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Address by the Rev. John M. Vander Meulen, D.D., LL. D.

“The Burning Heart”

Fellowships and Prizes

Alumni Notes

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No. 2

The Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church

PRESIDENT J. ROSS STEVENSON, D.D., LL.D.

The first institution in America for the training of Presbyterian ministers was the "Log College" at Neshaminy, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. This was founded by William Tennent in 1726, when there was a great spiritual awakening and a crying need of ministers for destitute congregations. Hitherto the church depended upon the mother country or upon the New England colleges for its leaders. The Log College, as the first literary institution of the Presbyterian Church above the public schools, definitely contemplated the education of ministers, and its graduates were accepted for licensure and ordination. Among these were eminent men; e.g., Gilbert Tennent, Samuel Blair, John Blair, called to teach Theology in the College of New Jersey, and Samuel Finley, the fifth President of the same college.

Following the death of William Tennent, in 1746, the Log College was abandoned, and it fell to the lot of Jonathan Dickinson, at Elizabethtown, who in his own home instructed certain candidates for the ministry in their theological studies, to continue the succession. Desiring that more ample provision should be made for the intellectual and religious culture of

youth, and more especially for the thorough training of such as were called to the Christian ministry, Messrs. Dickinson, Pierson, Pemberton and Burr, with others in their Presbytery of New York, turned their thoughts to the erection of a college. A charter was obtained and in 1747 the College of New Jersey began its career in the home of Jonathan Dickinson, its first President.

Like his immediate successors, his paramount interest was in religion, and in his first class of the College, numbering six men, five were candidates for the ministry. Provision was made for instruction not only in moral philosophy, but in theology. This continued until 1811, when by "terms of agreement" entered into between the Trustees of the College and the Trustees of the General Assembly, the task of teaching theology was turned over to the Seminary.

In a very real sense the Seminary is an outgrowth of the College. For many years after its establishment, as stated by Dr. Henry J. VanDyke, the connection of the Seminary with the College was formally recognized. The professors of the one institution gave occasional instruction in the other.

subscribed a fund of \$250,000 to cover this yearly expense. Furthermore, we shall need additional endowment for professors' chairs only partially endowed amounting to \$250,000. For necessary repairs and the upkeep of the buildings, it is estimated that we need \$61,000.

Just now we are appealing for the \$20,000 which we must have if the Seminary is to go forward with its present staff. The Executive Committee of the Alumni Association appeals to the Alumni to secure what they can toward raising this amount. In case an Alumnus cannot make a personal subscription, he may be able to secure something from members of his congregation. A subscription card is sent herewith, which we urge each Alumnus to fill out promptly.

Historic Appeal for Funds

Alumni will be interested in an appeal sent to the graduates of the Seminary a hundred years ago:

Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 3d, 1833.

Dear Brethren,

The Association of the Alumni of the Theological Seminary, organized during the Sessions of the last General Assembly, appointed us a standing committee for the purpose of aiding in carrying into effect the important objects for which it was formed. We, therefore, the members of that committee, beg leave to address you on the subject of the present pecuniary embarrassment of our Alma Mater. The report made to the General Assembly by the trustees of the G. A. on the state of its funds, and more recently the address of "the committee appointed by the General Assembly to procure from the churches a sufficient sum to meet the necessary expenses to the Seminary", etc., have sufficiently informed you

of the very depressing state of these funds.

Without some additional aid, this venerable institution must materially suffer, and large portions of the Professors' salaries be left unpaid. In the spirit, therefore, of our Association, and in accordance with one of its resolutions, we venture to address this circular to you; and do hereby earnestly solicit your early cooperation in effecting so important an end.

If every Alumnus will give, or secure not less than ten dollars per annum for five years, with particular reference to the salaries of the Professors, ample provision will be made for the wants of the Seminary during that time; and leisure be afforded for making more permanent arrangements.

You will find on the other page a form which embraces the above plan. Do us the favour to return this sheet, as soon as practicable, addressed to the office of the Board of Education, No. 29 Sansom Street, if you find it consistent with your duty to unite with us. If not, you need not return it.

We act under the sanction of the Committee of the General Assembly.

All monies to be remitted to the Treasurer of the Trustees of the General Assembly, or paid to his authorized agent.

In christian affection we remain,
very truly yours,

ALBERT BARNES,
SAMUEL G. WINCHESTER,
JOHN L. GRANT,
JOHN BRECKINRIDGE.

The Plan of the Seminary

THE REV. A. W. BLACKWOOD, D.D.

The Seminary operates under the *Charter and Plan* adopted by the General Assembly in 1811 and amended by subsequent General Assemblies. This Plan sets forth the design of the Seminary in part as follows:

"It is to form men for the gospel ministry, who shall truly believe, and cordially love, and therefore endeavor to propagate and defend, in its gen-

uineness, simplicity, and fulness, that system of religious belief and practice which is set forth in the Confession of Faith, Catechisms, and Plan of Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church; and thus to perpetuate and extend the influence of true evangelical piety, and gospel order." (*Charter and Plan*, January, 1931, p. 24.)

Under this *Charter and Plan* the General Assembly commits the management of the Seminary to the Board of Trustees, consisting of thirty-three persons, not more than eighteen of whom are to be ministers and not more than fifteen of whom are to be ruling elders. All of the trustees must belong to the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., and must be elected by the General Assembly. Before taking office each Trustee must subscribe the following formula, which is probably more exacting than in any corresponding institution:

"Believing the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice; sincerely receiving and adopting the Confession of Faith of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; approving the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; promising to study the peace, unity and purity of the Church; and approving the Plan of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, I solemnly declare and promise, in the presence of God and of this Board, that I will faithfully endeavor to carry into effect all the articles and provisions of said Plan, and to promote the great design

of the Seminary." (*Charter and Plan*, p. 28.)

When the present Board assumed control it became responsible for large trust funds, some of the most important of which are legally available only for the maintenance of an institution in keeping with the historic doctrinal position of the Seminary. At the first meeting of the Board, on June 14, 1929, it took the following corporate action by unanimous vote. This action still stands, and will continue to stand, as the official program of the governing Board:

"In the one hundred and seventeen years of its history, Princeton Seminary has stood with firm steadfastness for the propagation at home and abroad, and for the scholarly defense of evangelical Christianity as formulated in the Standards of the Presbyterian Church. In taking up the duties assigned to it by the General Assembly the temporary Board of Directors feels that it has a solemn mandate from the General Assembly to continue unchanged the historic policy of the Seminary and to do nothing whatever to alter the distinctive traditional position which the Seminary has maintained throughout its entire history."

In pursuance of this program the new Board has constituted the present Faculty, in which every chair is filled. Since assuming control the Board has elected six professors, each of whom has voluntarily signed the following formula, which for more than a hundred years has safeguarded the orthodoxy of the institution:

"In the presence of God, and of the Trustees of this Seminary, I do solemnly, and *ex animo*, adopt, receive, and

subscribe the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, as the confession of my faith; or as a summary and just exhibition of that system of doctrine and religious belief which is contained in holy Scripture, and therein revealed by God to man for his salvation: And I do solemnly, *ex animo*, profess to receive the Form of Government of said Church, as agreeable to the inspired oracles. And I do solemnly promise and engage not to inculcate, teach, or insinuate anything which appear to me to contradict, or contravene, either directly or impliedly, anything taught in the said Confession of Faith, or Catechisms: nor to oppose any of the fundamental principles of Presbyterian Church government, while I shall continue a professor in this Seminary." (*Charter and Plan*, p. 31.)

This inaugural pledge commits every professor to the acceptance and the teaching of all the doctrines of the Reformed faith, such as, the Sovereignty of God, the Inspiration of the Scriptures, the Deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, the Atonement, the Resurrection and the Final Return of our Lord—as these doctrines are interpreted in the Standards of the Presbyterian Church. To this solemn pledge every member of the Faculty is unswervingly true.

In keeping with the design of the Seminary and with her traditions for sound learning the members of the Faculty cherish a high regard for scholarship. They seek to train strong young men who will be masters of Biblical exegesis and church history, of Christian doctrine and ethics, and of the other theological disciplines; men who will know how to justify their

beliefs in the presence of current scientific discoveries and philosophic theories, and how to employ their knowledge in meeting the spiritual needs of men and women, as well as boys and girls; men who will become able preachers and leaders in the worship, the teaching and the practical affairs of the Presbyterian Church and of other evangelical Churches, both at home and in the foreign field. In pursuance of this program the Seminary has matriculated seven thousand, seven hundred and twenty-nine students. Five hundred and sixty-one of these have served as missionaries in thirty different countries. Six hundred and forty-one came from churches representing thirty-nine foreign lands. One thousand and sixty-nine have served as ministers in denominations other than the Presbyterian.

Such a widely representative institution for the training of evangelical ministers is probably more needed today than at any time in the history of the Seminary. In a day when some seminaries are turning away from the Bible as "the only infallible rule of faith and practice", and when some conservative institutions are in danger of becoming reactionary in outlook and in method, the Trustees and the Faculty of this Seminary are determined that there shall continue to be at Princeton a strong, aggressive, forward-looking seminary committed to the apostolic faith, loyal to the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., open on equal terms to young men of promise from every evangelical Church, and employing the most approved educational methods.

To Presbyterian congregations and



MILLER CHAPEL

Erected in 1834. Renovated in 1874. Relocated and enlarged in 1933.

individuals, as well as to other Christians who share these ideals, the Trustees and the Faculty appeal for prayers and for gifts, whether large or small, to aid in keeping the Seminary true to her loftiest ideals and in making her even more of a power in the Kingdom of God.

The Seminary Alumni and Present Enrollment

THE REV. E. H. ROBERTS, *Registrar*

From a study of the Biographical Catalogue issued in 1932 and of the subsequent annual catalogues one finds that seven thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine students have matriculated in Princeton Theological Seminary. They have come from every state in the union and from thirty-nine different countries. Canada has sent over two hundred men; Ireland, one hundred and twenty-four. The far east has been well represented by Japan, China and Korea. In recent years there has been a steady stream of men from South Africa. These last, of course, have been affiliated with the Dutch Reformed Church, but Princeton has always had an open door policy towards those of other denominations. More than a thousand of her students, representing over a score of denominations, have been members of other churches. Men who have gone from her halls have served Christian groups of varied types, such as Friends, Episcopalians, Baptists, Moravians, Methodists. The great majority of Princeton men have been Presbyterians, of course, but men of other folds seeking an institution that gives scholarly training and is consistently loyal to the faith

have knocked at the doors of the Seminary.

It kindles the imagination to see the new recruits each year affixing their signatures to the pledge in the Book of Matriculation. To read through the pages of this book and to discover scores and scores of names that have become household words in the Christian world impresses one with the potentialities latent in every class. But an institution's contribution is not to be measured merely by its galaxy of shining lights. There is the measureless influence which has been exerted by that huge but unostentatious army of men who have worked quietly, faithfully but most effectively in comparatively obscure posts. Some idea of their cumulative efforts comes to us in a recent communication from an alumnus. He finds that the men who graduated with his class have already given in the aggregate more than fifteen centuries to the preaching of the Gospel; that in addition to this more than two centuries of foreign missionary work has been contributed and more than three of educational activity. Of them it may truly be said, "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

But what shall we say of the men now in the Seminary? In the current year, 1934-35, one hundred and ninety are in attendance, distributed among the various classes as follows: Graduate Students eighteen; Seniors fifty-seven; Middlers fifty-four; Juniors fifty-nine; Partials two. Compared with the previous year this is a decrease of twenty-one students. This is not due to a smaller number of applicants for admission, but to the adoption by the