

**THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION**

**OF THE**

*Princeton* **THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
**OF**

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**AT PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY**

**MAY FIFTH—MAY SIXTH—MAY SEVENTH**

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**PRINCETON  
AT THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
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PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PRINCETON IN THE WORK OF THE  
PASTORATE

ADDRESS

BY THE REVEREND WILLIAM LEONARD McEWAN, D.D.  
Pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh

THE glory of a theological seminary consists in the number and character of the men it trains for the gospel ministry. However eminent may be the scholars produced, as distinguished from preachers, and however excellent their services to the church and the world in the defense of truth and the refutation of error, it must still be true that the chief work of a theological seminary is in the preparation of men for the service of preaching. Scholars are the by-products of such a school. They are vastly needed. They are greatly used. They are to be honored and appreciated. We take pride in, and give thanks for, the great scholars who have come from this institution. A theological seminary exists, primarily, for the purpose of training, for pastors and preachers to the common people, men who believe they have been called of God into the ministry of the gospel. That school of the prophets most fully meets its end which sends forth in largest numbers men who are qualified to "rightly divide the word of truth", who preach with holy confidence "the unsearchable riches of Christ", and who have also learned that, with full and accurate scholarship and persuasive eloquence, they cannot do their work without the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit of God. It is by this standard we measure to-day the work of Princeton Theological Seminary for these hundred years.

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This school of the prophets was born in the fulness of time. In the early years of the nineteenth century the necessity for the establishment of a theological seminary by the Presbyterian Church was evident. Theological education was in a chaotic state. Colleges such as Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Hampden-Sidney, and others were preparing men for the ministry, and many individual pastors had classes of young men under their care. There was a growing and wide-spread conviction that the Presbyterian Church ought to establish a school for the one purpose of training ministers.

The Presbytery of Philadelphia, led by Dr. Ashbel Green, brought the matter to the attention of the General Assembly in 1805. In 1808 Dr. Archibald Alexander of Philadelphia, the retiring Moderator, emphasized the Church's duty and responsibility for the supply of ministers. The Committee of the General Assembly, appointed in 1810 to draft a plan for a Theological Seminary to be established at Princeton, presented resolutions which were adopted, one of which was,

“That, as filling the Church with a learned and able ministry without a corresponding portion of real piety, would be a curse to the world and an offense to God and His people, so the General Assembly think it their duty to state that in establishing a seminary for training up ministers, it is their earnest desire to guard, as far as possible, against so great an evil. And, they do hereby solemnly pledge themselves to the Churches under their care, that in forming and carrying into execution the plan of the proposed seminary it will be their endeavor to make it, under the blessing of God, a nursery of vital piety as well as of sound theological learning, and to train up persons for the ministry who shall be lovers as

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well as defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus, friends of revivals of religion, and a blessing to the Church of God”.

The Board of Directors held their first meeting in Princeton on June 30th, 1812. On the 12th day of August the Seminary was formally opened by the inauguration of Dr. Alexander. Three students matriculated at the opening. The number increased to nine before the close of the first year.

The Assembly of 1813 elected Dr. Samuel Miller of New York City as a professor, and in 1820 Dr. Charles Hodge was added to the Faculty. These professors, by God's grace and under His guidance, laid the foundations of Princeton Seminary. They planted the seeds which through the years have grown, bearing the fruits upon which the Church has lived. They started those streams that have brought life whithersoever they have come, and which have deepened and widened with each succeeding generation.

Princeton Seminary has had illustrious names on the roll of its Faculty, and the great men who have been among its teachers have been known and honored among the lovers of evangelical truth throughout the world, but there have not been any who have not delighted to recognize and rejoice in the leadership of these three great heroic scholars and saints.

Never were men more unlike in temperament and talents, and never were men more united in the one supreme purpose of teaching and interpreting the Word of God. They supplemented each other until the impression made upon the students was not confused, but clear, definite, distinct and, perhaps, unique. This impression was the Princeton stamp upon its students. It was not so much

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the imparting of a particular system of theology, as leading men to a love for the truth, an unqualified acceptance of the Word of God as the infallible rule of faith and practice, and a great sense of responsibility upon every teacher of the Word. There was a full appreciation of high scholarship, with a devout and humble sense of dependence and a thorough evangelical spirit.

Dr. Alexander's distinguishing characteristic was a wonderfully clear and penetrating insight into Christian experience. He had himself been brought to a knowledge of Christ after much sense of sin and travail of soul. Under the trees in the mountains of Virginia he had spent hours and days in fasting and prayer and the study of the Bible. He had learned to observe closely his own mental states and exercises and to weigh carefully the experiences of his soul. He was peculiarly qualified to deal with young men preparing for the ministry. His great ability as a teacher and his broad scholarship were united with a child-like simplicity of heart, transparent sincerity, and a great loyal, personal love to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was also a man of plain common sense, and he knew how to deal with men of every class. It is not strange that his coming to Princeton, humanly speaking, was the means of a revival of religion in the College and in the town during the first year of his residence.

Dr. Miller had a comprehensive view of pastoral duty. He understood and loved the polity of the Church. He was a great authority in the department of history. When he was called to undertake the work of a professor, coming from the foremost pulpit in the land, he wrote in his diary,

“Resolved, that I will endeavor, by the grace of God,

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to set such an example for the candidates for the ministry committed to my care as shall convince them that, though I esteem theological knowledge and all its auxiliary branches of science very highly, I esteem genuine and deep piety as a still more vital and important qualification.

Resolved, that, by the grace of God, I will not merge my office as a Minister of the Gospel in that of Professor. I am persuaded that no Minister of the Gospel, to whatever office he may be called, ought to give up preaching”.

Dr. Hodge’s characteristic that marked him from others was the emphasis he put on objective faith in Christ. Those who heard him speak of the love of Jesus Christ for sinful men, the glory of His Person, the greatness of His redeeming grace, never forgot how his whole soul seemed to bow in adoring worship and his heart to overflow in grateful love as he preached and taught. His class-room was a place of worship. When he was considering the call given to him to become a teacher in the Seminary he wrote, “I believe that I would rather be homeless and penniless through life than in any way whatever enter such an office unsent of God”. “It seems to me that the heart, more than the head, of an instructor in a religious seminary qualifies or unfits him for his station”. The first sentence in his inaugural address was, “The moral qualities of an interpreter of the Scriptures may all be included in piety, which embraces humility, candor and those inward feelings which can only result from the operations of the Holy Spirit”.

Dr. Alexander was here thirty-nine years, Dr. Miller twenty-six years and Dr. Hodge fifty-two years. Under these greatest scholars of their generation and most attractive Christian gentlemen there was formed a cer-

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tain type of pastor and preacher. They accepted the Bible as the Word of God, and sought intelligently to explain it to the people. They understood and received the Reformed Theology as the system taught in the Bible. They believed in the form of government of the Presbyterian Church and the dignity and authority of its courts.

At the time the Seminary was opened this country was at war with Great Britain. The fourth President of the United States, James Madison—a graduate of Princeton College—was closing his first term of service. The population of the country was about seven million. A new national spirit was rapidly forming. The tide was moving west. New territories were being settled. New communities were being formed. The Church had need of more ministers. Into these fields the Seminary began to send its graduates. They worked a quiet but thorough revolution in the ideals and accomplishments of the pastorate. They exercised great influence wherever they went. The Church and the country felt the reinforcement of the army of the Lord in the coming of these strong, trained preachers and leaders. They set higher standards for the ministry. They led the Church to expect better service. They influenced whole communities by their superior attainments and ability as leaders. They became the evangelists under whose preaching great revivals swept over the country.

In the first ten classes graduated there were two hundred and fifty-six students. From these graduates there were six moderators of the General Assembly; two bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church; fifteen college presidents, presiding over such colleges as Princeton, Yale, Jefferson, Dickinson, Hanover, Centre, Western



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University of Pennsylvania and others. From these classes there went forth missionaries and pioneers to every part of the land. Throughout the South, from which many of the students came, over the wide, opening West to the far Pacific slope, their influence was felt.

It would not be possible in the limits of this address even to mention the names of the Princeton men who have done their work for the Church and for God in this land, for, with the graduating class of this year, there are five thousand nine hundred and forty-seven Alumni.

It would be interesting to take up one class after another, and make mention of the services of its members.

In the first class of the Seminary was William Anderson McDowell. Graduating from Princeton College in 1809, he had already been pursuing a theological course under the president, Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith. Upon his graduation he settled at Bound Brook, N. J., and afterwards in the First Church of Morristown. Threatened with pulmonary trouble he spent the winter of 1823 in Charleston, S. C., and was pastor of the church there for ten years. He was elected moderator of the General Assembly in 1832, and, by the Assembly of 1833, was appointed Secretary of Domestic Missions. In this office he served until his death in 1851, doing an unsurpassed work. Of him it was said, "Being dead he yet speaks, and will for generations continue to speak, in the Churches planted by his instrumentality, the missionaries encouraged by his sympathy, and the souls brought under the enlightening influence of the Gospel by his unwearied exertions".

From that same first class was graduated Benjamin Franklin Stanton. Remarkable revivals accompanied his preaching during his nine years' pastorate at Hudson,

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N. Y. He was pastor of the church at Hanover, Va., from 1829 to 1842. After the death of Dr. John H. Rice, he was lecturer on theology in the Union Theological Seminary of Virginia. He died of consumption in 1843. Dr. Weed said of him, "For twenty years he was dying of consumption, and knew he was dying of consumption, still he never ceased to preach while he had strength to stand in his pulpit"; and the Honorable Ben Butler testified, "In his theological views Mr. Stanton conformed, *ex animo*, to the standards of the Presbyterian Church as expounded at Princeton".

From the second class there went forth sixteen men. John Finley Crowe was pastor in Hanover, Ind., and in 1824 began the school which grew into Hanover College, with which he was connected until his death in 1860.

From this second class John Todd Edgar went forth to labor in Kentucky and Tennessee. He was moderator of the General Assembly in 1842.

Eliphalet Wheeler Gilbert, from the second graduating class, labored in Wilmington, Del. twenty years, where there is a memorial church bearing his name. He was president of Dickinson College, pastor in Philadelphia, and director of this Seminary for six years.

Elisha Pope Swift was a member of this class. He labored in Pittsburgh and Allegheny for forty-one years. He was a professor in the Western University of Pennsylvania and instructor in the Western Theological Seminary. He exerted as wide an influence, left as deep an impression and did as much constructive work as any of the great men who have labored in that part of the country. He founded the missionary society which afterwards became the present Board of Foreign Missions.

In the third class there were seventeen men. Among

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these was Jeremiah Chamberlain. He founded three colleges, one of which was Centre College, Kentucky.

George Washington Gale, a member of this class, led a colony from New York state and settled in Illinois, where his name was given to the town of Galesburg. He was the founder of Knox College.

Thomas Charlton Henry, of this class, died in 1827, thirty-eight years of age, but not until he had received the degree of D.D. from Yale, and had been associated with the movement that resulted in the founding of Columbia Theological Seminary of South Carolina.

Sylvester Larned went directly from the Seminary on a mission to the Indians of the Southwest, and to investigate the religious conditions of the city of New Orleans. He is described as the most finished orator and the most effective preacher in America in his day. Wherever it was known that he was to preach crowds thronged the churches. People of all classes were attracted by his preaching in New Orleans and a splendid church building was erected by popular subscription, and he was called to be the pastor. He died of yellow fever in New Orleans on his twenty-fifth birthday. It would be hard to find any other man of whom such estimates of power and promise were made.

Samuel Lyle Graham, of the class of 1818, was a missionary and pastor for seventeen years. Extensive revivals are recorded in the churches in which he preached. He was elected to the chair of Ecclesiastical History in the Union Seminary of Virginia in 1838. During his professorship he continued to preach regularly. When he was sick with his last illness in 1851, Dr. Rice came into his room and said, "Dr. Alexander has got home before you", thus bringing to him the news of the death

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of his dearly beloved teacher. The dying man raised himself in bed and cried out, "Oh, is it possible? Is it so? I had almost shouted 'glory'. Heaven has seldom received from earth such an inhabitant. His society in heaven will be invaluable".

There is not time to pronounce the names of all the eminent graduates of this Seminary, who have been known throughout the Church. There have been forty-two moderators of our Church, and fourteen moderators of other branches of the Presbyterian Church, making fifty-six in all. Of the seventy-eight professors in theological seminaries connected with the General Assembly of our Church at this time, exactly one-third, or twenty-six, are graduates of Princeton. There have been one hundred and twenty-four chaplains in the Army and Navy. There have gone out four hundred and twenty-five foreign missionaries who have labored in all the lands where the Church has thrown its battle lines. There have been one hundred and three secretaries of the Boards of our Church and of agencies connected with it. There have been one hundred and sixty-one presidents of colleges and universities. There have also been six hundred and eighty professors and teachers, and sixty-six editors.

By general consent, perhaps the most eminent preacher ever sent out from this school was Dr. James W. Alexander of New York, of the class of 1824.

Albert Barnes, of the class of 1823, was for forty years the pastor of the First Church of Philadelphia. When his name was known throughout the English-speaking world, and his books were printed in tens of thousands, he died while making a pastoral call on a sick parishioner.

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Henry A. Boardman, of the class of 1833, had but one charge. He was pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia for forty-seven years. He was moderator of the General Assembly in 1854, and elected to the chair of Pastoral Theology in Princeton Seminary in 1853. During his pastorate three thousand four hundred and fifty persons united with his church, fifteen hundred of them on confession of their faith.

No history of Kentucky could be written without recognizing the influence and the work of the sons of Princeton. Woven into the civil and ecclesiastical history of that state are the names of Robert J. Breckinridge and John Breckinridge, John C. Young and William C. Matthews, Nathan L. Rice, Stuart Robinson, Thomas Cleland, L. W. Green and many others.

Nor would the history of Western Pennsylvania be complete without the names of Elisha P. Swift, Wm. S. Plumer, Wm. M. Paxton, M. W. Jacobus and George T. Purves.

Indeed if there were time to revive the memories of those who are familiar with the great movements that are written in our history, the reading of the names of the men whose influence has been great in the time of crisis or through long years of service would be sufficient—James W. Alexander, John C. Backus, for forty-eight years in Baltimore; J. Trumbull Backus, for forty-one years in Schenectady, N. Y.; George D. Baker, for a score of years in Philadelphia; Albert Barnes, forty years in Philadelphia; Charles C. Beatty, for sixty years in Steubenville, Ohio; William Blackburn; Henry A. Boardman, for forty-seven years in Philadelphia; Rob't J. Breckinridge of Kentucky; James H. Brookes of St. Louis; T. W. Chambers, nearly half a century in New

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York City; William C. Cattell, Joseph Christmas, founder of the American Church in Montreal; Bishop T. M. Clark; Richard F. Cleveland (father of a president of the United States); Theodore L. Cuyler, for thirty years in Brooklyn; Doak of Tennessee; J. T. Duryea, Philemon H. Fowler, Sam'l W. Fisher, P. D. Gurley of Washington, D. C.; Leroy J. Halsey, A. A. Hodge, C. W. Hodge, E. B. Hodge, F. B. Hodge, William H. Hornblower, William Henry Green, Charles K. Imbrie, pastor, secretary and editor; Sheldon Jackson, Bishop John Johns, M. W. Jacobus, S. H. Kellogg, John M. Krebs, of New York; John C. Lowrie, Willis Lord, Bishop A. N. Littlejohn, J. M. Ludlow, Erskine Mason, Bishop C. B. McIlvaine, David Magie, George W. Musgrave, Thomas Murphy, N. G. Parke, R. M. Patterson, W. S. Plumer, S. I. Prime, William M. Paxton, George T. Purves, Nathan L. Rice, Rendall of Lincoln, David H. Riddle, Stuart Robinson, Charles S. Robinson, W. D. Snodgrass, William A. Scott, W. B. Sprague, J. G. Symmes, E. P. Swift, H. J. Van Dyke, C. Van Rensselaer, Charles Wadsworth.

It was, of course, my purpose to refrain from speaking of the living men, some of whom have not fallen short in reputation and service of the greatest of those who have finished their work. They stand today in places of importance and usefulness all over the land. I beg to make two exceptions to the rule adopted.

In "The Presbyterian" of this week is the following letter from James Park of the class of 1846, the oldest living graduate of this Seminary:

"I matriculated in the Seminary in September, 1843, and took the full course, graduating in 1846; and, by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, have been permitted

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to serve him in the active ministry of the Gospel for three score years; and for the past six years to hold the position of Pastor-emeritus in the congregation in which I was born, and to which, by its call, I gave the last forty years of my active ministry.

Now, on the verge of the ninetieth year of my life, the infirmity of old age denies me the pleasure of being present at Princeton's celebration in May. But as long as life and memory last, my heart and soul shall rise in praise and gratitude to God for the founding of Princeton Theological Seminary, and, for me, the favor of sitting at the feet of such men as Dr. Archibald Alexander, Dr. Samuel Miller, Dr. Charles Hodge, and Dr. Joseph Addison Alexander.

May the good hand of God always, henceforth as hitherto, be upon thee, 'O Princeton, loved of God and men' ''.

The other exception is that of a graduate of this Seminary who for twenty-six consecutive years has been serving four country churches in Pennsylvania. His father preceded him in a pastorate of thirty years in the same field. The people are poor. The churches are small. The community is primitive. In these twenty-six years he has gathered three hundred souls, mostly on confession of their faith. This is not a large number, to be sure, but they have been gathered from a scant population. In these years these churches have contributed out of their small resources fifteen thousand eight hundred and sixty-two dollars for their congregational expenses, less than six hundred and fifty dollars per year. In the same time they have contributed eight thousand two hundred and twenty-six dollars through the Boards of the Church, of which sum forty-three per cent. has gone to

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the cause of foreign missions. But out of that man's ministry the Church received another contribution. One son from that charge is a missionary in the home field, and one son and two daughters are in the foreign field, and two daughters are now in preparation for the foreign field. Strong elders also, serving in prominent churches and doing active work, were trained under this man's ministry. Neither earthly honors nor pecuniary rewards have come to this pastor. He is a representative of a great number of faithful men who do their work as unto the Lord.

In all these hundred years Princeton Seminary has been true to the ideals and standards of its first great organizers, and it has been loyal to the Word of God. No student has, by reason of any teaching from any professor, had his reverence for or belief in the Word of God, as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, weakened or destroyed. No student has here learned to question the essential deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, or has lost any of the passionate loyalty of his heart for Him as Saviour and Lord. No student passes through these halls without having it impressed upon his heart and mind and conscience that the only salvation for a lost world of sinful men is that gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe. Men who have the spirit of this Seminary go forth to their solemn calling as preachers of the gospel, caring for the vital and essential truths of revelation, and putting these things above the temporal and the accidental.

From this Seminary have been graduated about six thousand men, the greater part of whom (a little over half) remain until this present day. From more than two thousand pulpits every Sabbath day they preach the



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Gospel of Jesus Christ to multitudes of men and women. Year after year they stand in their places, the broken ranks being re-filled, proclaiming the everlasting righteousness and the infinite love of God. Who can estimate their influence upon the thought and life of this nation?

Standing this day between the living and the dead, representing the army of the sons of Princeton, we know that the thoughts and prayers and sympathy of men from the East and the West and the North and the South are turned toward this place and these services. Yea, may we not also believe that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses who have finished their labors on earth, and that they feel there what we say here, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry"? And we who are here may humbly, reverently and sincerely add, "and I thank Him that in His good Providence it was given to me to study the mysteries of His grace and the deep things of His Holy Word in this School of His Prophets at Princeton".