in the battle against "radicalism" in the western part of the Church, was also a good friend of Dr. Smith, who tried in 1859 to interest him though without success in a possible opening in Union Seminary.

One of Dr. Smith's closest friends was Dr. Cortlandt Van Rensselaer, whom he had several times visited at the delightful home of the latter in Burlington, New Jersey, and had come to know very well indeed during his stay in Philadelphia, since Dr. Van Rensselaer was serving there as Secretary of the Board of Education and as editor of the *Presbyterian Magazine*, (monthly), and *Home, School and Church*, (annual). In 1860, Dr. Van Rensselaer was in his last illness, though still in middle life. Dr. Smith writes as follows of his parting with his friend:

Found him very prostrate, thin and deathly looking, but soul filled with love of Christ. That, he said, was enough,—in view of that he felt that he left nothing in giving up this world. Our visit was short. His wife and sister were with him, both very calm and solemnly cheerful.

Dr. Smith's growing family, though a cause at times of anxiety and care, held chief place in his laborious life. His children were his companions at home. The older ones accompanied him on some of his numerous journeys and contributed very much to the satisfaction which he generally derived from travelling. Thus in 1854 he was delighted with the interest displayed in sight-seeing, and especially in mechanical appliances, by his eldest daughter, Mary Moore, who, he remarked, "has all my curiosity." He took her with him to the meeting of the Assembly in 1860 at Rochester. Now, still more like himself in her keen delight in travelling, she was a stimulating companion. Of the return journey he writes:

The ride down the Hudson last Saturday was splendid and dear little M. enjoyed it highly. She has enjoyed her visit to N. Y. also . . . Had a fine ride down the Bay Wednesday, P. M. . . .

During the visit to Washington "M, was in raptures at Mount Vernon and the Capitol." Upon arriving at Hampden-Sydney, he was pleased at the performance of his eldest son at his college commencement:

Morrison made a pretty good speech Tuesday night, [wrote his father], and his commencement speech today was creditable.

Dr. Smith's general views on religious and ethical matters during his later and middle years will be dealt with in a subsequent article in this series. It seems pertinent, however, to give an account at this point of his attitude towards some of the more urgent ethical problems which were characteristic of the years prior to the Civil War. In the second article on his life it has been noted that he conceived of Christian ethics as having application to social as well as to purely individual problems, and that he studied with interest and admiration the work of church leaders in Germany, France and England who were attempting

to apply Christian principles in dealing with problems of poverty, unemployment, crime, vice, ill health, and bad housing conditions.³ In the third article, it has been shown that Dr. Smith, in his early years as a pastor, undertook to deal directly with the social problem with which he was most conversant, namely, that of education for the masses, and that he devoted much of his energy and influence to advocating practical measures for developing better schools in his own state. During the period of his life now under review, he continued to show interest in social problems. He was still active in the cause of public education, but the opportunities for usefulness in that sphere were not so great during this period as in the earlier and the later decades of his life.⁴ He had little close contact with city life, but he nevertheless showed a keen interest in urban social problems during his visits to northern cities. In 1858 he endeavored to cultivate a sense of social responsibility among the Seminary students by enlisting their aid for a young man in the neighborhood who was ill and in distress.

One of the chief social abuses of the South and of other parts of the country, the practice of duelling, i. e., of engaging in mortal combat because of supposed affronts to an individual's personal "honor," was attacked by Dr. Smith with great vigor in a sermon which he delivered in the college chapel on the occasion of the death of Charles Edie, one of the college students, who was killed by another student when he refused to withdraw an offensive statement he had made about him, the latter student being acquitted by the trial jury. In his sermon, Dr. Smith made "a strong protest against this false code of honor" which caused the tragedy and which accounted for the leniency of the jury. The sermon produced a deep impression upon the students and was printed at their request.

Again, it might be noted that Dr. Smith's theory of the Church's functions provided a basis for a good deal of activity by the Church in the social sphere. He criticized Dr. J. H. Thornwell's position taken at the General Assembly of 1859 when the latter opposed a resolution commending the work of the Ameri-

³THE UNION SEMINARY REVIEW, November, 1944, vol. LVI, pp. 12, 14, 16.

⁴*Ibid.*, August, 1945, vol. LVI, pp. 359-363.

can Colonization Society on the ground that the Church was a spiritual body and had no temporal functions. Dr. Smith held, on the contrary, that

the church, though a spiritual body and for spiritual functions, has other agencies which though subordinate are important for the right discharge of its duties. Thus the Diaconate was established to care for serving tables—a function of this spiritual body to be performed by a part of its constituted officers whose qualifications are spiritual, but the work is a secularity. Now in a given case, a church diaconate in administering for the temporal benefit of the poor free negroes might feel called upon to provide for their removal to the African Coast, and thus the church as such becomes for the nonce and to a certain extent a patron of the colonization scheme. Why not recommend the Society through whose agency the affair is conducted?

The passage which has been quoted illustrates the fact that in the South during the period before the Civil War everyone concerned with problems of social morality was brought face to face with the question of the Negro and slavery. Dr. Smith's views and actions regarding this problem at this period were developed of course from those he had held in the preceding stage of his life.⁵ He continued to regard the promotion of the Negro's spiritual welfare as among the primary duties of the Christian and of the Church. He continued his earlier practice of ministering to the spiritual needs of Negroes. At the meeting of the General Assembly of 1855 he referred to the fine work done by the Ashmun Institute in Pennsylvania, a college and theological Seminary for colored men, as one of the greatest achievements of the Presbyterian Church.

Regarding the institution of slavery, Dr. Smith's opinion, at least until a very few years before the Civil War, was not markedly different, in some respects, from those which most Southerners then held. He resented the attitude of the abolitionists, who were growing more and more numerous at this period in the North. At the time of the introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854, he reported with distaste a sermon in one of the northern churches in which a preacher "abused and blackguarded slavery

⁵THE UNION SEMINARY REVIEW, August, 1945, vol. LVI, pp. 378, 379.

. . . and all who had anything to do with its preservation." He had little sympathy with the attitude of the New England delegates to the Assembly of 1855 who "lectured [the Southerners] very freely on slavery" in spite of the fact that the former "knew nothing of negroes." He felt so strongly about the activities of the Free Soilers in 1854 that he thought it might be wise for the South to secede from the Union, as some of the extremists from the lower slave states were then advocating. Yet during the years when the slave system was driving the two sections of the country towards the catastrophe of civil war, Dr. Smith's dislike for the system, which was already strong, seems to have deepened into an irreconcilable antipathy. Thus he appears to have virtually agreed with the estimate of slavery made by Frederick Law Olmsted in his well known descriptions of the South published in 1856 and succeeding years. After reading one of Olmsted's books, Dr. Smith wrote in his diary on December 21, 1858:

I am utterly astonished that I should ever come to Virginia to live after having had an opportunity to reside in Pennsylvania, [i. e., as Secretary of the Board of Publication], but one's inconsistencies are amazing.

Oh what trouble,—running sore, constant pressing weight, perpetual wearing, dripping, is this patriarchal institution! What miserable folly for men to cling to it as something heaven-descended. And here we and our children after us must groan under the burden—our hands tied from freeing ourselves.

Dr. Smith's feeling at this time was influenced in part by a long series of disagreeable experiences growing out of neglect, shiftlessness, disobedience and thieving on the part of his slaves, of whom one at least was virtually incorrigible. Hence he writes on December 31, 1858:

I am more and more perplexed about my negroes. I cannot just take them up and sell them though that would be clearly the best I could do for myself. I cannot free them. I cannot keep them with comfort.

With this worry I have also had a great deal of trouble about the future of my family if left in a slave state and condemned as I have been to drag on with negroes. *I am determined now to avail myself of the first clear opening to move out. . . .*

What would I not give to be freed from responsibility for these poor creatures. Oh, that I could know just what is right.

Views similar to these were coming to be entertained by other thoughtful people in the South. Thus Dr. Smith, in referring to a conversation with Dr. Moses D. Hoge on December 13, 1858, upon the question of "owning or hiring or selling negroes," writes:

Find he and I agree exactly. He is evidently by no means settled to stay forever in R[ichmond].

IV. THE CIVIL WAR

In accordance with his attitude towards slavery, Dr. Smith deprecated the talk of secession in the months preceding the Civil War.

I cannot see, [he wrote on October 31, 1860], how our people can be so infatuated to rush into division and civil war it maybe with nothing to be gained on either side which will not as well be attained by gentler counsels and plans.

Yet when the secession of the lower South took place, Dr. Smith seemed to put the blame for this action on the North and especially on the "Black Republicans," since they "refused all overtures of peace," while "the more patriotic [were] still endeavoring to secure peace on just terms."

I have felt, [he continued], that a month or so since the whole south ought to have combined in a conditional secession, leaving to the North the responsibility of breaking up the union. Now I am disposed to doubt whether Virginia had not better remain as she is.

But when the Fort Sumter incident occurred, he obviously approved fully of the decision of his state to secede and published in the *Central Presbyterian* a letter to one of the prominent northern ministers containing an able defence of the Southerners' action, arguing that they were merely defending their territory against subjugation by the North.

Of the conditions at Hampden-Sydney and in Virginia generally at this crisis, he writes on May 1, 1861:

We are in the midst of preparations for war. Dr. A[tkinson, President of Hampden-Sydney College] has raised a college company and my dear boy, [Morrison, his elder son], has come home to join it. . . . Our convention has passed the secession ordinance and we are to vote on the 23rd instant. The enthusiasm of the people is without bounds. Companies are forming everywhere.

He was of course deeply interested in the fortunes of the Hampden-Sydney company, to which his son belonged. When he learned that it had been sent to northwestern Virginia (now West Virginia), he was much disquieted.

I have felt from the first, [he writes], that nothing but God's special providence can save our little army out there. They are poorly commanded and have had no time to be fully prepared for this hard service. The enemy, too, is of our own household, and infuriated against E[astern] Virginia.

Soon the news arrived that the entire company had been captured at Rich Mountain and had been released on parole, i. e., upon the condition that they would not re-enter the army. Hence Dr. Smith at once set out to find his son in order to give him succor if he should need it and to facilitate his return home. He first went to Richmond in the endeavor to get some news of the company's whereabouts, and then, learning that it would pass through Staunton, he went to that town, arriving shortly before the company was due.

I had made preparations, [he writes], to go on to meet [the company] but didn't like to take up M[orrison] and leave the others walking, so I concluded to stay in Staunton and made arrangements for them to ride in wagons from Monterey, and got room in the Female Seminary to keep them, and passports to get them along the road.

As the company was approaching Staunton, Dr. Smith went on his horse to meet it. He was finally able to locate his son, whom he found in good health, and brought him to Staunton, where both father and son found lodging and the friendliest hospitality from old and valued friends.

During the remainder of the war, Dr. Smith, like most people in the South at this time, was burdened with care and anxiety. He was still deeply attached to the Confederate cause. Yet by April, 1862, he despaired of success.

The spirit of the people, [he wrote], does not seem put down. But I feel further resistance will avail nothing.

He was of course somewhat cheered by the victories of Lee, Jackson and other Southern generals in 1862 and 1863 but seems not to have recovered any real hope of success.

The professors at the Seminary shared the economic distress so general among the southern people. Their salaries were maintained, and even increased, in nominal value, but with the depreciation of the Confederate currency and the consequent inflation, they were no longer in any sense adequate. In the latter part of the war, as will be explained at a later point, even these salaries ceased to be paid. Hence Dr. Smith was forced to seek other means of meeting the rather heavy expenses of supporting his large family. Something was furnished by the College Church, of which he became sole pastor upon Dr. Dabney's departure to become a regimental chaplain and later adjutant on General "Stonewall" Jackson's staff. Indeed, the church paid not only his promised salary but a bonus in addition. By strenuous labor and the assistance of one or two faithful servants Dr. Smith was able to produce on his own acres a considerable amount of corn, pork, oats and other foodstuffs. Some of this he was able to sell, and thus, being a producer as well as a consumer, he avoided some of the disastrous effects of the inflation that towards the end of the war increased with such rapidity. In 1864 his former congregation at Staunton generously presented him with a horse to replace the faithful Davy which had died in that year.

During the latter part of the war Dr. Smith suffered severe domestic afflictions. A beautiful and fascinating little boy, Dabney, to whom the parents and the other children were deeply attached, suddenly became ill, and died in January, 1864, at the age of two. Morrison, the older son of the family, had returned to the army a few months after the expiration of his period of parole. He was

at first quite happy, coming at least twice on furloughs to joyous reunions with his family. But in the severe fighting during July, 1864, his health was broken, and after a stay in a military hospital, he came home in a very weakened physical condition. Nevertheless, after some improvement in his health as the result of a sojourn in the mild climate of North Carolina, he returned to his company in March, 1865. But he broke down completely during the retreat of the army from the Richmond-Petersburg area. He again came home and gave what help he could to his father in the arduous physical labor which was necessary for the support of the family. The unfortunate young man never really recovered his health. Shortly after the close of the war, while engaged in preparing himself for the ministry, he began rapidly to decline and in a few months his life came to an end.

There were a few cheering notes in the wartime gloom. The remarkable wave of religious feeling which swept through the army also influenced the young people of Hampden-Sydney, and during the autumn of 1863, several, including Dr. Smith's third daughter, Emily, united in communion for the first time. Mary Moore obtained a very satisfactory teaching position and towards the close of the war set up her own school at Hampden-Sydney with the assistance of the second daughter, Fanny.

The academic duties of the Seminary professors during the war years were very light. On the day appointed for the opening of the session of 1861-2, so few students were in attendance that the beginning of classroom work was postponed for several days. Only twenty-two were actually in attendance during this session. In March, 1862, the Confederate Government made an urgent call for more troops and consequently all the Seminary students left except four who had been in the company of the "Hampden-Sydney Boys" captured at Rich Mountain and remaining on parole. After the close of the session, all of these students, one of them being Parke P. Flourney, who afterwards married Mary Moore Smith, were exchanged and returned to the army. At the opening of the session of 1862-3, no students were in attendance, and only four appeared during the Autumn, in spite of the joint petition of the faculties of Union and Columbia Cem-

inaries to the Confederate Congress that theological students be exempt from military duty. One student enrolled in the Autumn of 1863 and two early in 1864. During the last year of the war, only one student, who had been exempted from military service because of physical disability, was in attendance. In view of these circumstances, the professors were permitted by the Board "to seek usefulness in partial missionary labors." Dr. Smith appears to have utilized this opportunity to the full, since, as has been seen, it had been his custom even when the Seminary was in regular operation to make frequent preaching missions to neighboring churches.

Hampden-Sydney, being out of the zone of combat, did not suffer until the close of the war from the devastation inflicted on many parts of Virginia. But after Lee's retreat to Appomattox, only thirty miles away, the village was filled with Union soldiers.

We had, [writes Dr. Smith], throngs of the enemy here Friday [April 13, 1865] and that night we did not go to bed. The campfires and noise of the army were perceptible all around us. On Tuesday [April 17] while at breakfast, I was sent for to see Mr. Samuel Anderson, dying. I returned to find my premises crowded with soldiers who carried off all my corn and other feed. Simon [his servant] had, with Peter B. [another Negro] secured and saved my horses. We got through the turmoil and devastation better than we expected.

V. THE COLLAPSE AND REVIVAL OF THE SEMINARY

The financial condition of the Seminary, however, at the end of the war, was exceedingly bad. Over one-fifth of the endowment which had been invested in bank stock and Confederate securities was totally lost. Of the remainder, amounting in 1866 to \$110,000, \$100,000 was invested in 6 per cent bonds of the State of Virginia and the rest in bonds of the State of North Carolina and of one of the southern railroads. On all of these bonds the payment of interest had been suspended, and there was no prospect that it would be resumed in the near future. Hence there were no resources with which to pay the salaries of the professors. Furthermore, there were no funds to pay the scholarships on which a considerable number of the students had depended to enable

them to attend the Seminary. Finally, the physical plant of the institution had fallen into a bad condition because of the lack of repairs during the war. The roofs were in such a state that it was necessary to put buckets in the garrets of the buildings during heavy rains. In addition, depredations had been committed upon the property by lawless wanderers during the latter part of the war.

Such was the situation when

about the last of June, [1865], Mrs. Harmon Brown of Baltimore came on bringing \$100 in money to each of the professors and cloth and clothing for their families.

Mrs. Brown, it appears, was acting as the agent of a group of Baltimore people interested in the welfare of the Southern Presbyterians and especially of Union Seminary. She and her husband were possibly the warmest friends of Dr. Smith in Baltimore, and it will be recalled that Mr. Brown had been especially active in attempting to gain Dr. Smith's consent to accept the pastorate of the Central Church of that city. It will also be recalled that Dr. Peck of the Seminary Faculty had been pastor of the Central Church from 1857 to 1860. Upon her arrival, Mrs. Brown made a suggestion which led to the solution of the pressing problems of the Seminary:

She proposed, [wrote Dr. Smith in his official report of the matter], that one of our number should accompany her home on her return, assuring us that by a personal explanation of our condition, important aid could be secured towards keeping the Institution open. The duty seemed to devolve on the undersigned. He never undertook the performance of a duty with more reluctance, but is constrained to add, he never performed one with more unmingled feelings of satisfaction and with more true comfort.

Further information regarding this mission is given in a report of the Seminary Faculty to the Southern General Assembly:

On reaching Baltimore he was most cordially welcomed by those whose friendly and sympathizing sentiments for Southern people had for years endeared them to thousands of sufferers by wounds and disease and imprisonment. He applied to no others. After spending two weeks

in Baltimore, he was encouraged to extend his visit to New York. After spending about three weeks in all in the prosecution of his object it was left for farther effort in the hands of a most efficient and zealous clergyman of Baltimore.

Dr. Smith comments as follows on his work at this time :

From the first day on which he entered Baltimore through two months of much arduous physical service to the day of leaving that city, he remembers no incidents connected with his service either in Baltimore or New York, calculated to give him pain, or on which he looks with material regret. Nearly every donor to the temporary relief of the Institution manifested as much pleasure in contributing as could be entertained by the recipient.

Dr. Smith in this first expedition expected to raise only four or five hundred dollars. Actually he raised in four weeks \$4,000. This made possible the immediate resumption of the Seminary's work :

We advertized, [wrote Dr. Smith], to reopen the Seminary in September and to sustain all students of proper qualifications who needed aid. In the course of the fall, we had 24 students.

The Seminary Faculty gave the following explanation to the General Assembly of their action in making their offer of aid to needy students :

They felt that this was not only an act of justice to these young men, but one of soundest policy on the part of the Church. There may be, for reasons of temporary force, and in special localities, a redundancy of ministers, but a few years of the ordinary ravages of death, and of the natural increase of population, not to mention what may occur by immigration, will effect great changes in the aspect of the church. It is therefore believed that prompt and zealous efforts should be made to sustain the means for furnishing our people increasing numbers of able and faithful ministers of the Gospel.

This policy, however, made the needs of the Seminary exceedingly urgent. Hence the Synod of Virginia in October, 1865, resolved to send Dr. Smith to Great Britain to solicit aid. This

project, however, was not carried out, and he was sent instead, in November, 1865, again to Baltimore and New York. In these cities he

raised enough money, with what had been obtained, to pay the professors \$1,650 each for the year and provide keep for all students needing it.

In addition to the funds thus obtained from the North, "the Virginia churches," according to Dr. Smith, "notwithstanding their poverty, contributed in money and provisions for the support of the students . . . over \$1100," during the period from October, 1865, to April, 1866. The total amount collected up to this point, as reported to the Board of Trustees in May, 1866, was almost \$9,500. The Board then suspended the collection of funds in Virginia and North Carolina, and commissioned Dr. Smith

to proceed at once to such parts of the country as in his judgment present the most inviting field for such labor, there to solicit contributions toward the endowment and use of the Seminary, and in every way to increase the interest already awakened in its behalf.

To carry out the Board's directions, Dr. Smith therefore went in the summer of 1866 to Baltimore, New York and Boston. As a result of his efforts at this time and also of his previous visits and correspondence he succeeded in obtaining about \$50,000. In all of his activity in raising funds, Dr. Smith acted as the agent of the Seminary. It would appear that important assistance to his efforts was rendered through correspondence by his colleagues at the Seminary, Dr. Dabney and Dr. Wilson and probably by Dr. Peck, who was well known in Baltimore, where he had served for several years as a pastor before going to the Central Church in that city.

The gifts obtained for the Seminary at this time were of such great importance in the movement for reviving the struggling institution that it would seem well to give some account of the lives of the chief benefactors and of the circumstances leading to their making the gifts in question. This will be treated in detail in the next article in the series. In the case of the largest contributor, Cyrus Hall McCormick, unusually full records regarding the whole

matter have been found in the two collections of the papers of Mr. McCormick and his wife, namely, those in the libraries of the McCormick Historical Association and the Nettie Fowler McCormick Biographical Association in Chicago.

NOTE

As in the case of the previous articles in this series, the author has received invaluable assistance from the Editor of the REVIEW, especially in the form of transcripts from the Synod, Presbytery, Assembly and Seminary records. Miss Virginia Roderick, Librarian of the Nettie Fowler McCormick Biographical Association, and other officials of that Association and of the McCormick Historical Association, have been exceedingly helpful, especially in furnishing me with copies of letters exchanged by Dr. Smith with Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus McCormick. The librarians of McCormick Theological Seminary, Union Seminary, Richmond, and the College of Emporia have also been coöperative in furnishing me with books from their collections.

Dr. Smith's daughter, Mrs. A. J. McKelway, Sr., has given me the use of notes and transcripts made by her from the official records of the Seminary and has made available Dr. Smith's diary and other material relating to his life. She requests that any person having in their possession material of this character should correspond with her at her residence, 2071 Park Road, Washington 10, D. C.

JESUS AND HIS BIBLE

BY ROBERT E. SPEER, D. D., LL. D., Litt. D.,

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The last chapter of the Gospel of Luke is surely one of the most interesting chapters in the New Testament. For one thing, it raises the curious and perplexing question why the disciples failed to recognize Jesus when He appeared to them after the Resurrection. When Mary met Him in the garden early on Easter morning she thought He was the gardener. When in the evening He appeared to the Eleven "they supposed that they had seen a spirit." When He appeared to the disciples on the mountain in Galilee, as He had appointed, "some doubted" at the sight of Him. When He appeared to the Seven as they fished in the Sea of Galilee and He stood and called to them from the shore, only John seems to have surmised who He was. And so on the occasion of His walk with