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I. THEOLOGY THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION.¹

THERE are some things relating to the supply of ministers of the gospel about which the leading Christian denominations are substantially agreed. It would be strange if any serious difference existed as to the first and great question of the source of the supply. It is written, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Ministers are gifts to the church from her triumphant and ascended Lord. As the first verse cited from the Epistle to the Ephesians is a quotation from the sixty-eighth Psalm, the import of the statement of the apostle is that God has never left the church to its own resources in the matter of providing ministers, but has reserved to himself, under every dispensation, the prerogative of furnishing them. This divine arrangement keeps the church dependent on God in a matter upon which her very existence, as well as her growth and prosperity, depends; but it is a wise and gracious one, in that it secures with infallible certainty to the church, in answer to her prayers, an adequate supply of the right kind of ministers, and at the same time enables them to speak as the ambassadors of Christ. The second feature of the divine plan relates to the agency given to the church in the word

¹ Delivered as an inaugural address in Columbia Seminary, May, 1896.

At the Southwestern Presbyterian University, lectures on Home Mission work, by men prominent therein, has been an especial feature of the last year's course.

Rev. R. E. Steele, in an earnest speech, presented the work of the Seamen's Bethel. Under the patronage of the "American Seamen's Friend Society," the work is now being pushed in New Orleans, Mobile, Savannah, Norfolk, and elsewhere.

I have said nothing of the mistakes of the Assembly. If one cared to do so he might find something to criticise. For instance, it was, to say the least, an unfortunate inadvertence that created the incongruity in one of the judicial cases, by which one and the self-same man sat as Chairman of the Judicial Committee, acted as counsel for the respondent, voted as a member of the court deciding, and, as judge, formulated the court's decision.

An ignorance of parliamentary law and of the *Book of Church Order*, on the part of some of the commissioners, sometimes retarded business, and occasionally precipitated parliamentary chaos. But these were not serious blemishes; besides, criticism is such a cheap accomplishment. Dr. Johnson has somewhere declared it to be "a study by which men grow important and formidable at very small expense; . . . and he whom nature has made weak, and idleness keeps ignorant, may yet support his vanity by the name of critic."

The Assembly will not be renowned for any startlingly great thing it did. It will, however, go down in the annals of the church as a court which grappled in a determined and courageous way with the not few intricate questions that came before it, and which approached all the great departments of church effort with the uplook and the outlook. It came to its adjournment without having once marred its deliberations with personal rancor. As the good Moderator offered the closing prayer, he seemed to lead us into the very and beatific presence of the Great Head of the church; and as the great tide of congregational song rose in the words of "Blest be the tie that binds," eyes grew moist, and hearts beat with gratitude for the sweet fellowship that lives under the blue banner of our Presbyterian faith.

Nashville, Tenn.

JAMES I. VANCE.

DR. W. H. GREEN'S JUBILEE.

From the very nature of the case, jubilee occasions are rare. And yet within the last quarter-century Princeton Seminary has had the unusual distinction of celebrating two of them. Each was a memora-

ble event. It was meet and proper that, in 1872, Princeton should pause in the regular routine of her work, throw open her doors, and say to her alumni and the friends of truth in general, Rejoice with me. A post may, though few do, stand in its place for fifty years, but to fill the post occupied by Dr. Charles Hodge, and to fill it as he filled it for fifty years, is an achievement as rare as it is difficult, and as honorable as it is rare. Princeton did well to make suitable recognition of the supreme honor God had put upon her in giving her such a man. She did well to place a crown upon the head of her great theologian, the foremost, in many respects, of his century, and worthy to rank with the foremost of any century.

Nor was it otherwise when, on May 5, 1896, she celebrated the jubilee of her equally distinguished scholar and exegete, Dr. Green.

William Henry Green was born at Groveville, in Burlington county, N. J., on the 27th of January, 1825. He entered the freshman class of Lafayette College, Easton, Pa., at the early age of twelve, and, in 1840, when only fifteen, graduated. His bent in those days seemed rather towards mathematics than towards the languages. Indeed, in the course of his happy little after-dinner speech, Dr. Cattell said that, in his college days, young Green preferred a formal request to be excused from the study of the languages, on the ground that he had no aptitude for them. So little can we foresee the end from the beginning. For two years after graduating from Lafayette he filled the position of tutor in mathematics in that institution. He then entered Princeton Seminary, remained a year, and returned again to Lafayette, as professor of mathematics. This position he filled for only a year, when, returning to the Seminary, he completed his course there in 1846. In the class with which he graduated were a number of men who subsequently attained distinction, among them Drs. A. A. Hodge, T. L. Cuyler, and H. J. Van Dyke. Immediately upon his graduation, he was elected assistant teacher of Hebrew, which post he retained for three years. Resigning his place in the Seminary in 1849, he became pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia. Here he remained preaching and studying until 1851, when he was elected Professor of Biblical and Oriental Literature in Princeton Seminary, taking the place of Dr. J. A. Alexander, who had been transferred to the chair of Church History. From the day of his election to this important professorship, Dr. Green has been quietly and unconsciously to himself, but steadily and surely, preparing the way for the grand ovation given him on May 5th last. During all

these years he has been an indefatigable student, an impressive and inspiring teacher, and a fertile and vigorous writer. His scholarship is broad, thorough, and accurate; his judgment well-balanced and sound; his style clear, calm, and convincing; hence his work is likely to stand the test of time. It is not, however, the purpose of this note to enter upon any review of Dr. Green's career, or to attempt any estimate of his work. I pass on, therefore, at once to May 5th.

I shall not attempt anything like a detailed account of the events of the occasion. Let it suffice to say, in general, that the day was auspicious. The skies, except during a brief and pleasant shower, were clear; the air was cool. The town of Princeton herself seemed to have donned her loveliest dress in honor of her distinguished son. The usual closing exercises of the Seminary were held in the chapel; and it was at once a solemn and inspiring sight to see seventy young graduates in divinity receive their diplomas.

These exercises over, a procession was formed, which promptly moved to Alexander Hall, on the grounds of Princeton College—soon and properly to change its name to Princeton University. Alexander Hall is a magnificent structure, costing, it was said, the enormous sum of \$350,000. It may not be amiss to express surprise and regret that in constructing this beautiful and imposing auditorium so little attention, apparently, was bestowed upon the comfort of the auditors. Beautiful architecture in such a building but poorly compensates for bad acoustics. The representatives of the Seminary and of the College, the invited guests, and those invited to deliver addresses—all together constituting quite a concourse—were conducted into the hall under the guidance of a marshal, and were there comfortably seated upon an elevated platform. In the centre, and toward the front of this platform stands a unique chair of state, or, rather, throne, of costly stone. This was occupied by Dr. Abraham Gosman, President of the Board of Directors of the Seminary, who presided over the exercises of the occasion.

Conspicuous among the distinguished personages who sat to the right of Dr. Gosman were Drs. Booth and Osgood, the former the Moderator of the Northern General Assembly of 1895; the latter well known as a member of the American division of the Committee of Revisers of the Old Testament, and a professor in the Baptist Theological Seminary at Rochester, New York. Equally conspicuous upon the left were Drs. F. L. Patton, of Princeton College, and C. M. Mead, of Harvard Seminary. But, unquestionably, the central and most ob-

served of all the figures upon the platform was that of Dr. Green himself. When he entered and took his seat to the right of Dr. Gosman the whole assembly rose to their feet as one man, and gave expression to their profound regard in prolonged applause. When quiet was at last secured the jubilee exercises proper began.

These, omitting the purely devotional features, fell under three heads, namely, addresses relative to Dr. Green's contributions to scholarship and services to the Seminary and the church; congratulatory addresses; and after-dinner speeches or toasts. Without attempting to go into particulars, it will be proper and useful to note a few points, especially in connection with the more formal and elaborate opening addresses. These, more than anything else, revealed the real nature and importance of the occasion. The subjects chosen for these addresses, the persons chosen to treat these subjects, and the manner in which they were treated, all combined to show that the occasion was designed to honor not merely Dr. Green the man, Dr. Green the scholar, Dr. Green the professor, but Dr. Green the representative and defender of certain well-defined and vitally-important views in regard to the word of God. It was not without significance that immediately after the opening address came Dr. Mead's discussion of Dr. Green's contribution to biblical criticism. By giving this theme not only a place, but the first place, in the programme, the committee who arranged the programme emphasized not merely the value of Dr. Green's contributions to biblical criticism, but their gratification at, and approval of, the position he had taken, and their sense of its supreme importance at this time. Dr. Mead treated his theme at once with vigor and much discrimination. The next address was by Dr. McCurdy, professor in Toronto University, and now widely and favorably known as the author of *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*. He spoke of Dr. Green's contributions to Shemitic scholarship. I cannot pass on without noticing and emphasizing at least one point in this felicitous address. Dr. McCurdy, among other deserved tributes which he paid to Dr. Green, laid special stress upon his minute and thorough acquaintance with his chosen field of investigation. And is not this, after all, the real test of scholarship in any department? One's range may not be wide, but, if he has *mastered the material* falling within that range, he is so far a scholar. It does not necessarily follow, however, as many vainly imagine, that this mastery of the material in a given sphere qualifies one to gather up in sound generalizations the lessons of the phenomena which, in detail, he has

passed under review. But this detailed acquaintance with and mastery of the material is certainly a *sine qua non* to valid generalizations. Scholars frequently arrogate to themselves the functions of judge and jury in the questions that emerge in connection with their investigations. This is, unquestionably, assuming too much. Surely it ought to be enough for them, both in the way of honor and responsibility, that they are the only competent witnesses in these cases, and that their first-hand, exhaustive knowledge of the facts involved is indispensable to a wise or righteous decision.

It will not, I trust, be regarded as invidious to say that Dr. Patton's was, in some respects, the crowning address of the occasion. It was listened to with the greatest attention, and elicited repeated tokens of appreciation and approval. Dr. Patton is evidently, and justly, something of an idol with the constituency of Princeton. As a tribute to his worth, his ability, and his present and prospective influence, President Patton's address must have been peculiarly gratifying to Dr. Green. Among others, two remarks that he made impressed themselves specially upon the mind of the writer. He said—and how truly!—that just at this time the church has no greater need than that of a body of competent *scholars*. This is a conviction which has been rooting itself more and more firmly in the writer's own mind for a number of years past. It is certain, however, that this body of scholars will not be forthcoming unless the church bestirs herself and uses the means to secure them. Suitable young men ought to have their attention directed specifically to this subject. They ought to be taught that they can serve God as truly and as effectively by devoting their lives to the study as by going into the pulpit. And then the church ought certainly to provide the scholarships and fellowships that would furnish them the necessary pecuniary basis for the continued prosecution of their selected lines of investigation. Scholarship and specialism may have their dangers, but these dangers are not to be compared to those of dense ignorance or superficial knowledge. There is the wealth among us to provide all the funds necessary for attaining this greatly-to-be-desired end. Let it be consecrated, and then let the church sound God's call to scholarship in the ears of many of her choicest sons.

The other remark which fell from President Patton and impressed the writer was to the effect that the seminary is not the place to *investigate*, but to *impart to others the body of truth held by that branch of the church to which the professor belongs*. There is, doubtless, a sense in which this is true. The writer, however, could not but regret

that Dr. Patton should even seem to lend countenance to the notion industriously fostered by designing persons, that those who teach in our seminaries are "counsel for creeds" in such sense that their sole business is to ascertain what the church believes, and to teach that. Doubtless President Patton would be as far as any one from intimating that theological professors have less need or less right than any other professors to be open-minded, active-minded seekers after truth.

As long as all creeds are but imperfect and defective expressions of the truth as set forth in the word of God, so long must there be both room and need for re-examination, renewed and more thorough investigation. Who is prepared to say that all the facts and phenomena of Scripture have been fully ascertained and properly classified by those who have preceded us? This is certainly not true in the sphere of text-criticism, of Old Testament and New Testament grammar, of grammatical and historical exegesis, or even of theology. Would it not be wiser to say that every theological professor is under peculiarly solemn obligations to be an original and thorough investigator, in order that he may be an effective teacher? The mere fact that renewed investigation is not likely to lead him to new and different conclusions is no valid reason for ceasing his search into and after truth. It seems to the writer that it cannot be too clearly understood, or too frequently and loudly proclaimed, that no scientist or other investigator, in whatsoever sphere, is freer, more fearless, more earnest and open-minded, or more absolutely untrammelled in his quest for truth, than is the theological professor. True, he ought not to be in his chair unless he has accepted the creed of the church that elects him to the position, and accepted it intelligently and *ex animo*. But surely such acceptance is not tantamount to a pledge to cease to think upon the manifold questions—many of them profoundly difficult, and not a few of them obscure and perplexing—which are involved in every creed. Such acceptance does not imply that one has canvassed, and, as far as he is capable of doing so, has finally settled all these questions. It certainly does not bind one to refrain from looking into questions not in the contemplation of those who framed the creed, and so not covered by its statements. The acceptance by an honest man of a given creed only means that, with such examination as he has been able to give the subject up to that time, he holds this creed to embody the teachings of Scripture on the points covered by it. It neither precludes further examination nor pre-determines the conclusions to which such examination shall lead. The fact is, that a

professor's teaching is likely to have weight in proportion as he produces the conviction on the minds of his students that his teachings are the result of thorough and fearless personal investigation.

While holding these views, the writer recognizes very clearly the fact that every theological professor is bound to confine his teaching strictly within the limits of his church's creed; nay, further, he recognizes the fact that no theological professor has a right to hold, as a kind of esoteric doctrine, views which he has reason to believe would be looked upon with distrust or disfavor if proclaimed to the church.

But I must desist. The question is too large for further discussion at present. President Patton's remark, which led to this digression, if only taken as he doubtless designed it should be, is certainly a just one. After Dr. Patton took his seat, Dr. Green rose and made a brief but appropriate and feeling acknowledgment of the high tributes that had been paid him. His appearance was the signal for another outburst of hearty and prolonged applause. The congratulatory addresses were in good taste, and characterized by a tone of hearty sincerity that must have made them fall gratefully upon the ear of the venerable scholar to whom they were addressed. The after-dinner speeches were, without exception, well conceived and well received.

The impression left by the exercises, as a whole, was not only decidedly pleasant, but will be both lasting and wholesome. In honoring Princeton's noble standard-bearer, we before all, and above all, honored the standard which he has borne so honorably and so well. This standard has on it the motto, "The Oracles of God—The Scriptures of Truth."

Columbia, S. C.

W. M. MCPHEETERS.

VIII. AN EPISODE IN IMMERSIONIST HISTORY.

A singular state of things it is that has arisen in the Baptist Church of the South. That denomination possesses, in the loose manner of course necessarily involved in a body which is no more organically united than the Baptists, a theological seminary, in Louisville, Ky. The institution is widely known and deservedly respected and honored. Some of the ablest and noblest men of that faith, or of any faith, are there now, or have been promoted from its work to the presence of him whom they faithfully served. The names of Boyce and Broadus are household words with people of all denominational faiths. The