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## Commencement Number

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

“The Burning Heart”

Fellowships and Prizes

Alumni Notes



# The Princeton Seminary Bulletin

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Vol. XXV

PRINCETON, N. J., June, 1931

No. 1

## The One Hundred and Nineteenth Commencement

Tuesday, May the twelfth, marked the conclusion of the one hundred and nineteenth year of the Seminary's service in training men for the Christian ministry. The Seminary has had a good year. The value to the Seminary of the reorganization whereby its two Boards were consolidated into one and the powers and functions of Trustees, Faculty and President were given harmonious definition, is being demonstrated. The Seminary's historical theological position is being cordially and loyally maintained, and the Board of Trustees, with the cooperation of the Faculty, is studying, planning and executing to make the institution the best possible in teachers and teaching methods for its mission of training young men to become effective ministers of the Gospel for the church and the world in the time in which they are called to minister. The curriculum, in its content and proportions, is being reshaped. The new members of the Faculty are proving themselves able and inspiring teachers with gifts for spiritual leadership and friendly social contact with the students.

The Commencement season reflected the spirit of the year. The Alumni and friends of the Seminary gathered in numbers completely filling the First Presbyterian Church at the Commencement. There was a general feeling of good will, of satisfaction in the progress of the Seminary, and hopeful expectation for the further increase of its usefulness.

The program of Commencement began with the Baccalaureate Service on Sunday morning. The sermon was preached by President Stevenson, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered by President Stevenson and the Rev. W. L. McEwan, D. D., LL. D., President of the Board of Trustees. On Sunday afternoon there was a Fellowship Meeting of the Graduating Class at "Springdale", the President's residence. Dr. McEwan preached in the First Presbyterian Church in the evening.

On Monday morning the inauguration of the Rev. Harold I. Donnelly, Ph. D., as the Thomas W. Synnott Professor of Christian Education, was held in the First Church. The charge to the Professor was given by the Rev. Harold McAfee Robinson, D. D., of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Donnelly's inaugural address will be printed in the November number of the Seminary Bulletin, lack of space preventing publication in this issue. In the afternoon of Monday, President and Mrs. Stevenson received the Alumni and friends at "Springdale".

On Tuesday morning Commencement was held in the First Presbyterian Church. The singing of the hymns, led by the Seminary choir, was as usual a stirring and up-

our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, as you seek to train undershepherds of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

## The Teaching of Homiletics Today

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

BY PROF. ANDREW W. BLACKWOOD, D.D.

Mr. President, members of the Board of Trustees, and other Christian friends, before I turn to the message of the hour permit me to express my appreciation of the honor which has been conferred upon me in being chosen as professor of homiletics in The Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton. I count it no small privilege to occupy the chair which has long been graced by the presence of that Christian gentleman and eloquent divine, Professor J. Richie Smith. "Herein is the saying true, 'One soweth and another reapeth'. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; others have labored and ye are entered into their labor" (John 4: 38).

I appreciate this honor most of all because it means that I am to labor here at Princeton. Together with a host of ministers who have shared her privileges in days bygone, I believe in Princeton Seminary—in her past, in her present, in her future; I honor her conservative traditions and I humbly pledge allegiance to her Christian ideals. I shall strive to be loyal to the faith of the fathers, for which this institution has ever stood, but I am even more concerned about the faith of our sons, for whose training this institution exists, and I hope to be used in helping to train the sort of young ministers whom the Church and the Kingdom need today.

One of the greatest needs of the Church, under God, is a generation of scholarly young ministers who will preach the Gospel of Christ and His Cross in a way which will meet the intellectual and the spiritual needs of living men and women, at the same time promoting

the wider purposes of the Kingdom of God. The Church likewise needs more than a few highly trained specialists who can serve as teachers of religion and allied subjects in our various institutions of learning. Opinions may differ concerning which of these two needs is the more pressing just now, but all will agree that such an institution as Princeton Seminary ought to continue to meet both of these needs, by giving to every student a broad and thorough training in the fundamental theological disciplines, and by encouraging the exceptional man to attain distinction in some one field of theological learning. No doubt every teacher of divinity students judges his success at times by the number and the character of the young men to whom he imparts a double portion of enthusiasm for mastery in his special field, but all the while he understands that such exceptional scholars are the rare and costly by-products of an institution which exists to train the majority of its students for effective service as preachers and pastors.

If I am correct in assuming that the theological seminary exists largely to supply the Church with scholarly young ministers who will preach the Gospel effectively, I may likewise assume that the work in homiletics—the science and the art of preaching—deserves its assured place in the theological curriculum. This morning, therefore, instead of pausing to justify the need for such a department in the modern seminary, I wish to discuss the teaching of homiletics today, with no specific reference to any one institution. I wish first to point out the ideal objectives of those who are now laboring in this field, and then to take up the practical ways and means by which they are striving to attain their ideal objectives. If I dwell a good deal upon practical ways and means it will be largely because homiletics belongs in the field of practical theology, and likewise because many of the problems in this field are practical rather than theoretical. Before we turn to these practical ways and means, however, we should consider the ideal objectives.

### *Ideal Objectives*

In all teaching that is worthy of the name the purpose largely governs the method. This is especially true in the teaching of pastoral theology, including homiletics. Here we should



encounter no insuperable difficulty in fixing our objectives, for we need only keep before us as the ideal finished product the kind of young minister whom the Church needs today. So let us remind ourselves what sort of finished product the Church has a right to expect after a student has taken three years of work in homiletics. We shall assume that he is a sincere Christian, that he has intellectual ability, that he has been called to preach, that he has been graduated from a reputable college, and that he has completed satisfactorily all of his work in the seminary. What then should he know—or rather, what should he be able to do—in the field of homiletics?

First of all, and quite in general, he should know how to preach. He should know how to plan, how to compose and how to deliver sermons of various sorts, to meet the different needs of men. He should have gained a working knowledge of the theory of homiletics, which has to do with sermon structure and with literary style, for in preaching, as elsewhere, "Style is the dress of thought" (Behrends); and he should have learned, at least in a measure, how to apply his theories to the actual work of preaching. From this point of view homiletics is a science, more or less exact, with principles carefully formulated and with practical guidance in the application of those principles to the making of sermons. The study of homiletics as a science has engaged the serious attention of scholarly divines from the days of Chrysostom (*De Sacerdotio*) and Augustine (*De Doctrina Christiana*) down to Erasmus (*Ecclesiastes sive Concionator Evangelicus*) and Melancthon (*De Rhetorica*), not to mention a host of more recent writers on the Continent, in Great Britain and in America.

The history of homiletics as a science is somewhat like that of English composition, which is the modern successor to old-fashioned rhetoric. One difference between the two ways of teaching young men how to write is that modern English composition tends to reduce complicated, semi-mechanical rhetorical systems to something approaching simplicity. There is a corresponding difference between the teaching of homiletics now and in days bygone. For example, Christlieb says that in the German Lutheran churches at the beginning of the seventeenth century homiletics was shriveling up into "a purely formal teaching

of method"; today it sometimes swings to the opposite extreme and encourages a sort of "happy indefiniteness". The result of such a simplifying tendency is that the ministerial student now faces no insuperable task when he undertakes to learn all that the modern Church requires him to know about the science of preaching. The materials in this field have never been so vast and varied as in other theological disciplines, and if a working knowledge of the principles of English composition as they apply to preaching were all that is involved in the work of this department, the teaching of homiletics would be far more simple than it really is. (Cf. *The Christian Preacher*, by A. E. Garvie, Scribner's, 1901, pp. 351-354 et p.)

The difficulty arises largely from the fact that homiletics is an art as well as a science. The Church rightly judges the young minister's preaching ability by what he can do in the pulpit rather than by what he may know in the study. Hence the prospective preacher should think of himself as called of God to master this finest of the fine arts—the fine art of bringing forth from the Scriptures clear and inspiring visions of truth and duty. In such creative endeavors he should constantly employ the principles of his science, as a sculptor employs his knowledge of anatomy, but all the while he should be learning how to rise above the mere mechanics of the making of sermons; he should gradually become able to preach so as to bring his hearers face to face with the living God. Thus by personal experience he should learn why Dr. James Black of Edinburgh a few years ago delivered to theological students a series of lectures under the general title—*The Mystery of Preaching* (Revell, 1924).

No young man can hope in three short years to become a master of this finest of the fine arts, but every man who goes out from the theological seminary should have fixed his preaching standards high, he should have learned how to handle his tools and he should have begun to taste the joys of creative achievement. He may not carry away with him from the seminary an imposing array of completed sermons ready for use, but he should have determined that by God's blessing upon his ceaseless labors he will learn how to preach in a style increasingly worthy of the

glorious Gospel. Thus he should be prepared to take as his motto the words of Paul to a busy young pastor—"Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (II Tim. 2: 15). When we translate these glowing apostolic words into cold American prose they tell us that the young pastor should know how to preach.

These words likewise suggest that the young minister should know what to preach. This ideal, also, is a counsel of perfection, for when he crosses the threshold of his first pastorate he can not have such a mastery of his preaching materials as he should gain during the next fifteen or twenty years of daily intellectual toil. But he should have the same sort of working knowledge of his materials as he would have if he were being graduated from the law school, or from any other professional training school. One of his main reasons for enrolling in the seminary is that he may learn what to preach, and this he does in the various departments, where he gains a working knowledge of Biblical exegesis, of church history, of systematic theology and of kindred subjects. In the study of homiletics—which logically comes after those more fundamental disciplines—he should learn how to select from the vast realms of theological learning the facts and the truths which by God's blessing will enable him to meet the needs of his fellow men. He should learn how to focus various rays of revealed truth so as to cause men's hearts to burn within them as he interprets to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning the Risen Lord. So far as practical effectiveness in the pulpit is concerned, it would matter little how much the young minister might know about the science and the art of homiletics if he did not know what to preach.

There is another ideal which is beginning to influence the teaching of homiletics; I refer to the need of training in planning one's pulpit work. When the young minister goes out to his first parish he may well think about planning his first year's preaching, somewhat as the graduate of an agricultural college thinks about planning for the rotation of crops, or as the graduate from a university school of education thinks about planning for his first year's teaching. In those secular callings the wise young graduate expects to depart from his program

whenever changing conditions require, and so does the sensible young pastor, but if he is to meet with success and joy in his first year's labors he ought to formulate some sort of program for his preaching. (Cf. N. J. Burton, *In Pulpit and Parish*, Macmillan, a re-print, 1925, pp. 254-275.)

This idea is by no means new and strange. Almost every pastoral preacher of note has done something of the sort, but always in his own characteristic way. With scarcely an exception the pastors who are now speaking from the pulpit so as to advance the Kingdom of God are deliberately planning their pulpit work somewhat in advance. Such foresight and system appear to be all the more necessary in recent years, because of the increasing demands upon the pastor's time. During the summer many a busy pastor feels the need of getting away to the mountains or even across the sea, that he may look out over the vista of coming days and search for attractive trails along which he can guide his flock to the City of God. This is the sort of spiritual leadership which we hope the students of today will give to the Church of to-morrow, and so we wish them to catch the vision of planning their pulpit work. (Cf. the various homiletical writings of C. E. Jefferson; e. g., *The Building of the Church*, Macmillan, 1913, pp. 233-268.)

When some of us look back over our first few months in the active ministry and remember how we floundered about until we began to use foresight and system in preparing our sermons we wonder why we were not encouraged to do some of that preliminary floundering while we were still in the seminary. What is the work in homiletics for if not to afford a training ground on which the student may learn what he greatly needs to know ere he crosses the threshold of his first pastorate? As a matter of course the seminary professor can give but little aid to any one student in devising plans for a prospective parish, because the professor is ignorant of local conditions, and because the student must do this sort of work for himself after he arrives on the field. But the professor can show the wisdom of making a plan to meet such needs when they become known, and he can point out the danger of substituting any mechanical plan for the vitalizing power of the Spirit of God. (Cf. *Preaching Week by Week*, The

Warrack Lectures, by A. Boyd Scott, Hodder & Stoughton, 1929.)

Still another ideal concerns the training of young ministers for leadership in public worship. In common with other non-liturgical bodies the Presbyterian Church is becoming increasingly dissatisfied with many current ways of conducting worship. All of us believe that only our best is good enough for the service of God, but many of us have fallen into the habit of offering to Him that which costs us practically nothing. (Cf. II Sam. 24:24; Mal. 1:6-13.) We Presbyterians are by no means ready to adopt a compulsory liturgy or to lessen our historic emphasis upon the sermon as a God-given means of converting the sinner and of building up the Kingdom, but we are awakening to the importance of every portion of public worship, especially the reading of the Scriptures, the offering of prayer and the ministry of music. Surely we ought to pray for a revival of old-fashioned belief in all of "the outward and ordinary means of grace"—particularly the sacraments—and we ought to expect such a revival to begin in our theological seminaries.

Many an earnest young student of homiletics fixes his gaze so exclusively upon the sermon that he scarcely appreciates the importance and the difficulty of leading in the other parts of public worship. For example, he may not dream that one of the most vital and exacting undertakings committed to any mortal here below is to lead a congregation to the throne of God in prayer. In dealing with such a student we ought first of all to ask the Lord to open his eyes that he may behold the possibilities of prayer and praise, not merely as "the setting of the sermon", but as the mystic highways along which the man of God should lead his friends in the pew close to the heart of The Eternal. In all such endeavors the service of the seminary must be largely indirect, for no one save the Spirit of God can teach a minister how to pray. But surely the seminary can encourage every student to set up in his heart lofty ideals for the hour of worship, and inspire him to determine that by God's grace he will learn how to lead in every portion of that hour so as to call no attention to himself but to bring every worshipper face to face with the Living God.

Last of all and far from least among the ideal objectives in the teaching of homiletics today is the desire that the student make the most of his God-given powers. According to the well known dictum of Phillips Brooks preaching is the communication of divine truth through a human personality. Needless to say, the divine truth is more important than the human personality, but still the beloved bishop did well to stress the importance of the personality of the man in the pulpit—a personality which expresses itself directly or indirectly in every part of public worship and especially in the sermon. Divine truth through a human personality—that has ever been God's chosen way of revealing His holy will. Hence it is the high calling of the seminary to guide the student in learning the truth which makes men free and in developing the sort of personality which will enable him to present that truth most effectively. Such a preparation for the ministry can never be "the mere training to certain tricks." "It must be nothing less than the making of a man" (Brooks).

While the ministerial student is developing a strong, attractive personality he should preserve his own individuality, and that is increasingly difficult in the midst of our highly standardized American educational systems. Too often we try to send young David out to fight in Saul's armor. Even in the theological seminary we forget that "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty", and we strive to make every young man conform to a rigid homiletical pattern. Meanwhile we know that in the history of the Church every effective preacher has differed from every other "as one star differeth from another star in glory". Hence we should resist the modern tendency towards the mass production of young ministers, and we should encourage every student to be himself, his best self, instead of a weak echo of somebody else. We should expect

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Amid the flood of recent books about Public Worship the following should prove especially interesting to our alumni: *The Public Worship of God*, by J. R. P. Selater, Doran, 1927; *Ideas of Corporate Worship*, by R. S. Simpson, T. & T. Clark, 1927; *Hymnody of the Christian Church*, by L. F. Benson, Presbyterian Board, 1927. These are still more thought-provoking: *Reality in Worship*, W. L. Sperry, Macmillan, 1926; *The Technique of Public Worship*, by Odgers & Schutz, Methodist Book Concern, 1928; *Extempore Prayer*, by M. Talling, Revell, 1902; *The Recovery of Worship*, by G. W. Fiske, Macmillan, 1931.



every one of them to hear the voice of the Spirit of God saying to him, "Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak to thee" (Ezek. 2: 1). "And when this cometh to pass, (behold it cometh,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them" (Ezek. 33: 33).

Here then are some of the ideal objectives of those who are teaching homiletics today: they wish every student to learn how to preach and what to preach, so that he will become a master workman in the Kingdom of God; they wish him to learn how to plan his pulpit work so as to meet the needs of the people with cumulative effectiveness; they wish him to learn how to lead in public worship so as to bring his friends in the pew close to the heart of The Heavenly Father; and they wish him to make the most of his God-given powers so as to become a worthy ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. Needless to say, all of these objectives are unattainable, for the only person who ever achieved perfection in this holy art was the Lord Jesus, and only by His blessing can the youth of today become an effective preacher. Hence it is with hesitation that one turns from viewing these ideal objectives and ventures to discuss practical ways and means by which teachers of homiletics are striving to reach such inaccessible heights. "Who is sufficient for these things?" "Our sufficiency is from God" (II Cor: 2: 16; 3: 5).

#### *Practical Ways and Means*

In all questions about current educational methods one must speak with caution, for the ways of teaching in professional schools are being radically changed. This is notably true in the teaching of medicine, it is largely true in the teaching of law, and it is increasingly true in the teaching of practical theology. I refer to the use of the seminar, the project method and the discussion group, as well as various sorts of survey courses and honors courses and theses courses. Some of these methods seem to have passed the experimental stage, while others doubtless have not; all of them are now being employed in the teaching of practical theology, though not to the exclusion of the older methods, for the tendency seems to be towards a blending of the old and the new.

In many a theological seminary the teacher of Junior homiletics employs a text-book because this method seems to afford the quickest and the surest way to introduce first year men to the principles which underlie all preaching. Later in the course this method is usually supplemented by lectures on the science and the art of preaching—lectures which give the professor an unparalleled opportunity to display his powers. Practical experience, however, seems to convince the teacher that something more is required than a substantial text-book and inspiring lectures. Here is the testimony of a thoughtful observer of theological education in Canada—

"There are no lectures to which students come more hopefully than to those on homiletics; none from which they return with greater bitterness. The reason is plain—no man can tell another how to preach. There is no demand more ridiculous than that which is often made upon divinity schools that they *turn out* preachers. A preacher who would be *turned out* would not be worth listening to. . . . In Christian service there can be no mechanical repetition. Efficiency depends on the principle of individuality, purified and intensified by sharing in a great ministry, and by the influence of a great dynamic." (T. B. Kilpatrick, *New Testament Evangelism*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1911, p. 59.)

It is no wonder, therefore, that teachers of homiletics have been using still other paths of approach, one of the most attractive of which is the biographical. The quickest and the surest way to encourage many a student to set up lofty homiletical ideals is to bring him face to face with the master preachers of the Christian Church throughout the ages. When a young man goes out to preach as a passing supply he hears much about his prowess in the pulpit, and he is tempted to be satisfied with his attainments, but when he becomes acquainted with such men of God as Athanasius and Chrysostom, Savonarola and John Knox, Spurgeon and Alexander Maclaren, Frederick W. Robertson and Phillips Brooks, he begins to appreciate the possibilities of the Christian pulpit, and he understands why the late Silvester Horne wrote about *The Romance of Preach-*

ing. After such a course many a student humbly resolves that by God's grace he too will become worthy to stand before men as an ambassador from the court of heaven, and to plead with them to be reconciled to God.

Closely allied with the biographical method is the analytical. The difference between the two is that in the one the emphasis is upon the personality of the preacher, whereas in the other it is upon the structure and the literary style of the sermon. The analytical method is being employed by different teachers in different ways but in all alike it bears some resemblance to the laboratory method of teaching physical science. First in the study and then in the class room the student analyzes one sermon after another, in order that he may learn for himself how the master preachers have impressed truth and duty upon the minds and the hearts of men. After the student has analyzed sermons of various sorts he undertakes the much more difficult and important work of synthesis, in order that he may apply to his own preaching the principles which he has discovered in the world's great sermons. Needless to say, the value of such a course depends largely upon the diligence and the resourcefulness of the student. (At this point I am indebted to personal correspondence with Professor E. H. Byington, of Boston, and to the text-book of the late President Ozora S. Davis—*Principles of Preaching*, University of Chicago Press, fourth impression, 1929.)

Still another path of approach to the study of homiletics is by way of psychology. This method is comparatively new and it has not yet found universal favor, partly because some of its devotees have made extravagant claims. Practically the only book of consequence in this field is by a conservative thinker, Charles S. Gardner, D. D., professor emeritus of homiletics and sociology in The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville. (There is an earlier book in German—*Wie predigen wir dem modernen Menschen*, by F. Niebergall, Tübingen, 1909.) In the preface of his book—*Psychology and Preaching*, Macmillan, 1918—Dr. Gardner says that the study of psychology has done much to advance modern education, and that there seems to be as much reason for the application of psychology to preaching as to teaching. Such an application seems to be peculiarly fitting in these days when in-

creasing numbers of those who sit in the pew are becoming accustomed to psychological methods, for in a real sense this may be termed the psychological age. But even when the minister is preparing to address those who are not versed in such modern lore, he does well to ask himself repeatedly whether or not he is planning to make the best psychological approach.

The psychological approach simply means that the man in the pulpit begins with his hearers where they are, intellectually and emotionally, in order that he may lead them to higher levels of Christian thought and living. This sort of approach is new only in name. From the times of Paul or of Amos down to those of Spurgeon and Parker—not to speak of ex-President Patton and Alexander Whyte, or of John Henry Jowett and George H. Morrison—every effective preacher has known how to address his fellow men in ways which have been in keeping with the best modern psychology. Every such preacher has been somewhat like the Lord Jesus of whom it is said that He knew what was in man. "The Lord Jehovah hath given me the tongue of them that are taught that I may know how to sustain with words him that is weary" (Isa. 50: 4). Such an understanding of human hearts, both individually and collectively, has always been essential to success in preaching, and never more so than now. One way of promoting such a knowledge of human nature is through the application of psychology—both individual and social—to the work of preaching.

Three elements enter into effective preaching: first, a mastery of the truth which one proclaims; second, a personality dedicated to making that truth regnant in human lives; third, a sympathetic understanding of the men and women to whom one preaches. With the first of these elements, all important as it is, psychology has comparatively little to do; with the second it is more directly concerned; and with the third it is most deeply involved. This third element—the sympathetic understanding of the congregation—has usually been overlooked by lecturers on homiletics. Even Phillips Brooks chose as the title of his introductory address at Yale—*The Two Elements in Preaching*, as though this third element were less vital. And yet it should be obvious that the pulpit exists largely for the sake of the pew, and not the pew for the pulpit. Surely the



shepherd should feed his sheep (cf. Ezek. 34: 2, 8), and he should know what they need. The most up-to-date phrase for such old-fashioned study of the sheep is "the psycho-analysis of the congregation"—a phrase which one need not admire in order to recognize the wisdom of doing what it suggests.

If the application of psychology to preaching accomplishes nothing more than to exalt the needs of the congregation to their rightful place in the thinking of the young preacher, such a discipline will do much to insure a fruitful ministry in the Church of tomorrow. The results of any such discipline, however, must be measured in terms of preaching and not of psychology. In the words of Alexander Vinet, professor of theology at Lausanne more than eighty years ago, "The psychology of the preacher must be practical and popular." Here is a much more recent reminder from Principal Alfred E. Garvie of New College in London—

"The mere scientific jargon of psychology is out of place in the pulpit . . . and yet exact observation and accurate explanation of the ways of the soul of man have a very great value, when vitalized by experience. . . . But this psychological interest must never become theoretical only; it must ever be subordinated to the desire and purpose to bring the abounding grace of God into closest touch with the manifold needs of men."  
(*The Christian Preacher*, pp. 335-336.)

Vastly more important, therefore, than the psychological approach is the Biblical content. The modern temptation is to make psychology a substitute for revealed truth, an end in itself, and not simply a means of causing truth to prevail in human hearts and lives. One great need of the hour is effective preaching from the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice (cf. II Tim. 3:14-17). The hearts of men and women everywhere are hungering for something that they do not have, and if the ministers of to-morrow content themselves with making ingenious psychological approaches instead of feeding human souls with the bread of life, there will soon be in the Church even more of an appalling spiritual famine than there appears to be to-day (cf. Amos 8:11).

The preacher of the Gospel does well to think about the most effective path of approach to the city of man-soul, but he must remember that an approach is only an approach, and that the vital question concerns the message which he delivers after he finds his way into the human heart.

In preaching to the unsaved the minister's first duty is to bring every hearer face to face with Christ and His Cross as revealed in the Book; and in preaching to Christians his first duty is still to proclaim God's revealed truth in order that men may advance His Kingdom upon the earth. Whatever else the student of homiletics may learn, therefore, he should learn how to preach from the Bible. These words have a familiar sound, but what do they mean? For answer let us turn to one of our sanest writers on homiletics, J. Oswald Dykes, principal emeritus of Westminster College in Cambridge—

"When it is urged that pastoral preaching should be Biblical . . . what is meant is that the thoughts of the preacher, besides being rooted in Biblical teaching, are to move mainly along its lines, so that his whole way of conceiving of things—his way of thinking about God and man, and sin and salvation, and life and duty—is to be the Scriptural way of thinking about such things. And, what is a more subtle quality, it is meant that the spirit of his thinking is to be that of Holy Writ. . . . This comes only when the preacher's own religious life is steeped in Bible study. He must be . . . conversant with God's Book before everything else, if he is to speak habitually, as if out of its very bosom, with the accents of inspiration echoing in each tone and the fragrance of it clinging to his breath." (*The Christian Minister and His Duties*, T. & T. Clark, 1908, pp. 201-202.)

Such a conception of the subject matter of the Christian sermon calls for the teaching of homiletics Biblically. By this phrase one means that from the very first day in the seminary the student ought to be encouraged and taught to base all of his preaching frankly upon the Bible; he should learn with young Timothy that the Scriptures were inspired in order that the minister may be equipped with materials

for all kinds of sermons. (Note the Greek conjunction in II Tim. 3: 17, with the resulting purpose clause.) Not every student will become an expository preacher, in the narrow use of that term, although the Church needs a vast deal more of direct expository preaching than it is likely to have in the immediate future. Here and there an exceptionally gifted young man will feel called to walk in the footsteps of Alexander Maclaren or of William M. Taylor; meanwhile every young minister ought to learn how to preach various sorts of sermons which are Biblical in substance. He should always preach in his own characteristic way, provided it leads him to use revealed truth in meeting the needs of men.

Here again, there is nothing new; rather is there need of returning to the best traditions of other days. Throughout the years holy men of God have been using the Bible as the source book of their preaching, and partly for this reason they have spoken with that authority which is often missing from the pulpit to-day. For some reason few of the master preachers have written scholarly books telling their younger brethren how to approach a parable or a psalm so as to see in it the message which is there enshrined. This sort of homiletical teaching must be done largely by indirection, and it can never be a substitute for the scientific study of the Bible, either by way of introduction or of exegesis, but after the student has learned how to deal with the Scriptures in the original tongues he often needs practical guidance in the use of the treasures which he has uncovered by his exegetical labors. When he goes out into the ministry he should be able to do for his fellow men what Philip did for the eunuch. "Understandest thou what thou readest?" "How can I except some one shall guide me?" . . . And Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this scripture preached unto him Jesus." (Acts 8:30-35.) That is the kind of Biblical preaching which the Church has a right to expect from every young man who is being graduated from the theological seminary.

Thus we have glanced at various methods of approach to the study of homiletics: the introductory approach, the biographical approach, the analytical approach, the psychological approach and the Biblical approach, which is the best of all, as well as the most difficult. These various methods require constant reference to the library, in order that the stu-

dent may learn how to use books, and that he may find out for himself which ones are most worth while. When at last he goes out into the active ministry he ought to be prepared to continue his life-long study of the art of preaching.

Still other methods are in use here and there, but those outlined above are the most common. Some of these newer methods are open to question, but there is one other which has stood the test of time, and which now appeals to practically all teachers of homiletics. I refer to the old-fashioned custom of hearing the students preach original sermons and of criticizing those sermons in the presence of the class. Such a method affords a proving ground for testing the student's mastery of the theories which have been formulated in the class room. This is probably the most fruitful type of work that is being done in our particular field, but the advantages are so well known that I need not recount them here.

#### *The Conclusion of the Whole Matter*

A brief glance back over the trail which we have followed this morning would show that in the teaching of homiletics to-day the emphasis is upon the student as a prospective preacher, and that it is upon what he can do in the pulpit rather than upon what he may know in the study. The principle underlying much of this teaching is that of training the student to perform difficult and delicate kinds of intellectual labor by requiring him to do something of the sort, day after day, under competent supervision. Such methods are in keeping with what a prominent university professor styles "creative education." He says that much of our American schooling simply means that the professor is doing the thinking for his students, whereas he ought to be requiring every one of them to stand upon his own feet and to use his own intellectual muscles, so that he may grow strong and resourceful as he learns to surmount the kind of obstacles which he will meet in the practical affairs of life.

From the point of view of "creative education" the professor is called, primarily, not to teach homiletics but to train young men, and to train them one by one, each in a different way. Since preaching must be a different matter with every man, the teacher can spend his time no more profitably than by holding personal interviews with the students, one by one and in small groups, as they come to talk

over with him the work which is in their hands. Likewise should he enjoy hearing them preach and watching them grow in ability and in promise as they draw near to the close of their days in the seminary. Meanwhile there are manuscripts and other papers to read, to mark and to return, but who could object to hard work which enables him to share in the hopes and the dreams of these sons of the Church?

The real test of a seminary teacher's work begins after his students have gone out into the harvest field and have begun actively to use the powers and the resources which they have developed in the training school. According to Phillips Brooks a young minister's usefulness is practically determined by the habits which he forms during the first few years in the pastorate. As a matter of fact his habits as well as his ideals should be largely fixed while he is in the seminary, but surely the practical test will begin out yonder. "By their fruits ye shall know them." In the light of this obvious truth it might be well if the professor of homiletics could defer his installation address until he had taught in the department for fifteen or twenty years. "Let not him that girdeth on his armor boast himself as he that taketh it off" (I Kings 20: 11).

As a teacher grows older in the service of Christ and the Church, and as he becomes increasingly conscious of the vast gulf which yawns between his ideals and his attainments, he longs for the blessings which descend upon imperfect labors because of the effectual, fervent prayers of righteous men and women. Let me ask you, therefore, fathers and brethren, as well as other Christian friends, to pray for me that I may ever be true to Christ and His Cross, and that I may be used in helping to train successive groups of young men for the kind of ministry which the Church and the Kingdom need to-day.

If I were to select a passage of Scripture to serve as a motto for the work in homiletics here at Princeton Seminary I should turn to Second Corinthians—the spiritual autobiography of the Apostle Paul—and to that passage in which the greatest of human preachers makes known the secret of spiritual power in the pulpit:

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. Seeing it is God that said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' who shined in

our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves." (Ch. 4:5-7.)

## The Inauguration of Professor Donnelly

The inauguration of the Rev. Harold Irvin Donnelly, Ph. D., as the Thomas W. Synnott Professor of Christian Education, was held on Monday, May the 11th, in the First Presbyterian Church. The Rev. W. L. McEwan, D. D., LL. D., President of the Board of Trustees, presided and proposed the constitutional questions. The charge to the Professor was given by the Rev. Harold McAfee Robinson, D. D., of the Board of Trustees. It is regretted that Professor Donnelly's Inaugural Address cannot be printed in this number of the Bulletin because of the unusual space required by the other addresses that must have place in this issue. It will be printed in the November Bulletin.

## Princeton Seminary at the General Assembly

In the election of Moderator of the 143rd General Assembly at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the names of two Princeton Seminary graduates were presented, that of Dr. Lewis S. Mudge, of the class of '95, who was elected, and that of Dr. David DeF. Burrell, of the class of '01. While Dr. Mudge presided as Moderator, the work of the Stated Clerk was carried forward effectively by his associates, the Rev. William B. Pugh, '13, the Rev. W. P. Finney, D. D., '86, and the Rev. John Clark Finney, '07. In the appointment of Chairmen of the Standing Committees the Rev. Herbert



