



The Princeton Seminary Bulletin

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No. 1

The One Hundred and Twentieth Commencement

The Seminary finished its one hundred and twentieth year with its annual Commencement on Tuesday, May the seventeenth. On the previous day the Board of Trustees held its annual meeting, reviewing the affairs of the Seminary, awarding the degrees which were conferred at Commencement and making provision for the next session. At a time when so many educational institutions are financially embarrassed, it is gratifying that thus far Princeton Seminary has suffered only a slight shrinkage in income from investments.

At the Chapel service on Sunday morning President Stevenson chose as the text for the baccalaureate sermon: "Go tell this people," Isaiah 6:9. The Rev. W. L. McEwan, D. D., LL.D., President of the Board of Trustees, assisted in the service and in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

The gathering of the Alumni and others for the Commencement on Tuesday morning exceeded the capacity of the First Presbyterian Church. Dr. McEwan, President of the Board of Trustees, presided. The prayer was offered by the Rev. Peter K. Emmons, of the Board of Trustees. The Commencement Address was given by the Rev. W. Taliaferro Thompson, D. D., Professor of Christian Education in Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia. The Rev. W. P. Pugh, Secretary of the Board of Trustees, read resolutions passed by the Board on the occasion of the retirement, because they had reached the age limit of service fixed by the ordinance of the Board, of the Rev. Geerhardus Vos, Ph.D., D. D., as the Charles T. Haley Professor of Biblical Theology, after thirty-nine years of occupancy of the chair; and of the Rev. Paul Martin, A. M., as Registrar and Secretary of the Faculty, after a term in office of twenty-six years.

Fellowships and Prizes were awarded and degrees bestowed as indicated elsewhere in this issue of the Bulletin. President Stevenson made the parting address to the Graduating Class, finely wrought in the language of Scripture.

A feature of the Commencement that will linger in the memory of those present was the musical numbers rendered by the Westminster Choir led by Dr. John Finley Williamson. These included "The Church's One Foundation" as a Processional; "Built on a Rock the Church Doth Stand," Christiansen; "Grant unto Me the Joy of Thy Salvation," Brahms; and as a Recessional "Jerusalem the Golden."

very cordial and from a number of them there have come reports of very successful gatherings of Alumni.

John W. Voorhis, Instructor in New Testament

In response to the invitation of the Board of Trustees, the Rev. John W. Voorhis, A. M., has accepted the position of Instructor in New Testament for the coming year. Mr. Voorhis was graduated from Princeton University in 1917 and received in A. M. degree in 1919. He was graduated by Princeton Seminary in 1920 and the records show that he was a student of very unusual ability in all the subjects of the course.

On graduation from the Seminary Mr. Voorhis became pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Paoli, Pa. He later was assistant in the Market Square Church of Harrisburg, Pa., where he made a specialty of developing the educational activities of the church. Since 1928 he has been Associate Professor of Bible and Religious Education in Park College, Missouri, and made a reputation as a thorough and successful teacher. Mr. Voorhis will teach New Testament Greek and the course in New Testament Biblical Theology, and will offer an elective on some New Testament subject.

The Ministry of Today

HUGH THOMSON KERR, D. D.

Address delivered at the luncheon of the Alumni Association, May 17, 1932.

Twenty-five years ago in delivering the Commencement Address to the students of New College, Edinburgh, Dr. Marcus Dods said that he did not know whether to pity them or envy them. They were going out into a perplexed world.

One probably has the same feeling today as he sees a group of young men going out into the ministry. Ours, too, is a perplexed, befogged, bewildered age. Two things may be said which may make for a balanced judgment. First of all there have been recurring periods all through Church history when days were dark and minds befogged. Thirty years ago when Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclaren) was Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in England he championed a return to Puritanism in order to stem the tide of secularism. We can go back on stepping-stones to the origin of the Church and discover darker periods in Church history than we have ever known. There was the period of Deism and Rationalism, the period of the Inquisition, those long years too when the Church was so corrupt that the light burned only where heroic individual Christians like Wycliffe and Huss fought for the Truth. There was the hundred years of night when Christianity was driven into obscurity in the monasteries and there was the long period following the apostolic age when persecution decimated the Church and when antagonists like Celsus drove forward their intellectual flank attacks.

The second thing to say is that there is confusion in every other department of life. Politics would appear to be bankrupt. The profession of law is wondering where the line of demarcation is to be drawn. Industry is at the cross roads and education is not sure of its goal.

We, however, face our own age and must understand it. We must understand first of all the secular invasion that has taken place with the inevitable encroachment upon time and culture and the crowding out of the higher values of life. It can all be put into a sentence spoken by Dean Inge, "If a person spends 16 hours a day dealing with Things and 5 minutes a day trying to find God, it will not be strange if Things are 200 times as real as God." There has been also a social invasion. The area to be covered by religion has widened vastly in our day. It is no longer satisfactory for one to dwell apart, contemplating the world in isolation. He must mingle his life with the world and live the Christian life in all its widening contacts. There has been also a religious invasion. Christianity has been contacting other re-

ligions and men have been throwing out bridges seeking to make alliances with the faiths of other lands. There are people who hold a sympathetic attitude towards Gandhi who said, "I cannot set Christ on a solitary throne because I believe God has been incarnate again and again."

We have been rationalizing religion instead of experiencing it; apologizing for Christ instead of obeying Him; trying to make prayer logical instead of effective; carrying on academic discussions about God, limiting Him, restricting Him, syllogizing about Him; talking about the re-discovery of God as if God were waiting for the Presbyterian Church, or the Methodist Church, to certify to His whereabouts. There is a touch of humor about it all, as there is about the old scotch dominie's prayer, "O, Thou who art our only hope and ultimate hypothesis." Think of making use of an "ultimate hypothesis" in a sick room!

This rationalization has swept us off our feet and we have been in a hurry to surrender our Christian vocabulary. I think I know how necessary it is to speak in the language of our generation but words are precious jewels and should not be exchanged for others which do not have equivalent value. I am very fearful that the new language does not fully express the old faith. I do not think "reflex action" is a better term than "repentance." I do not think that "an inferiority complex" explains the New Testament "doctrine of sin." I do not think that the "unification of consciousness" is an exact term for the "new birth." I do not think "social control" is a substitute for "family worship." I do not think "religious education" is an equivalent for "evangelism" and I do not think "astronomical intimidation" means the same as "the fear of God."

This is the age that ministers face today. What can we say in all humility to one another so as to be of help in days like these? There are three things that I would like to say.

I.

We must work for a renewal of the radiant enthusiasm which belongs essentially to Christianity. When he retired as Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Anderson gave the Methodist Conference four suggestive watchwords concerning himself: "(1) I will never be a grouch. (2) I will always

be a student. (3) I will always cherish the memory of those who have gone. (4) I will try to keep alive as long as I live." It is this last rule that I am interested in now. There are many ministers who have not kept alive and this is the cause of so much depression in the ministry and in the pulpit. The thrill, the sense of joy, the radiancy of life is essential if we are to commend the religion of Jesus Christ as a Gospel.

II.

We must see that we have a quickened conscience. A minister is a man under contract, called to a definite, particular and important task. There is nothing the Church needs so much as a definite consecration of the ministry to definite parish tasks; first of all to preaching and then to the cure of souls and these two are one. Our Church may be small but the Church of Jonathan Edwards was small and the Church of Samuel Rutherford was small and the Church of the father of Sir William Robertson Nicoll was small and yet he had in his library over 17,000 volumes and knew every house, every family, every person in his parish.

III.

The ministry today needs to discover anew the genius of adaptation. There must be some sort of spiritual strategy in presenting the Gospel in our day and generation. We marvel at the wisdom and adaptability of Jesus and we marvel at the enthusiasm and adaptability of St. Paul who was "all things to all men that he might save some." The Gospel never changes. It is the same yesterday, today and forever but our approach to it must be the approach of our own day and generation and it may be that old methods and old ways and old services must needs be discarded in order that we may find a fresh approach to Him who is the same in the Twentieth as in the First Century.

The Westminster Choir School

Princeton Seminary hopes to be greatly benefited by the fact that in the future the Westminster Choir and the Westminster Choir School are to be located in Princeton. The Choir will continue to give concerts in different parts of the