

27 1912

THE NEW-YORK OBSERVER

Faith

There have been days, and brighter,
 when faith would not more staunchly grow;
 but when the sky is o'ercast with clouds
 and the wintry blasts of the world's great
 sorrows chill the life, faith, somehow, comes
 back to warm the heart and clear the mists
 away. Then--not till then--do we see with-
 out the darkened glass, and the vision is
 golden; and then, we know, not as in part,
 but even as He knows and is able to be
 known, Who teaches us, as children are
 taught, to reach our hands out and up to Him.

JANUARY 25,

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THE GRAVES OF PRINCETON'S FIRST ALUMNI

By the Rev. J. R. Graham

The announcement was recently made that the long-forgotten grave of the first Alumnus of Princeton College had been discovered. He was, at the time of his death, pastor of the Blooming Grove Church, in Orange county, N.Y., and his grave was found beneath the church.

The fact that the first Alumnus of Princeton Seminary died in the pastorate of the Goodwill Church in the same county, and is buried in its graveyard, gives additional interest to this announcement, as these two churches are contiguous and the graves of the two Alumni, thus distinguished, are but a short distance apart.

The Rev. Enos Ayres was a member of the first class graduated from the College of New Jersey, receiving his diploma November 9, 1748, before the college was removed from Newark. As diplomas were then delivered to the class alphabetically, and as the name Ayres is the only one in that class beginning with "A," it is fair to say he was the first Alumnus of the college. Mr. Ayres having studied theology under the celebrated Dr. Bellamy, entered the Presbyterian ministry in 1750, and a few years later was settled as pastor of the Blooming Grove Church. This church is on the highway leading southwest from Newburg, through the center of Orange county and is almost in the shadow of the mountains at West Point. His ministry here ended at his death in 1764. For

a long time his grave was lost sight of, but recently some Alumni of Princeton found it beneath the church.

The Rev. Milton Blain entered Princeton Seminary when it opened in 1812, and was the first student matriculated, and therefore its first Alumnus. After serving several other churches, he was settled, in 1830, as pastor of the Goodwill Church in Orange county, a distance of only seven or eight miles from Blooming Grove. He continued to serve this church until his death in 1857, and his remains are buried in its cemetery.

There may be nothing significant in this coincidence; yet to some it will be at least interesting to know that the first Alumnus of each of our two great institutions at Princeton, found his most important field of labor in the same neighborhood, and that the graves of the two men are in such close proximity.

It may be added that the history of these two contiguous churches has been interesting, but widely different. The Rev. Abner Reeve, who succeeded Mr. Ayres at Blooming Grove, "in his zeal for independency," left the Presbyterian Church in 1770; but his departure was attended with no effect upon his church. Some fifty years later, however, the Rev. Mr. Arbuckle, then its pastor, having adopted views entirely out of harmony with those of the Presbyterian Church, to avoid the discipline of his Presbytery, withdrew from its jurisdiction. His church as a body withdrew with him, and has since maintained itself as independent, and (it is said) Unitarian in creed.

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On the other hand, the Goodwill Church, though not without conflict at times, has adhered steadfastly to the faith of its fathers. After the death of its pastor, the Rev. Andrew King, in 1816, the Rev. William Gray was called. The Presbytery of Hudson, finding him an avowed Hopkinsonian, refused to place the call in his hands. The Synod, when appealed to, reversed this decision; but the General Assembly, on appeal, sustained the Presbytery. In this final decision the great majority of the church acquiesced. A minority seceded and organized a church in connection with the Dutch Reformed. Some years ago this church was dissolved and many of its families returned to Goodwill, which has had no other troubles of a doctrinal character, and has always been unusually free from personal frictions.

Winchester, Va.

The first course of six lectures on the L. H. Severance Foundation will be given in the chapel of the Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, during the week of February 25. The lecturer will be Mr. Edward Warren Capen, Ph.D., Hartford School of Missions. The titles are: 1, "The Problem"; 2, "Progress in the Removal of Ignorance, Inefficiency and Poverty"; 3, "Progress in the Ideals of Family Life and the Position of Woman"; 4, "Progress in Social Reconstruction"; 5, "Progress in Ethical Ideals"; 6, "Christianizing Tendencies in non-Christian Religions and the Resulting Challenge to the Church."

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Hammering Away

BY CLELAND B. McAFEE, D.D.

There is a saying of Sancho Panza, "Pray to God and keep hammering away!" Both lines of action are important. Some of us pray easily, and some of us hammer away steadily, but it takes both to make either really successful. Prayer is not meant to be a shield for inactivity; it is not a polite form of laziness. When we say we have left a thing entirely to God, we must be sure that He has not given it back to us to be attended to for Him. On the other hand, struggling and straining to get something done often wears us out when prayer would so stimulate us that we would do better work. We pray best when we hammer away, and we hammer away most effectively when we pray.

When we work without prayer we are treating our task or our problem as though it were our own. When we join prayer to our work, we come to realize that our task is God's and is given us by Him. Prayer reminds us of the higher partnership under which we do our life business. It keeps a duty from seeming impossible or a result from seeming incredible. When they asked Morrison if he thought he could make any impression on China, he replied, "No, but I think God can." He never learned that from merely hammering away. He faced an impossible situation with entire equanimity because he had counted God in, and in the light of His presence the situation was not at all impossible.

But prayer gives us patience to keep hammering away. All of us ministers know the "sag" of the second or third year of a pastorate, when the new is worn off both pastor and people. The pastor has learned what fixed elements there are in his new church, what his people will not do and where their hard spots are. The people have learned what the new pastor cannot or will not do, how he will or will not preach this or that kind of sermon, and all the rest. For a year or so the new hope carries them over hard places. But there are not many pastors who have not had days in the second or third year when a call somewhere else would not have been welcomed. They are days when letters go to close ministerial friends in which much can be read between the lines. It is a critical time. Pass it safely and new values will appear, real values, in pastor and people. Happy the man to whom the call does not come! Let him keep hammering away at his work. His blows may not make a tune, but they will keep up his courage, and as he takes God into his thought he will not fail.

Mothers know more about it for their children than fathers. Generally there is a discouraging period in a boy's life, when he seems hard as adamant, closed against good influences and counsel, seemingly started on a wrong course. Often a girl has a time of giddiness, becomes boy-struck, foolish, unreasonable. Other people, fathers often included, lose patience with them. Fathers generally say that they "will come out all right." Mothers may think that, but they are pretty sure that they must be brought out right; they will not "come out" so without somebody's care. So they pray to God and keep hammering away. More counsel, more advice, more warning—how amazing mothers are! And how contemptible a grown man seems when he declares he was given too much advice when he was a boy, or had too much religion in his boyhood, and that he now disregards all of it—how contemptible he seems! Never mind, you mothers! You are in the right of it. Keep hammering away, and be sure to pray to God while you do it.

The rule holds in all good work. Prayer and hammering away are the two straps by which all heavy loads are lifted, all great tasks accomplished. Young men succeed in business,

young women become good teachers, Sunday school workers gain power, church helpers gain skill, by doing both. Some people can make great plans, wise plans, can announce them in the papers, can ask God's blessing on them, and then see them fail utterly because they have no patience to work them out. They must have new schemes to work on, must go around tapping here and tapping there, striking steadily nowhere until the rock breaks. Others can wear their lives out in good deeds, doing their utmost to make plans work, pounding away on obdurate situations, and getting nothing accomplished. We need fall into neither mistake. We can learn to pray to God and keep hammering away.

Brooklyn, New York.

HOME MISSIONS OFFICIALS CONFER

The Home Missions Council held its annual meeting January 17-18 in the assembly room of the Presbyterian Home Board in the Presbyterian Building, New York. The Council is composed of the Home Mission Boards representing the evangelical, religious bodies in the United States. During its three years of existence it has helped to make much history, and the plans more fully developed at this meeting will make still more.

The report of the Committee on Indian Affairs is always intensely interesting. Dr. Thomas C. Moffett is the chairman of this committee. For some months an attorney has been retained in Washington to represent the Council in the interests of the Indians. This counsel is no less eminent than the Hon. Henry B. F. Macfarland, who has rendered signal service and has in hand now several matters of great importance. At no point have the home mission forces of the various religious bodies come together more harmoniously or effectively than through the activities of this Indian committee.

The investigation of neglected fields instituted at the last meeting of the Council has been in progress. The report of the Council's special committee at this session, and the recommendations for the further prosecution of the task, elicited the greatest interest. Among the recommendations heartily adopted was the co-operation of the Boards, through a committee of five, with the State Survey committees, organized in fifteen of the Western States. These State committees are already at work, and by July 1, 1912, it is anticipated that a survey of this vast region by school districts in the discovery of religious conditions will have been completed.

Plans for this survey were inaugurated through the Council's special committee and the deputation from the boards who visited these States during November and December. Consultations were held in each State with field superintendents, State and district committeemen, State board members and others directly concerned with the administration of home mission affairs. The plan for the complete survey then proposed was unanimously adopted.

During one day for an hour and a half the Council of Women's Home Mission Boards met in joint session with the Home Mission Council when the report of a special committee was received and its recommendations heartily adopted. This committee had in hand the proposition of a plan of joint campaign in the interests of the home mission cause. The plan, enthusiastically supported by both organizations, contemplates the setting apart of the period of November 17-24, 1912, as special home mission week, when all the churches of all denominations will be asked to unite in the systematic presentation of the home mis-