

THE

PRINCETON

SEMINARY

BULLETIN

The Church and The Secular

John C. Bennett

Sermons:

The Compensations of The Ministry

James W. Clarke

Behold, I Make All Things New

James I. McCord

The Bible in the Confession of 1967

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The Revolutionary Challenge to Church and Theology Richard Shaull

A Representative American of The Sixties: James

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Church versus Non-Church

I. The Coming Non-Church: Ray Billington

II. Non-Church is Nonsense: Alison Adcock

One In A Million

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# The Princeton Seminary Bulletin

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Donald Macleod, Editor

Edward J. Jurji, Book Review Editor

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the last twelve of which he was also chairman of the Department of Practical Theology. Retiring from Princeton to Philadelphia in 1950, he continued to teach for the next eight years at Temple University School of Theology.

He was an indefatigable worker, and during these twenty-eight years as a seminary professor, Dr. Blackwood distinguished himself as a faithful teacher, as a student of the life and work of the parish, and as one of the most respected and authoritative writers of his time in America in the field of the Gospel ministry and its related offices. He set for himself the task of outlining the true nature and the vital importance of the parish ministry to each successive class of students. He was a facile writer, and during his career he published twenty major books on his special subject, some of which at the time were the only treatments available in that field, while others became definitive works for study by fellow teachers and preachers. Indeed few seminary teachers have felt a greater responsibility for the needs of the parish minister, and through his books he exerted an influence upon many preachers who had not known him personally.

The passing of Dr. Blackwood marks in a certain sense the end of an era in theological training. Theological education as he and his colleagues conceived of it was bound to change, but his contributions to it contained a certain stable element that even the rapid transformations of our generation cannot remove or efface. To those who studied under him and worked with him, he demonstrated those qualities of unflagging discipline and honest piety which, although they may have to be defined anew in terms of our age, are at all times worthy of emulation.

DONALD MACLEOD  
HENRY S. GEHMAN  
for the Faculty

FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER  
1875-1966

PROFESSOR FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER, who died July 31, 1966, was a native of Dubuque, Iowa, where he was born May 15, 1875. His family had emigrated from the canton of Bern, Switzerland, and he was proud of his descent from the motherland of the Reformed churches. His theology had a strikingly Helvetic tinge.

Dr. Loetscher graduated, *magna cum laude*, in Princeton University's class of 1896. At the university he also earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. The Seminary had awarded him the B.D. degree. After a year of graduate study in the Seminary he continued his advanced work at Berlin and Strassburg. In 1903, he began his teaching career at Princeton Seminary. He served as Professor of Homiletics for three years (1910-13) and, then, as Archibald Alexander Professor of Church History (1913-45). For a number of years after retirement (1945), he continued as professor at Temple University (1945-51).

To Professor Loetscher's credit are significant scholarly contributions. There is the early monograph, a Ph.D. dissertation, on the celebrated Silesian mystic, entitled *Schwenckfeld's Participation in the Eucharistic Controversy of the Six-*

teenth Century. Mention may be made of the magisterial essay, "St. Augustine's Conception of the State," and of an address delivered before the General Assembly on the theme, "The Influence of the Reformation." No less massive was his Inaugural Address, "Church History as a Science and as A Theological Discipline." Degrees, D.D. and LL.D., *honoris causa*, were conferred upon Dr. Loetscher by Lafayette College in 1904, and by the University of Dubuque in 1918, respectively.

Dr. Loetscher edited the *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, was secretary of the American Society of Church History as well as editor of its *Papers*, and president in 1934. In 1939 he represented his denomination on the American Theological committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order, also serving as secretary. Later he became departmental editor of *Collier's Encyclopedia*.

Dr. Loetscher was a rare type of person who never failed to attract the attention of those who met him. Not a man of many words, he was nonetheless, warm-hearted and delightful. His speech was marked by subtle humor. He had inherited the pride of a Swiss "burgher" which rests upon careful education, unremitting industry, as well as a flair for free institutions.

Small wonder, therefore, that his advice and wisdom were sought at many a level by Seminary and Church. It was always crystal clear that his deepest concern lay with the common cause. Never disposed to offend, he had the courage when necessary to voice frank disapproval. His whole life ambition was rooted in the community to which he belonged. And that to him invariably meant loyalty, above all else, to the Presbyterian Church and Princeton Theological Seminary.

Such an attitude molded his personal religion to a remarkable degree. For him, faith was centered in prayer. His mastery of rhetorical forms, his use of the phraseology of Scripture, the theological vocabulary of the Fathers he knew so well, and his firsthand acquaintance with the liturgies of the church,—were factors which cumulatively produced an unforgettable impact upon an audience. It was thus that he rendered an offering toward the spiritual formation of the student and the church.

Frederick Loetscher was a man of the church. He served Presbytery and Board as well as on General Assembly committees. These he regarded as organs through which, in a secular order, the Church was empowered to engage in the quest of its heritage and hope. The only way for Christianity to be articulate, he believed, was the way of the Incarnation. That is to say, a willingness on the part of man to receive the gifts of grace under mundane conditions. This truth he made the core and recurring theme of his lectures on church history.

For the same reason he stood by the Confession of Faith. He was too competent a theologian, however, not to recognize the historical nature of the confessions. He could not endorse any theology—liberal or otherwise—that seemed prone to substitute a doctrinal statement for an ecclesiastical confession. In those turbulent days that overtook the Presbyterian Church in the twenties, he refused to take sides with the sectarian brethren. No theological conservatism

prompted his position at that time. It was a position inspired by deep regard for the church, a commitment to its unity and peace in the face of recalcitrant trends.

Such was the concern that moved him to give unstinted support to the new Seminary policy initiated under John A. Mackay, a policy of explicit ecumenical emphasis and outlook.

Dr. Loetscher was a churchman eminent in his own right. This was the posture that determined his entire course of action and record. He thoroughly agreed, for instance, that a formula of subscription should be required of all professors upon joining the Faculty of the Seminary. In his judgment, this imposed no extra burden upon a scholar, nor did it imply abridgment of academic freedom. He saw danger in the tendency prevailing elsewhere when a divinity school stressed one-sidedly intellectual research, because thereby it might undermine the *raison d'être* of all theological education, namely, the preparation of candidates for the ministry.

He was equally alive to the issue that the modern minister had to have a first-class scholastic training. He therefore gave hearty support to the proposal to institute a graduate doctoral program when it was first brought before the Faculty. His own excellent background in the classics had qualified him to conduct research in two Continental universities with high distinction. This equipped him to communicate to his students a balanced knowledge of church history based on source material. He impressed upon his classes the fact that radical historical criticism and the propounding of new hypotheses in the field were in the last analysis contingent upon conscientious adherence to the primary sources of our knowledge. Such a sound principle of learning by no means precluded the use of secondary sources. It did not fail to inspire future scholars who sat at his feet.

Words culled from his major writings might best depict his kind of mind. In the St. Augustine treatise (p. 36), he wrote: "In general then, the relation of church and state, as Augustine conceived it, may fairly be described as one of mutual dependence and reciprocal obligation." He concluded in the Reformation address (p. 100): "The whole history of modern education emphasizes the contribution of Protestantism to our intellectual life. Nothing was more characteristic of the outward manifestations of the awakening of the sixteenth century than its devotion to the cause of learning." And he rightly argued in justifying his own copious quotations from the Schwenckfeld sources (p. IV) that "a mystic must be allowed to speak his own dialect." Finally, these words from the second Inaugural (p. 35): "Church History is a necessary supplement to dogmatic theology."

We the members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary desire to express most sincerely our gratitude for the blessing and enrichment mediated in our midst through a versatile scholar and colorful personality of the caliber of Frederick W. Loetscher who for so many years labored among us as an honored teacher and esteemed colleague. *Requiescat in pace.*

OTTO A. PIPER  
EDWARD J. JURJI  
for the Faculty