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OF
PRESIDENT JOHN A. MACKAY, Litt.D.

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PRINCETON, N.J., APRIL, 1937

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The Inauguration of President Mackay

IN the beautiful Chapel of Princeton University on Tuesday, the second of February, ¹⁹³⁷ the Rev. John Alexander Mackay, Litt.D., was inaugurated as President of the Seminary. In addition to the Trustees, the Faculty, the student body and a large gathering of the Alumni and other friends of the Seminary, one hundred and ten institutions and boards were represented by official delegates. The Rev. William L. McEwan, D.D., LL.D., President of the Board of Trustees, presided. The Scripture was read by the Rev. Albert J. McCartney, D.D., and the music was furnished by the Westminster Choir School and the Seminary Choir. Following the Ceremony of Inauguration prayer was offered by the Rev. Peter K. Emmons. The charge to Dr. Mackay was made by Dr. Robert E. Speer. President Mackay delivered the inaugural address on the subject of "The Restoration of Theology." The benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Frank Sergeant Niles.

Immediately following the service a luncheon was served to the official delegates and representatives of the Alumni in the dining-room of the Westminster Choir School.

The charge by Dr. Speer and President Mackay's inaugural address are printed in this issue of the BULLETIN.

CHARGE TO THE PRESIDENT

Charge at Inauguration of Dr. JOHN A. MACKAY as President of Princeton Theological Seminary by DR. ROBERT E. SPEER in behalf of the Board of Trustees.

PRESIDENT MACKAY:

It is with great joy and great hope that we are installing you today nominally as the third but in reality, I think, as the sixth president of Princeton Theological Seminary. The title of president was first established in the case of Dr. Patton, succeeded by President Stevenson and now by you, but the Seminary has never been since its founding in 1812 without a real and recognized head. First it was Dr. Archibald Alexander, then Dr. Charles Hodge, then Dr. William Henry Green. The remembrance of this great succession, the nature of this occasion and the responsibility laid on me by the Trustees combine to suggest as the one appropriate theme for this charge, the simple but strong words of Paul to Timothy, "Guard that which is committed to thy trust."

First of all we lay on you today the trust of a great tradition. In this place we are not of those who speak disparagingly of the past. On the contrary we glory in our heritage. And you cannot do better as you begin your work here than go back and saturate your mind and spirit with the early history of the Seminary, and especially with the biographies of the great triumvirate of Dr. Alexander, Dr. Samuel Miller, and Dr. Hodge. It was those three men who laid the foundations and created the character and influence of Princeton Seminary and in a real measure also of the University. Dr. Hodge declared that Archibald Alexander was the ablest man he had ever met, and Dr. Hodge had met the ablest scholars of Germany, Great Britain, and America. Samuel Miller was known and loved throughout the Church, in whose councils he was one of the most influential leaders, for his grace and wisdom and charm. Charles Hodge joined them at the age of 22 in 1822 and served the Seminary until his death in 1875. These three estab-

lished the tradition of sound scholarship, of evangelical fidelity, of practical wisdom and efficiency and of Christian moderation and courtesy which is the heritage we commit to your trust. They were men of clear and unflinching conviction but they were also men of fair and generous temper. Men of more contentious spirit spoke of them with a touch of derision, as "the Gentlemen at Princeton." That is what they were and in this and all else their true successors, and not least your immediate predecessor, have followed them.

I would venture to say an additional word about Charles Hodge. You are familiar with his theological works, the *Systematic Theology*, the *Commentary on the Gospel to the Romans*, etc., but you should read too for guidance in present-day issues his *Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church*, his *Church Polity* and his articles in the great review which for many years, under different names, was such a mouthpiece of the Seminary as we need to recover for our own time. But most of all we need to perpetuate Charles Hodge's spirit. He was a student of acknowledged, authoritative scholarship, a statesman in the affairs of the denomination and of the Church at large, and a man of noblest Christian spirit, kindly, hopeful, tender, pure and true. If ever there was in any of our seminaries an incarnation of Christian honor and faith and love it was Charles Hodge. He was a Calvinist but not of the school of Gomarus. He stood like a rock in his own conception of the Gospel and the Church, but his friendships ranged far and wide—Tholuck and Ludwig von Gurlach in Germany, D'Aubigne in France, Candlish and the great Scotchmen, and in every communion in America. His closest and dearest friend throughout life was his classmate, John Johns, Episcopal bishop of Virginia.

You will enter into the Princeton tradition, represented in the spirit and influence of Charles Hodge if you will read some time the story of four of the great episodes at the close of Dr. Hodge's rich life—(1) the story of the Pan Presbyterian Conference in Philadelphia in 1867 and his speech in reply to the visiting Episcopal delegation led by his dear friend Bishop McIlwaine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in which Dr. Hodge boldly accepted the Thirty-nine Articles as equivalent to the Westminster Confession. (2) The Fiftieth Anniversary of his professorship in 1872 and his noble reply to the address of Dr. Boardman, declaring the absolutely Christological character of his theology and his faith. As he wrote to his brother, the famous physician and surgeon, "Christ is our God—when we speak of keeping near to God, we mean God in Christ." He had a wide tolerance, however, of varying types of opinion and while using language as well as it can be used he yet recognized that "language is an imperfect vehicle of thought." I cannot do more than recall the entry in his diary on the evening of this great semi-centennial day: "April 24th. The apex of my life. The Semi-centenary Anniversary of my connection with the Seminary as professor. The day, by the blessing of God, was fine, and the celebration a wonderful success. The attendance of Alumni very large; delegations of other institutions numerous, and of the highest character; the congratulations from all at home and abroad of the most gratifying kind, altogether affording an imposing and most affecting testimony of the unity of the faith, and of common love to the same gospel, and to our common God and Saviour Jesus Christ." (3) The meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York City in 1873, probably the most notable meeting of the Alliance and one of the most notable Christian gatherings ever held in America. Dr. Hodge made one of the opening addresses, a noble appeal for the recognition of the unity of the

Church and the fellowship and cooperation of all believers. (4) And the fourth and last occasion was the re-dedication of the Chapel of the Seminary in 1874. The address which he made there is quoted in full in A. A. Hodge's life of his father and you will find it a lovely summary of the great heritage of personal life and love which we commit to your trust today in unabashed loyalty to the past.

But we are laying on you not only this duty preserving the heritage but also the duty of enlarging and enriching it. In its very nature the past is something to build upon, to go on with. It is not something to be left behind. It is something to carry forward. The past is the source of momentum for advance. In a gun the force which hurls the projectile is generated behind it. The past is not to us what Sydney Lanier esteems it in "Barnacles":

"Old Past let go and drop in the sea
Till fathomless waters cover thee!
For I am living but thou art dead.
Thou drawest back, I strive ahead."

This is not our view. It is we too often who are hesitant and slow, while the Past chides us and presses on us and seeks to urge us to move forward in our day as the Past moved in its day. This movement of life is the essential note of authentic Christianity, the Christianity of the New Testament. The Gospel itself was a new covenant. Its inner principle was growth. Christians were to grow in grace and not only in grace but also in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. They were to desire the sincere milk of the word that they might grow thereby. They were to advance from glory to glory, to grow up into Christ, to come at last in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. The very conception of Christ which we hold necessitates the idea of enlarging knowledge of Him in whom are hid treasures of wisdom and knowledge to which we have not yet come. To be sure,

in Himself Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, but to us and to the Church He must be each day something new and more. This is the true doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and the same New Testament writer who said Jesus Christ is forever the same issues the bold summons: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." Here is a summons indeed. We are to leave principles at which many of us have even yet not arrived and to go on to perfection. This is the call of our Princeton heritage.

Charles Hodge used to say, in the whimsical humor which was characteristic of him, that no new idea had ever been broached at Princeton. But the Seminary itself was a new idea. It began where it had not been. And book after book and article after article poured out of the Seminary not only restating old truth in new ways but offering new truths and often truths which were fiercely opposed. "How little," wrote Dr. Hodge to a daughter,— "how little we know of anything but by experience." And by his own rich and ever richer experience he enlarged the bounds of his knowledge and of the knowledge of all whom he taught, like the wise householder bringing out of his treasure ever things old and new. Yesterday I came providentially upon the extract from the will of Waterman Thomas Hewett establishing the foundation on which Canon Streeter gave the lectures embodied in his volume on *The Primitive Church*:

"I desire to place on record at the close of my life my profound *Faith* in the Christian religion. I believe that the future of the human race and the highest individual character are dependent upon realizing in life, consciously or unconsciously, the spirit of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. Every successive generation must apprehend anew these truths, and a fresh statement

of them by the ablest and most reverent scholars is desirable to secure their intelligent acceptance and recognition."

It is the voice of the past which is heard today charging us to move on to new camp ground carrying the Past with us as we go. Even as Isaiah heard it, here today we hear it—a voice behind us saying, "Yonder is the way—Go forward in it."

So trustfully we lay on you the trust of the future. Perhaps I may be so bold as to suggest some of its tasks:

First we want you to help young men here to feel the joy and duty of girding up the loins of their minds and thinking firmly and courageously. In his autobiography, *Out of My Life and Work*, a book less inspiring than the life of which it spoke, Albert Schweitzer describes what he conceives to be his mission: "I therefore stand and work in the world as one who aims at making men less shallow by making them think—With the spirit of the age I am in complete disagreement because it is filled with disdain of thinking." We believe here in the supreme importance of theology and sound theological thinking and we want theology and sound theological thinking kept in the place which they have always filled here. This age needs this more if possible than the age of Alexander and Hodge and Warfield. A friend told some of us recently of a friend of hers who said to her plaintively, "My little daughter will persist in asking me about God and I don't know what to say to her." Well, we know we are not seeking a revelation. We have one. We are seeking to understand and to proclaim it. And we have no part with those who decry doctrine or deride what they call "dogma" or think that it does not matter what men think. As Justice Holmes wrote: "Reason means truth and those who are not governed by it take the chances that some day the sunken past will rip the bottom out of their boat." The same Apostle who bade Timothy to guard his trust urged him to be "a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of

the faith and of the good doctrine." We want men taught in this Seminary and sent out who know the historic Catholic faith and who live it and can preach it.

Secondly, we want this to be a place not alone for training able advocates but equally a place of warm evangelical piety, where men learn to know and love God in Christ and their brothers in Christ and to go out as irrefutable witnesses to the grace and glory and joy of the Gospel. The true tradition of Princeton has always united doctrine and experience. The words of Whittier have been illustrated to generation after generation of students in the lives of the men who have taught here: "Warm, sweet, tender even yet,"—those are the very words that describe what we have seen here—as far removed as anything could be from a cold intellectualism of theoretical theology. On the occasion of Charles Hodge's Jubilee, ex-President Woolsey of Yale was speaking of what he owed to Dr. Hodge, and indeed it is almost true that he owed him his own soul when they had been fellow students in Germany. Old Dr. Hodge was reclining in his feebleness on a couch on the platform. As Dr. Woolsey spoke Hodge arose and throwing his arms about Woolsey's neck kissed him before all the audience. The men we have known here were no frigid doctrinaires. They were the warmest, simplest Christians. I remember as a freshman in college going to an evangelistic meeting in Dohm's old beer hall on Nassau Street to hear Dr. A. A. Hodge. The Seminary professors were conducting a series of such evangelistic meetings. They were all strangers to me and I was amazed to see the little round red-headed speaker pouring forth the most moving appeal with the tears coursing down his cheeks. And who can think of the Seminary in the days of "Rabbi" Green without recalling the tenderness and beauty of his personal devotion to God and his overflowing affection for Christ. We want great scholars and great teachers bred here but we want also great preachers of the

love of God, who themselves love God with all their mind and heart and their neighbors as themselves and better.

Thirdly, we want the Seminary to continue to be what it has been in the past—a great fountain of missionaries who will go to the ends of the earth. This has been the Seminary's glory for four generations. The first name in the alumni catalogue is the name of a home missionary. Elisha Swift, the founder of foreign missions in our church, was a graduate of the third class. Charles Hodge was for more than twenty years a member of our Board of Foreign Missions and for two years its president, an office in which Dr. Paxton and Dr. Erdman have followed him. A. A. Hodge had been a missionary in India. The Seminary has sent out more foreign missionaries than any other seminary in America. We rejoice that you are coming back with your glorious missionary experience to reinforce and to perpetuate this missionary consecration, that Princeton may continue to provide the type of missionary needed amid the changing and the unchanging conditions which the Church confronts in the world situation today.

Fourthly, we want the great tradition of the Christian temper preserved. Those early teachers were truly called "the gentlemen of Princeton." And their spirit has remained not least in the character and influence of your immediate predecessors as designated presidents, Dr. Patton and Dr. Stevenson. We want consideration and considerateness combined now as then. We rejoice in the wide catholic influence of the Seminary and its far range. I remember the noble letter of congratulation which came to Dr. Charles Hodge in 1892 from the theologians of Scotland. The first name signed to it was that of Dr. Candlish and the last was Robertson Smith's. And this wide range, which has included especially Ireland and South Africa, is to be widened still more in the recognition of Princeton as the great centre of the positive, constructive, evangelical teaching of the whole

glorious supernatural Gospel of the New Testament.

It may seem a small matter to add, after these greater things, but there are many of us who cannot be content without a revival of the *Princeton Review* and a renewal of the contribution which for so many decades it made to the propagation and defense of the Gospel and of its understanding and interpretation in the Reformed faith.

But why should all this be said? You yourself have all this and more already in your mind and heart. All that we could ask would be simply that you go forward and carry out the purposes which you yourself have formed. You are a son of this Seminary and you bring to it your Scotch inheritance. But it would be asking too much of you to do these things alone. You have a right to ask that all of us, trustees, alumni and friends of the Seminary and of the evangelical faith should cooperate with you, and such cooperation we who are here today pledge you for ourselves and for those whom we represent. The Seminary needs still larger resources in equipment and in endowment, and working together we must try to secure these. They are indeed secondary. The more essential resources are personal and spiritual. Charles Hodge is said to have written all three volumes of his *Systematic Theology* with one half-disabled gold pen. What would he have done with a pen only a quarter disabled? And what vastly less other men must be content with who can command new pens by the gross? In 1860 a band of 1,000 ragged, half clad, poorly armed soldiers scrambled ashore at Messala under the fire of a Neapolitan gun boat. In sixty days they had overrun Italy and taken Rome, and a new chapter in the history of their country began. A thousand ragged men—and Garibaldi. The real dependence is not on buildings or bonds but on men—on you and the men with you here. But you

need the tools and it must be the business of us all to secure them.

This is a happy day for us and for the Seminary. But there have been times, more than one or two, when this Seminary has been tried as by fire, and no doubt such times will come again. We shall not fear them. For what after all have these fires done in the past and what will they do when they blaze again, but try and refine? Nothing more can they do to us if our walls are built on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, yes, more than the corner-stone, the very basic rock itself, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." Our Seminary stands today unsinged by the fires of the past. It will continue unharmed so only we build with the materials which no fire can destroy.

A few years ago there was dedicated in New York City a new high school building named after a great Jewish woman who had been for years its principal, Julia Richman. At the dedication a sonnet was read whose closing words I recall here this morning:

"Be this the sum, the last word best of all;
She built her life into the city wall."

That is all that we can ask of you, that you build your life into these walls, into which good and great men have built their lives before you, resting on the one everlasting Rock Foundation from which "nor life nor death with all their agitation" shall ever be able to remove us. It is in this confidence that, speaking for the Trustees, and as an old and beloved friend, I welcome you as President of this Seminary.

THE RESTORATION OF THEOLOGY

By JOHN A. MACKAY

IN the Storr's Lectures which he delivered last year at Yale University, and which have since been published under the title, *The Higher Learning in America*, President Robert Maynard Hutchins of the University of Chicago launches a philippic against the present state of higher education in this country. In the judgment of this university president the modern American university is like an encyclopedia whose only unity is in its alphabetical arrangement. It has become a service station by the wayside of life, sensitive to the transient whims and needs of the public, whom it seeks to serve. Exclusively mastered by the standards of the empirical and historical sciences, it has produced a state of intellectual atomism and general cultural anarchy. What is lacking? Thought must be brought once again under the direction of luminous and compelling first principles. If cultural chaos and meaninglessness are to come to an end education must be mastered and lit up by a transcendent principle of unity. This principle can only be derived from metaphysics, as among the Greeks, or from theology, as in the mediaeval university.

Whereupon President Hutchins proceeds to rule out theology as the source of the unifying principle he desiderates. He does so on the ground that theology is based on revealed truth and articles of faith, implying orthodoxy and an orthodox church, whereas, we are a faithless generation and take no stock in revelation and have no such church. The only hope of culture, therefore, is in metaphysics. "It is in the light of metaphysics that the social sciences dealing with man and man, and the physical sciences dealing with man and nature, take shape and illuminate one another. In metaphysics we are seeking the causes of things that are. It is the highest

science, the first science and, as first, universal. . . . The aim of higher education is wisdom. Wisdom is knowledge of principles and causes. Metaphysics deals with the highest principles and causes. Therefore metaphysics is the highest wisdom. . . . If we cannot appeal to theology we must turn to metaphysics. Without theology or metaphysics a unified university cannot exist."¹

I.

With the central thesis of President Hutchins I find myself heartily concurring. It is most certainly true that our greatest cultural need at the present time is a consistent world view, a *Weltanschauung*, as the Germans call it. I would even go further than does the Chicago president and say that a world view is needed not only to give unity and direction to university education; it is no less needed to give meaning and unity to life and thought in general. For our real problem is the problem of contemporary culture in the whole length and breadth of it.

Where I dare to take issue with this distinguished and prophetic educator is in his view of the sole relevance of metaphysics and the irrelevance of theology to the present cultural situation. I am deeply interested in metaphysics; I long for the day when a Christian metaphysic will sway thought and direct conduct in the higher centers of the nation's life. But what is needed primarily and most of all, in my judgment, is theology, great theology. We are living in that kind of a time when only the emergence and dominance of great theology will produce great philosophy on the one hand and great religion on the other.

¹ Hutchins, *The Higher Learning in America*, pp. 97, 98, 99; Yale, 1936.

But let us not try to settle for a moment whether the hope of culture is in metaphysics or theology. Let us rather clarify still further our thoughts and deepen our concern about the fact that some worthy principle of unity is most desperately needed in the world of today. Such a principle is being demanded of us who occupy positions of leadership. Encompassed on all sides by meaninglessness and futility, youth is listening for authoritative voices and is bracing itself for a crusade without knowing where to go, without knowing even whose sepulchre to redeem from pagan foes. Alas, if the naturally constituted mentors of youth are unable to give the leadership in thought and action that this historic moment demands!

A brief glance at the cultural scene in America and in Europe will convince us in a concrete way of the appropriateness of President Hutchins' strictures and the opportuneness of his concern. The significant thing about the intellectual attitude of this university president is that he represents a very small group of front-line educators in our midst, not themselves technical philosophers, who have caught a vision of something that has been disturbing European thinkers for a considerable time. A sense of uprootedness and spiritual homelessness is taking hold of many sensitive spirits in the modern world. A feeling of nostalgia is sending them back along the roads of history to find lost clues to the meaning of life. There is being fulfilled in the lives of many modern men and women in this country what Professor Paul Tillich said some ten years ago about modern man in general—that, with all his liberty, "he has become uncertain in his autonomy."

From time to time an echo breaks through to us, a reverberation sounds in the halls of culture in America of the thought-agony of more than one European cousin. One of the first European thinkers to become aware, even in the pre-war days, that we were slowly headed for a cultural

crisis, was Albert Schweitzer. He tells us in his autobiography that more than a decade before the outbreak of the Great War he had become uneasy at the extent to which men were smug and complacent about our civilization. They took it for granted as something fixed, whose basic principles were unchallengeable. In the early war years, forgotten in the solitude of the African jungle, engaged day by day in tasks of mercy, this missionary doctor—who happened to be also a front-line musician, theologian, and philosopher—put into shape the Dale Memorial Lectures which he subsequently delivered before the University of Oxford in 1922 on "The Decay and the Restoration of Civilization." In those lectures Schweitzer deplored the anti-intellectual trend in European culture that had led finally to the total absence of a guiding philosophy of life. He harked back to the days of the Enlightenment, when great philosophers like Kant and Hegel began to influence people in all ranks of life who had never so much as heard their names. Bitterly deprecating the lack of an ethic in culture and the tendency since Nietzsche to consider man solely in relation to other men and society instead of in relation to the universe as a whole, he pronounced those memorable words: "For the individual as for the community, life without a theory of things is a pathological disturbance of the higher capacity for self-direction."²

The aftermath of the War has shown how deeply prophetic was Schweitzer's thought. In these last years something of transcendent interest has been taking place in European reflection upon the cultural problem. Three types of mind have become aware of the crisis situation that confronts us. All three see the need of a luminous, authoritative principle amid our cultural anarchy. All three hark back to different periods in the history of culture in search

² A. Schweitzer, *The Decay and Restoration of Civilization*, p. 86.

of a clue. All three propose different solutions. Albert Schweitzer proposes a metaphysical world view inspired by the rationalism of the Enlightenment, which shall have at the heart of it the ethical principle of reverence for life. Jacques Maritain, ✓ and his friends, following in the steps of the great Cardinal Mercier, and thinking from within the Roman Catholic tradition, propose a return to the Christian philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. The third representative figure is Karl Barth. Agonizing amid the silence of the Swiss mountains not far from the thunder of the guns on three frontiers of his native land, and deeply concerned about the source of an authoritative word for his simple parishioners, Barth went back to the Reformation and to Holy Scripture, very especially to Saint Paul.

I shall never forget one afternoon in Barth's study in Bonn, when he related to me a conversation he had had with Albert Schweitzer some years before in Münster. "You and I, Barth," said Schweitzer, "started from the same problem of cultural anarchy, relativism, and uncertainty. But while I went back to the Enlightenment you went back to the Reformation."

A rationalistic metaphysic that takes no real account of the Christian revelation; a Christian philosophy that builds upon this revelation in order to think through in the light of it the problem of life in our time; a Christian theology which concentrates supremely upon an interpretation and application of this revelation itself; these are the three principal attempts being made today within the main tradition of western civilization to cure our cultural disease and to set the face of man and society once more on a luminous road toward a new cultural era. The thesis which I want to develop on this occasion is that our major intellectual need is theology, great theology, theology that brings to a focus the rays of light that streamed from above in Jesus Christ along the line of the vertical and continue

come to us through Him, and that transmits these rays, as undimmed as possible, to every sphere of life and thought across the wide plane of the horizontal.

II.

Why do I believe in the primary importance of theology in the present cultural situation? Let me indicate briefly the grounds for my conviction.

1. First, theology deals with the crucial facts of existence with a realism that philosophy does not. The traditional philosopher has invariably maintained that in order to understand reality one must occupy a detached spectator's position outside of it. He has stoutly insisted that identification with a positive religious position, by which a man makes a practical decision regarding his personal relationship to God and the universe, incapacitates him for true philosophic reflection. There are, however, three things which the metaphysician as we have known him hitherto has forgotten. He has forgotten that truth concerning God, who is the basis of all reality, cannot be attained by the profoundest intellectual effort, because God as God can never be reduced to a mere object of thought. He has forgotten that he himself is also a part of reality and that therefore he cannot view reality truly from a spectator's balcony because he cannot become detached from himself. And then, he has woefully forgotten to take into account the stark reality of sin, which warps perception and reflection both.

The old school philosopher has entirely missed the fact that the primary need of human existence is man's need of redemption. And redemption, let it be borne in mind, means not only a stream of light such as greeted the shackled prisoners on leaving the Platonic cave, but the infusion of a new life principle such as came to Plato's disciple, Saint Augustine, in the garden at Milan. This double need of redemption the religious man feels. His spectator attitude to reality is brought to

an end. Theory will not satisfy him as a basis for living; he becomes aware that life is serious business, that it is at bottom a question of "to be or not to be." He no longer thinks merely about the everlasting essence of things; like Pascal he thinks in agony of his own concrete existence as one who desperately needs God. He is confronted with a choice, but it is not a choice between ideas or theories about reality; it is a choice as to whether he himself or God will be the center of his life. He is forced to action, whereas the philosopher continues to live a balconized, spectator-like existence. But by making the right choice, by thinking existentially as a wayfarer, the religious man gains insight into a whole new world of reality. With this new insight comes a transforming, energizing experience of grace; he now strives to fulfill his destiny on the road of daily living as part of God's great scheme of things.

We are here on the border of the historic abyss that divides philosophy from theology, the bottomless gulf that opens up in human life when the consciousness of sin awakes. Theology, when it is true to its nature, takes cognizance of this gulf; philosophy must take cognizance of the reality of sin and man's basic need of redemption if it is going to make a serious contribution to the reconstruction of culture.

A young philosopher who had become powerfully aware of the fact of original sin as a problem for philosophy as well as for theology was T. E. Hulme, to whose future as a thinker, before he was killed in the Great War, his contemporaries looked forward with great expectancy. Let me quote a significant passage from the posthumous collection of his writings entitled "Speculations." Hulme was everything but a sentimentalist. "I want to emphasize," says he, "as clearly as I can, that I attach very little value indeed to the sentiments attaching to the religious atti-

tude. I hold, quite coldly and intellectually as it were, that the way of thinking about the world and man, the conception of sin, and the categories which ultimately make up the religious attitude, are the *true* categories and the *right* way of thinking.

". . . I have none of the feelings of *nostalgia*," he goes on, "the reverence for tradition, the desire to recapture the sentiment of Fra Angelico, which seems to animate most modern defenders of religion. All that seems to me to be bosh. What is important, is what nobody seems to realize—the dogmas like that of Original Sin, which are the closest expression of the categories of the religious attitude. That man is in no sense perfect, but a wretched creature, who can yet apprehend perfection. It is not, then, that I put up with the dogma for the sake of the sentiment, but that I may possibly swallow the sentiment for the sake of the dogma. Very few since the Renaissance have really understood the dogma, certainly very few inside the churches of recent years. If they appear occasionally even fanatical about the very word of the dogma, that is only a secondary result of belief really grounded on sentiment. Certainly no humanist could understand the dogma. They all chatter about matters which are, in comparison with this, quite secondary notions—God, Freedom, and Immortality."³

Our conclusion, therefore, is this. Until the reality of original sin is squarely faced as an ultimate metaphysical fact and becomes a problem for thought, and until an integral part of metaphysics is a metaphysic of conversion, metaphysics as such will not possess the necessary insight into the ultimate nature of reality; it will be unable to formulate true and adequate first principles for thought and life; it will thus be impotent to make a creative contribution to the restoration of culture. Theology must get ready, on that account,

³ Hulme, T. E., *Speculations*, pp. 70-71 (Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., 1924).

to play an increasing rôle in the cultural realm.

2. The second reason why I believe in the primacy of theology over metaphysics in the cultural situation today is that the thought systems at the heart of the most potent cultural forces of our time are theologies rather than philosophies. I mean, of course, those two socio-political systems, Communism and Fascism, which are genuine religious faiths and which are bringing about some of the most far-reaching cultural changes in the history of mankind.

The dialectical materialism which has taken the place of the old mechanistic materialism in the thought system of the rulers of Russia has provided Russian Communists with the equivalent of God. The old materialism could inspire only a fatalistic attitude in those who accepted it as a philosophy of life. There was nothing in the universe that invited cooperation, for everything happened inexorably without human choice. Those, however, who believe in the dialectical rhythm which guarantees in our time the triumph of the messianic proletariat have a cosmic reality with which it is possible for men to cooperate. The Marxist Communist has found something equivalent to what made Luther sing "Ein Feste Burg ist unser Gott" ("A Mighty Fortress is our God"). He feels himself to be invincible because the stars in their courses fight against the Sisera of the Bourgeoisie. Thus while he fights against religion he does so in the name and in the strength of a religious faith which is rooted in the nature of things.

Herein consists the challenge of Communism to popular Christianity. In his book, *Creative Society*, Professor John MacMurray sounds the note of warning to bourgeois Christianity among us. Aware of the fact that for many Christians God is as much a mere idea as He is for the typical philosopher, MacMurray asks the tremendous question whether a faith that

repudiates religion may not in the end overwhelm a religion that repudiates God. Another way of putting this would be to say that belief in the idea of God which lies at the heart of philosophy and of much popular religion does not have the remotest semblance of a chance when matched against the theology of men of passionate religious faith.

The point I am trying to make will become clearer if we consider the other new faith of our time, that particular phase of Fascism known as National Socialism. When Karl Heim, the philosopher theologian of Tübingen, published in 1931 the first volume of his theological system, *Faith and Thought*, he devoted the introduction to a long discussion of the cultural anarchy then obtaining because of the absence of a unifying world view. After the book had gone through two editions the Nazi Revolution broke out. When the third edition was published it was an entirely new book written to meet a totally new cultural situation. No longer was German thought without the direction of a unifying philosophy. The "Caesarless, terrible time" of Albert Schweitzer had passed. A new Caesar had appeared and in his train had come theologians of a new faith and the hierarchs of a new church, Alfred Rosenberg, Ernst Jünger, and Ernst Bergmann. Heim thus synthesises a number of significant passages from Rosenberg's extraordinary book, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*. This is what the theologian of the new German polytheistic faith says: "Today a new faith has arisen: the blood-myth, the belief that to fight for the Blood is to fight for the divine in man; the belief—embodied with a vision that leaves no possibility for doubt—that the Nordic Blood presents that mystery by which the ancient sacraments are superseded and transcended.' Hence arises 'the new world-view of our time: the soul of the people, bound to one particular race, is the measure of all our thoughts, desires, and activities, the ultimate standard of our values.'

'This inner voice demands today that the blood-myth and the soul-myth, Race and Self, People and Personality, Blood and Honour, these alone, these and literally nothing else, without any kind of compromise, must penetrate, support, and determine the whole of life.' The *mythus* 'will suffer no other claimant to the supreme value beside itself.' 'The God, whom we reverence, would have no existence but for our Soul and our Blood: so for our time would the creed of a Meister Eckhart run.'"⁴

A news cutting from the *New York Times* of January 30 is a striking comment upon the way in which this new theology is being applied in the Third Reich: "In Mecklenburg," reads the cable, "Archdeacon Brose and Pastor Harloff of the Protestant Cathedral in Gustrow have introduced a new form of communion service. The pastor, presenting bread and wine to the congregation, says: 'God has given us bread from the German earth that shall nourish our faith, that we may remain loyal and true to the German earth. God gave the seed that is the blood of the earth. We drink that we may live in loyalty. We desire to make our lives sacred wholly to the nation. We bring to the nation this sacrifice in all truth and loyalty.'"⁵ In such a cultural scene the very conception of an international God is anathema.

What has impressed Karl Heim is the fact that in the new Nihilism now obtaining in Germany not only has it become impossible to conceive a God beyond, but the very problem of a transcendent God has become unreal. It is to this problem that Heim addresses himself. He labors to find a place for the Almighty in the world of Rosenberg, now that the intellectual problem of a dwelling place for God has seriously arisen. What success he may have

in his attempt at laying the "Foundation for a Christian Metaphysic" we cannot predict. But one thing we do know. It was no metaphysic, not even a Christian metaphysic, that created a spiritual center of resistance within German Protestantism to the official German faith, but a Christian theology, that of Karl Barth. For it is only a religion that can meet a religion, and only a theology that can stand up against a theology. The situation in this country is fortunately very different from the situation in Germany, but great theology is no less necessary in the American cultural scene than in the German; for we never know when demonic forces of the same religious character might take issue with Christianity and the cultural inheritance it has given us in this or any country. Should such a contingency arise, are we quite sure that the universities in this nation possess sufficient conviction about ultimate things to follow a different course from their sister institutions in Germany?

3. The third reason for the paramount importance of theology as a science in the culture of today is the fact that a true and adequate theology is required for the life and thought of the Universal Christian Church in our time. The major problem of contemporary civilization is in the realm of community. Communities founded on blood or soil or national tradition struggle desperately with communities founded upon class. That being so, the relevance of that universal community which came into being at Pentecost and which recognizes no barriers of soil or blood or class becomes more than ever apparent. In both Communist and Fascist countries the state tends increasingly to become converted into a church with its Messiah, its holy books, its liturgy, and its theology. Only a community of love, as closely knit together as the communities of race and class and tradition, and rooted as much as they in a theological conception of its nature and destiny, can withstand the assault of Christianity's new rivals and enable the

⁴ Heim, K., *God Transcendent*, p. 7; Nisbet & Co., Ltd., trans. from 3rd Ger. ed.

⁵ *New York Times*, Jan. 30, 1937.

Christian community to fulfill God's purpose for mankind. That is to say, it is only confessional churches, I venture to believe, that will ultimately be able to maintain themselves in the kind of an era upon which we are now entering. If it is true that civilization needs Christianity, it is equally true that Christianity needs the Church, and still more true that the Church needs theology.

But what kind of a theology does the Church need? The scope of this study does not involve a complete theological statement, just as President Hutchins did not feel called upon to outline in the lectures to which I have referred the particular metaphysic which he considered most desirable for cultural purposes. To be consistent he must share with us some day the metaphysic of his choice; for after all it is the content of a metaphysic as of a theology that makes all the difference. I on my part reserve for another occasion a statement of the theology I have in mind. For the present, let this suffice, merely by way of parenthesis.

The Christian Church today, whether it be regarded as a spiritual center of resistance against the new totalitarian faiths, or as an ecumenical fellowship which has become real for the first time in world history, needs a theology that will give it resistance-strength, communal cohesion, and expansive power. It needs the theology that is inherent in the Biblical records and the tradition of historic Catholic Christianity, a Theology of the Word. The Church needs to remember that God has spoken by word and deed on the plane of history. His everlasting "Nay" has sounded against all ultimate loyalty to whatever is not God. Be it Baal or Caesar that disputes his sovereignty, be his rival the Mammon of materialism or the self of Idealism, God alone must be God in the life of men and nations. His everlasting "Yea" has also sounded in Jesus Christ, the God-Man. This must the Church also remember for her life and effective service. The God-

Man is the starting point and soul of Christian theology, the center of history and the clue to its meaning, the mirror in which man comes to know himself and God, the Redeemer through faith in whom he is enabled to become what God intended him to be. There is something else that the Church in our time must remember: her own true character and function, as the "bearer of history." Her greatest concern must be to become existentially what she is essentially, that is, a fellowship of the Spirit, the Body of Christ, the expression of His mind, and the organ of His will. A high doctrine of the Church is needed, and a churchly theology, to set in high relief the status of the Church as an integral part of ultimate spiritual reality, whose function it is to bear witness to the Gospel, God's will to world fellowship in Jesus Christ.

III.

But to all this I hear voices of dissent. The Gospel is enough! We have Jesus Christ! Why bring theology back again from her Babylonian captivity? Her fresh début in the modern world would be a pitiful anachronism. Let her linger on if you will in seminaries and schools of religion, but even there let the study of Dogmatics be optional. Above all, I hear it said, never presume that this study can have any serious contribution to make to the cultural situation today.

But what is the Gospel? Who is Jesus Christ? The reaction against theology both in secular and church circles in recent times is one of the tragic, but at the same time one of the perfectly explicable phenomena in the thought life of the last generation. We are face to face with a deep prejudice in the popular mind in regard to theology and for that reason to any contemplated rehabilitation of it. We have here a state of mind that has various roots and phases.

1. To begin with, there is a prejudice against the status of theology as an essen-

tial and independent science because of the overweening pretensions of secular culture. One of the goals of the cultural era which began at the Renaissance and is now fading away to give place to another, was the emancipation of man in his life and thought from every idea derived directly from Christianity. One thought system after another was constructed which would have been impossible apart from Christian ideas. These systems, however, judged the whole heritage of Christian thought and experience in terms of their conformity or unconformity to standards determined by the natural and social sciences, by historical research, by the taste of cultured people in a particular epoch, by the axioms of speculative thought. Very especially from the time of the Enlightenment secular culture became the patron, the arbiter and the guardian of Christianity and all that belonged to the Christian religion. Christianity was taken under the condescending, protecting wing of culture. The German philosopher Hegel expressed the consummation of this process in a memorable way. "While the Gates of Hell," he said, "were never able to prevail against the Christian Church, the Gates of Reason have."

What was the result of the ignoble surrender of Christianity to culture? It became the highest aspiration of many Christian leaders to make their religion the inner side of culture, its soul or its buttress, as it were, its bard or its toastmaster. It never occurred to them to criticize the postulates upon which this culture was based, that "man is the measure of all things," and the famous dictum of Descartes, "I think, therefore I am," which set modern philosophy on a side track from which it is only now beginning to find its way back to the main road. And so it came about that such a dogma as that of original sin was cast out as an affront to the dignity of man and human nature. Those facets of the Biblical portrait of Christ were retained which commended themselves to men of taste as a true picture of what the Man of

Galilee must have been. Those elements in His teaching were retained which coincided with the subjectively approved picture of Him. Those Christian beliefs were accepted which could be validated by reason or be regarded themselves as truths of reason. The criterion which inspired Biblical study was whether the events that marked the course of history in the Records and the thought of the various writers was in accord with the presuppositions or prejudices of the cultured critics. Far be it from me to suggest for a moment that the literary and historical criticism of the Scriptures does not have a most legitimate place and has not rendered in many instances invaluable service. The essential Christian revelation has nothing to fear from any established fact of science or any authentic datum of history. The true lover of the Bible will ever keep an open mind to positive truth, for truth is one, and God is true. The antagonist of the Christian thinker is not the unbiased scientist and historian but the man who brings to the study of every Christian doctrine the presuppositions of a world view antithetically opposed to the particular world view which is implicit in the Christian revelation. Unfortunately, many a Christian thinker, overawed by some prevailing philosophy, has tried to rationalize his own faith in terms of it, and in so doing has denaturalized the Christian faith and betrayed theology. From being the science of Revelation theology was content to become the science of religion and gradually became lost in the penumbra of those very important yet peripheral studies, the psychology and philosophy of religion. Theology as such thus became irrelevant to both Christianity and to life. This is where it is today in the minds of a multitude of people who say, Why try to rehabilitate theology? The answer is, The hour has come, and is long overdue, when the presuppositions of our culture must be challenged, and it is theology that must do it.

2. Another cause of the prejudice against theology has been the insistence in many representative Christian circles that Christianity is in no real sense a way of thought, but exclusively a way of life. Now it is one of the legitimate glories of religious Liberalism, with which this particular viewpoint has come to be associated, that it has emphasized ethical activity as an inseparable concomitant of true Christianity. I am not suggesting that Liberalism was the first religious movement to make this discovery or the first to insist upon this truth. For in the New Testament there is an identity between faith and action. I am suggesting merely that, in justice to Liberalism, we should recognize that it has been associated in a glorious way with a sensitizing of the Christian conscience and an enthusiasm for great human causes in the social and international spheres. It has been most unfortunate, however, that conduct should have been left to the exclusive inspiration of Christian sentiment or to the teaching, or what was regarded, as the teaching of Jesus, while Christian doctrine and a Christian world-view counted for little or nothing in inspiring and directing Christian action.

The religious education movement has reflected this anti-noetic attitude towards Christianity; its presentation of Christianity has been fragmentary and atomistic. Anything of the nature of a system has been avoided; psychology and methodology have taken the place of dogma. Thus in every way an antipathetic attitude has been created towards theology. But with what results? With this result, that men and women in our churches do not know in any intelligent or systematic way what Christianity is. At a time when the followers of the new crusading religions, to which I have already referred, are schooled in massive thought systems, which make average Christians who come up against them feel like infants, and when the young men and women of the new generation are clamouring for a coherent system of Christian be-

lief, we have no adequate theology to give them. Once more I say the churches must return to theology and begin to agonize about the formulation of belief or they will perish. For the plain truth is that it is not so self-evident as many people think what Christian principles are. A word from that distinguished British thinker, Sir Walter Moberly, comes very much to the point in this connection. Writing in the last number of *Christendom* he says: "If the world is once again to be invited to try the Christian way, the first necessity is that Christians should themselves regain some clear corporate conviction of what that way is. Here our greatest danger is that we are likely to underestimate our present intellectual bankruptcy. The comparative failure of all recent attempts to present a Christian social gospel has been partly due to the tacit assumption that there is in existence a body of Christian principles, readily accessible and agreed upon by Christians generally, which has only to be applied. But in fact such principles are still to be discovered.

"If the church is again to be a force in the world of affairs, it will have to re-discover its fundamental theology. What is the Christian view of man as compared with the views, for instance, of Marx and of Freud and expressed in terms equally relevant to current events and problems."⁶

Strangely enough, there has appeared in conservative, orthodox circles in this country in these last times a most unfortunate dislike, or at least wariness, of theology and theological discussion. This attitude derives from unforgettable experiences of divisions caused by theological differences. Because theology can be divisive, as ecclesiastical history abundantly testifies, fear of controversy leads many church leaders to put a virtual ban on theological disputation. This is an unhealthy and perilous procedure, especially at such a time as this. To hush up questionings and divergences of

⁶ *Christendom*, Winter Number, 1937.

opinion on matters of transcendent importance can easily bring a nemesis of disaster. It ought to be possible at this time of day to clarify thinking on major Christian issues without ceasing to be Christian in doing so. An European observer of the American scene said some years ago that perhaps what the country needed more than anything else was a first class theological discussion; he meant a discussion on major issues which would challenge the thought of every man and woman in the Christian churches of America. Such a discussion would register conviction regarding the relevance of Christian thought and write the needed outlines of a theological system in the minds of every layman in the country. Then at last would there be a chance of getting beyond the weak, undogmatic and invertebrate faith which marks the life of the generality of church members today.

3. But let it be confessed, and with a very great degree of sadness, that the defection of theology itself must bear a very large share of the blame for the present attitude toward it. Nowhere have the dread possibilities of the reflective power of the human mind to convert ideas into realities been so much and so tragically in evidence as where religious loyalty is transferred from God to ideas about God. At different times in the history of Christianity we find this subtle but deadly transference. No one has described this dread phenomenon better than Emil Brunner in his book, *The Mediator*. Says Brunner:

"The great danger of dogma is that too often it transforms the sign of the thing it represents into the thing itself. When this happens, a process of listening to a personal message becomes a neutral process of theoretical learning and the acceptance of certain intellectual truths. The formulation of the truth has been mistaken for the truth itself."⁷

"As soon as we begin to think *about* these doctrines, instead of submitting ourselves to them, our attitude becomes wrong. They have become objects to us, when the shoe ought to be on the other foot: we ought to be objects to them. We appraise them, instead of allowing them to judge us. Our attitude towards them has become that of a spectator, and this means that our relation to them has become purely intellectual. They are no longer 'the Word,' but a theory, an object to be looked at coolly from the outside. And the result is that now we master them instead of letting them master us."⁸

"Faith has become doctrine, a matter for the intellect, the play of thought, scholasticism. This disaster is not due to the dogma, the formulated creed of the Christian Church; for without dogma the world invades the Church and lays it waste; the disaster is due to the fact that the dogma, the merely intellectual expression of the divine truth in Christ, has itself been deified. The fact that God's Word is not a static theory, that it is not a Word which man can manipulate as he chooses, but that it is a living personal challenge has been forgotten. When dogma has ceased to be witness, that is, to point to something behind and above itself, then it is fossilized into a concrete 'Word,' a fetish. Or, if we say that the ethical meaning of the Word of God has been forgotten, we mean the same thing. The Word is no longer a challenge; it has become an object for consideration, a theory."⁹

Have you ever known people who were ready to challenge the world to point out a flaw in the orthodoxy of their belief, but who lived nevertheless complacent, unsympathetic, censorious lives, utterly devoid of the spirit of Christ? They stooped, when occasion demanded, to unethical proce-

⁷ Brunner, Emil, *The Mediator*, Lutterworth Press, 1934; p. 598.

⁸ Op. cit., p. 600.

⁹ Op. cit., pp. 595-596.

dures to further their worldly interests or even to propagate their religious faith. How did such an anomaly become possible? Because those people had converted their ideas about God into God Himself. They became idol-worshippers without knowing it, and their lives took on all the ethical marks of idolatry. They patronized and manipulated their God at will; they keep him in their pockets or on their book shelves. Few people can be so unlovely or are so utterly lost as these. The publicans and the harlots shall go into the Kingdom of Heaven before them.

I cannot leave this point without saying—and with this I bring our discussion to a close—that there is no place on earth where it is so perilously easy to make ideas of things divine do duty for the divine things themselves as in a theological seminary. Theology can so easily take the place of religion. True thoughts about Christ, thoughts which are passionately believed in and as passionately taught, can in a very subtle and awful way take the place of loyal obedience to Christ, and the daily imitation of His life. Student and professor alike are exposed to this peril, though I think that the danger of the professor—and here I think of myself in particular—is greater than that of the student, for the latter is apt to be more immersed in the real world than is his teacher.

As I begin to undertake professorial and administrative duties in the historic center of sacred learning under whose auspices we are met today, and as I look forward to years of loyal comradeship with fellow teachers and fellow students, I remind myself constantly of a famous description which Kierkegaard once gave of a theological professor. He prefaced his words with this somewhat irreverent viewpoint about professors in general: "Take away paradox from a thinker," said he, "and you have the professor." Well, that malicious observation of the great Danish

philosopher is neither here nor there for our present purpose. What interests me is to refer to his description of the type of professor who can falsify the inmost nature of Christianity and bring the sacred name of theology into disrepute. Kierkegaard imagined that near the cross of Christ stood a man who beheld the terrible scene and then became a professor of what he saw. He witnessed the persecution and imprisonment and cruel beating of the apostles and became a professor of what he had witnessed. He studied the drama of the cross, but was never crucified with Christ. He studied apostolic history, but did not live apostolically. The living contemporaneity of the Crucified meant nothing to him. "The 'Professor' follows steadily along—it has even become proverbial of professors that they 'follow,' follow the age, not, however, that they follow or imitate Christ. Supposing that there was a contemporary theological professor at that time when theology had not yet emerged, one could go through the Acts of the Apostles and get one's bearing by observing what he now was professor of.

"So it ended with the Apostles being crucified—and the Professor became professor of the crucifixion of the Apostles. Finally the Professor departed with a quiet peaceful death."¹⁰

What Kierkegaard meant to say is something that has the most serious import for those of us who essay to teach or to learn what Christianity is. Our rôle as teachers or students of Christian theology will be worthily fulfilled; we shall succeed in erasing the stigma attaching to theological learning and escape the perils inherent in such learning in the measure, and only in the measure, in which faith in the Crucified commits us to the way of the Cross. Then as teachers and as students we shall share

¹⁰ Translation from the Danish by Rev. Walter Lowrie, D.D.

the fellowship of His sufferings and follow our Master in loving, humble obedience in the tasks He assigns us in the life of today. It is my profound conviction that the theology which carries forward the Reformed tradition to which Princeton Seminary belongs has a rôle of unprecedented importance to play in the world of today and of tomorrow. If we of today are faithful, the

great days of this Seminary are not all in the golden past.

"God needs MEN, not creatures
Full of noisy, catchy phrases.
Dogs he asks for, who their noses
Deeply thrust into—To-day,
And there scent Eternity.

Should it lie too deeply buried,
Then go on, and fiercely burrow,
Excavate until—Tomorrow."

INAUGURAL LUNCHEON

Immediately following the Inauguration a luncheon was held at the Westminster Choir School. It was a matter of regret to the Inaugural Committee that it was not possible to invite to the luncheon all of the Alumni, but no dining room sufficiently large was available. It was necessary, therefore, to limit the invitations to the delegates, Trustees and Faculty, and a representative from each class. Before introducing the speakers, Professor Loetscher, who presided at the luncheon, spoke in part as follows:

"Honored Guests:

"In behalf of the President, the Trustees, and the Faculty of the Seminary I extend to you a most cordial welcome. We deeply appreciate your presence with us on this happy occasion. We greet you not only as kindly disposed witnesses of a notable event in our history—the inauguration of a new president—but also as delegated messengers of friendship and good will from educational institutions of many kinds, from church courts, boards and agencies, and from widely scattered groups of our alumni; and we feel sure that you would all be very glad, if only circumstances permitted, to convey to President Mackay directly, for yourselves and for those whom you represent, your hearty congratulations and best wishes. We thank you, friends from near and far, for the honor you do us by your attendance at these festive exercises, and for the pleasure your company gives us.

"This is indeed a red-letter day in the annals of our Seminary: a day of joy and gladness; a day of hallowed memories that fill us with gratitude for the past, and of delightful anticipations that betoken our confidence and courage as we face the future: a day long to be remembered in Israel by all true lovers of Zion.

"Dr. Mackay has become our third president. Some of us can recall—and I am sure we have today been recalling—the inauguration of his illustrious predecessors—that of Dr. Francis Landey Patton in 1903 and that of Dr. J. Ross Stevenson in 1914—two *nomina clara et venerabilia* in the history of American Presbyterianism and indeed of ecumenical Christianity. And we think, too, of those professors who, before the office of seminary president was established, served for almost a hundred years—from 1812 to 1903—as chairmen of the Faculty and virtual heads of the institution—Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, William Henry Green, William M. Paxton, and Benjamin B. Warfield—men of very different talents and attainments, but all exceptionally gifted and justly celebrated for their noble contributions to the cause of Christ and His Church. And we think, too, of that larger company of teachers—far too numerous to mention—whose labors through the century and a quarter of our corporate life have become a priceless heritage not only to generations of students but also to that great multitude

in all lands to whom the sons of Princeton have in turn imparted the blessings they have received from their theological *alma mater*. And if, as Thomas Chalmers once said, 'The heraldry of an institution of learning is its alumni,' we cannot but take special pride in the fact that as regards the number of our graduates and former students—exceeding eight thousand—this Seminary is the largest divinity school of any name in the country. With but a touch of pardonable exaggeration we might apply to them the language of the Psalmist: 'Their line is gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world.' Gratefully, too, do we remember the splendid succession of Directors and Trustees who have rendered invaluable services in promoting our temporal and spiritual welfare. Standing upon the threshold of this new day in our history, we reverently pause and give thanks for the great communion of the faithful—living and departed—who here have taught and learned more perfectly the way of life in Christ Jesus.

"We are all here.

E'en the dead, though dead so dear,
Fond memory to her duty true
Brings back their faded forms to view.
How life-like, through the mist of years,
Each well remembered form appears:
They're round us as they were of old—
We are all here.'

"But we are looking today, not so much to the past, as to the present and the future. And as we do so, there is, I need hardly remark, much that a devoted alumnus occupying the position with which I am honored here this afternoon would like to say; but I realize that the time at our disposal belongs to the distinguished guests who have been invited to address us. But I am sure I shall be pardoned if, speaking more especially for myself and my colleagues in the Faculty, I say just a word about our sincere delight, our real joy, in welcoming Dr. Mackay as our president. Some of us well remember his brilliant career as a student, and as we congratulate him on his

election to this high office—an office concerning which Dr. Patton said at his own inauguration that there is none greater within the gift of the Presbyterian Church—we also congratulate ourselves on having had some little share in training him for his life-work; but most of all do we, his former teachers and all his colleagues, congratulate the Seminary on his coming to this new field of service. Brief as his sojourn among us has been, he has already won all our hearts, as long before he had commanded our admiration and esteem. We gladly bear public testimony to our deep appreciation of his intellectual vigor and versatility, his broad and generous culture, his unusually affluent ministerial experience in our own and other lands, his masterly understanding of the religious and theological problems of our day, his administrative ability, and his superb gifts as a preacher and speaker. We admire his sincerity, his modesty, his tact, his fairness, his mingled gentleness and firmness, and his sympathetic interest in every detail of our institutional life, including the special and peculiar needs of individual students. And there is something deeper than these qualities of his mind and these traits of his character that draws us to him in love and loyalty. His presence on our campus has become a fountain of spiritual grace and blessing to us all. And so we rejoice in his leadership, being confident that as we follow him we shall be treading in the very footprints of Him who is the way, both the truth and the life."

Prayer was offered by the Rev. Hugh B. McCrone, D.D. Greetings and best wishes were extended to President Mackay and the Seminary by President Harold Willis Dodds, Ph.D., LL.D., of Princeton University; President James A. Kelso, D.D., LL.D., of Western Theological Seminary; President Benjamin R. Lacy, D.D., LL.D., of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia; Dean Luther A. Weigle, D.D., LL.D., of the Divinity School of Yale University.

DR. MACKAY'S MESSAGE TO THE ALUMNI

Easter Friday,
March 26, 1937

DEAR FELLOW-ALUMNI:

Nearly a year has passed since a very gracious telegram from the Alumni Association reached me in the woods of Michigan. That telegram with its expression of earnest desire was a decisive factor in leading me to set my face definitely toward Princeton. In the months that have elapsed since that time I have taken over my new duties, have been officially installed into office, and have settled down to both teaching and administrative responsibilities.

Varied notes of sadness and gladness have intermingled since this Seminary year began. Death has taken an unusual toll in the ranks of our Faculty family. First, Mrs. Zwemer, the saintly life-partner of our Professor of Missions; then Dr. Caspar Wistar Hodge, last of the great dynasty which added so much lustre to the name of Princeton throughout the world, and himself a distinguished theologian and teacher; and lastly, the Rev. Joseph H. Dulles, with whose administration as Librarian for more than forty years the phenomenal growth of our library is associated—all passed away within a few weeks of each other.

But happily the memory of these last months is mostly one of gladness. The warmth of our reception by the Faculty has deeply moved my wife and me. The spirit of cooperation shown by everyone connected with the Seminary has won our hearts. We have a splendid student body, whose dedication to study and earnest Christian purpose augur well for the years ahead in the life of the Seminary and the Church. The President and Faculty of the University have been exceedingly cordial.

So, also, has the local community in general. As for our Trustees, I feel proud to be associated with a body of men who give freely of their time in unnumbered ways to advance the interests of the institution we love.

There are also many other favoring winds of circumstance which make hope run high. Our Seminary is headed, I venture to believe, for one of the greatest opportunities in her long history. In a moment of religious unrest, coupled with great theological confusion, strong tides of thought are running in the direction of Princeton's historic position. The decadence of theological education in several lands hitherto noted for the eminence of their teachers of divinity lays an unusual responsibility upon Princeton Seminary to become the center of evangelical learning that our time so sorely needs. The future is ours if we have faith to grasp it.

But if we are to fulfil our mission in this most crucial moment in the history of Christianity, the closest cooperation and the most ardent devotion will be required of us all. Only unitedly and by placing ourselves under the leadership of the Holy Spirit can we match this hour. We have obligations to today and to tomorrow as well as to yesterday. What ultimately matters is loyalty to God and His eternal purpose in Jesus Christ, a loyalty which can be discharged only in the measure that the Gospel of salvation is apprehended with clarity, proclaimed with conviction, translated into Christ-like living, and applied to the complex situation of today. Winds and tides of God are with us. But it would be fatal to forget that this is the day of our visitation. Let us honor our past by launching out into the future. We must set sail for the high seas or flounder in the shallows. We must let the light of our inheritance

shine before the men of this generation or our candlestick will be taken from us.

My sense of personal responsibility weighs heavily upon me. I am convinced that the President of Princeton Seminary, especially at such a time as this, ought to be free to be first and foremost an educator and a companion of youth. But this can become possible only if all who believe in the Seminary and its God-given mission cooperate with him in supplying the material things that are needed for the maintenance and development of the institution. Our present equipment is quite unworthy of a great tradition and a great institution like ours. And yet I feel that our needs of today and our hopes for tomorrow have only to be made known to our friends throughout the Church in order to win their support. But the Church constituency will not know our needs save in the measure in which we the Alumni of the Seminary make them known.

It has already been my privilege to share my hopes and aspirations with a number of Alumni Associations. I look forward to speaking before other associations in the months immediately ahead. At Commencement time there will be opportunity to talk over together the plans for the future. I bespeak for that occasion a record gathering of all the members of our Association.

I trust we shall ever be free and perfectly frank with one another, always in the bonds of charity. Nothing will give me greater pleasure than to receive suggestions, which will be carefully weighed, and I hope I shall never be averse to honest criticism. Only let us pray for one another and bear one another's burdens. Above all, let us take upon our shoulders, according as God has given us strength and opportunity, the burden of our Seminary's future as the greatest contribution we can make to the Kingdom of His Son in our time.

Your friend and fellow-alumnus,

JOHN A. MACKAY

THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

The One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the founding of the Seminary is to be observed in a fitting way in connection with the Annual Commencement.

The program of events is as follows:

Monday, May 17:

3:00 p.m. Address by the Rev. Lynn Harold Hough, D.D., LL.D., Dean of Drew Theological Seminary.

4:30 p.m. Reception at "Springdale."

7:00 p.m. Alumni Banquet with addresses by the President and representative Alumni.

Tuesday, May 18:

10:30 a.m. Commencement Exercises with address by the Rev. John Sutherland Bonnell, D.D., Pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City.

The suggestion has been made that in view of the banquet on Monday night classes or clubs could arrange to have special reunions at breakfast or luncheon Tuesday, the 18th.

All Alumni are urged to make a special effort to be present.

Reservation cards will be mailed early in May to all Alumni living within two hundred miles of Princeton. Those living at a greater distance who plan to attend will please write for a reservation card.

THE AUTUMN CONFERENCE OF ALUMNI

The seventh Conference of Alumni of Princeton Theological Seminary will be held on the campus on Thursday and Friday, September 16 and 17. Sessions will continue from Thursday afternoon to Friday noon. The leaders of the Conference will be announced later. The music will be under the direction of the Westminster Choir School. All Alumni will be welcome. Dormitories will be open for over-night guests. Please reserve the dates, September 16 and 17.

HUGH B. McCRONE,

Chairman Executive Council