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## Commencement Number

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

“The Burning Heart”

Fellowships and Prizes

Alumni Notes

# The Princeton Seminary Bulletin

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## The Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church

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

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

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

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

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

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

The students of both worshipped on the Sabbath in the College Chapel, the professors of both took regular turns in preaching, and for a time many of the townspeople sat under the same ministry.

In the revival of 1814 which swept through the College, its leaders were Ashbel Green, President of the College, and Drs. Alexander and Miller of the Seminary; at that time Charles Hodge, a student in the College, received the spiritual vision with which his long and honored career in the Church began. However, the College and the Seminary have never had any organic connection, the one being an independent institution under a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees, and the other being established and controlled by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

In order to secure for candidates for the ministry more extensive and efficient theological instruction than they had hitherto enjoyed, the General Assembly of 1810 decided to organize a Seminary. Three propositions had been under consideration—to establish a Seminary in each one of the seven Synods, to establish two Seminaries one in the North and the other in the South, or to establish one great school in some convenient place near the center of the bounds of the Presbyterian Church. The advantages of this last proposal were that it would be furnished with larger funds and, therefore, with a more extensive library and a greater number of professors. The system of education pursued in it would therefore be more extensive and more perfect; the youths educated in it would also be more united in the same views

and contract an early and lasting friendship for each other, circumstances which could not fail of promoting harmony and prosperity in the Church.

This plan of having one central Seminary was adopted by the Assembly, and a committee was appointed to digest and prepare a plan of a Theological Seminary embracing in detail the fundamental principles of the institution together with regulations for guiding the conduct of the instructors and the students. This committee was composed of seven members, five of whom were Trustees of the College of New Jersey; Dr. Ashbel Green, who in 1812 became President of the College, serving as chairman. The plan as adopted by the Assembly of 1811 designated the new institution consecrated solely to the education of men for the gospel ministry as *The Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*. The Trustees of the College of New Jersey, desiring to bring the proposed Seminary to Princeton, appointed a committee to confer with a corresponding committee of the General Assembly, "to frame the plan of a constitution for the Theological Seminary containing the fundamental principle of union with the Trustees of that College and the Seminary already established which shall never be changed or altered without the mutual consent of both parties, provided that it should be deemed proper to locate the Assembly's Seminary at the same place with that of the College."

The terms of agreement between the General Assembly and the Trustees of the College of New Jersey, carefully drawn by a joint committee, were



ALEXANDER HALL

"Old Sem", the original Seminary building, first occupied in 1817.  
The oldest Presbyterian Seminary building in the United States.

adopted in 1812, and in 1813 the Assembly took action as follows: "Resolved, that the permanent location of the theological seminary be in the borough of Princeton, New Jersey, in conformity with the agreement with the Trustees of the College." Dr. Archibald Alexander, pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, was elected the first professor and, taking up his residence in Princeton, the classes were held at first in his house. In the following year, Dr. Samuel Miller, associate pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of New York City, was elected the second professor of the growing institution, which with its increased number of students found it necessary to hold the lectures and recitations in the College rooms.

From these beginnings, the Seminary has had a continuous and ever-expanding career of life and service. Thirty-three professors all told have been inaugurated as members of the Faculty. Dr. Charles Hodge has the distinction of having given instruction in the Seminary for a period of fifty-six years. Next in line of service is Dr. William Henry Green, who was a member of the Faculty for forty-nine years. During the past one hundred and twenty-two years, seven thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine students have been enrolled; nine buildings have been erected, and eleven residences for professors acquired. The total value of lands and buildings is \$1,048,258.99, and the total value of all other Seminary holdings, \$4,147,699.94. The Library has grown from the books used by Dr. Alexander, in whose house the Seminary began its life in Princeton, to a choice collection of 187,168 vol-

umes. There is a competent staff, headed by the Librarian and an Assistant Librarian.

Some of the achievements of the Seminary in the service of the Church at home and abroad are briefly recounted in the following pages and in subsequent issues of the Bulletin to be published during the present academic year.

### **The Present Financial Condition of the Seminary**

During the past year a very careful survey of the Seminary property and of all Seminary holdings has been made. The endowments of the Seminary, largely invested in guaranteed mortgages and gilt-edge securities, are yielding an income which has been greatly reduced during the past year or two. Interest payments have not been met and in some instances taxes have not been paid, which makes it necessary for the Seminary not only to pay the taxes but to take proceedings leading to foreclosure. Although expenses have been reduced to the lowest point and salaries and wages have been cut 15%, there is a deficit of \$20,000, which has to be met in order to balance the budget. This amount must be secured within the next four or five months, otherwise it may be necessary for the Board of Trustees to limit the service of the institution, and this at a time when the training of a competent leadership for the Church is imperatively needed.

The expenses of the Seminary in recent years have not been increased except in the way of providing pensions; this has added to the budget \$12,000 annually. There should be

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

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

### Historic Appeal for Funds

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

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

Dear Brethren,

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

of the very depressing state of these funds.

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

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

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

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

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

In christian affection we remain, very truly yours,

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

### The Plan of the Seminary

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

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

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