

THE FOUNDATION

GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

SECOND QUARTER 1952

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GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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Commencement 1952

The sixty-seventh commencement exercises at Gammon Theological Seminary began on Sunday afternoon, May 18. The chapel was comfortably filled with eager listeners who had come to hear Dr. Ernest C. Colwell, Dean of the Faculties at Emory University, Atlanta, Ga. He challenged the Graduates to do serious thinking and not to rely on what was in notebooks. They were to preach to their generation the truths that they had found sufficient for living in these days. Dr. Richardson presided in his usual efficient manner.

Sunday evening following the Baccalaureate address a reception was held at the home of President and Mrs. Richardson. Many of the friends were present.

Monday morning the seniors held their last chapel service. Dr. Richardson delivered the message and it was a serious good-bye admonition to the graduates to go out and uphold the traditions of Gammon and to work hard for the Kingdom of God. As a class gift they presented Dr. Richardson with a very servicable cover for the electric organ. Monday noon all visiting alumni, graduates and friends were served luncheon by the Seminary. At the same time speeches were delivered by Dr. Charles W.

Abington of the class of 1898, Dr. John A. Simpson, also of the class of 1898, and by Walter Scott Chinn, of the class of 1896. There were about twenty alumni present. Following the luncheon the annual meeting of the Gammon Alumni association was held. Monday evening an informal at-home was held at the President's home.

Tuesday, the 20th, the Commencement exercises were held. The Seminary Singers rendered special music. Dr. Prince Albert Taylor, Jr., of the class of 1930, and editor of the Central Christian Advocate delivered the commencement address. Following the address three young women were awarded the degree of Master of Religious Education. Then thirteen young men were awarded the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. Dr. Charles W. Abington, of the class of 1898, and Dr. John A. Simpson, of the class of 1898, were awarded the Alumni Citation. Clifton N. Bonner of the graduating class was awarded the Todd Prize for greatest improvement in three years at Gammon.

Charles H. Dubra of the Alumni Association presented the organ to the seminary as an alumni gift. Dr. Daniel H. Stanton received the gift

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CHRISTMAS . . . Its Christian Origins

By FRANK W. CLELLAND, *Professor of New Testament*

The late Dr. Albert E. Bailey has compressed the origins of our modern Christmas into the following lines

*Out of the Judean Hills
Came the Star, the Manger, the
Angels, the Child.
Out of the Forests of the Pagan
Northland
Came the Yule-log, the Mistletoe,
the Holly, the Tree.
Out of Asia and Russia and Holland
Came St. Nicholas with his wallet
of gold.
Out of Merrie Old England
Came the Puddings, the Games, the
Carols.
Out of the Heart of Humanity
Came the Impulse to Hospitality
and Good Will.
Out of the Heart of God
Came all.*

As Christians we are concerned, first of all, with what came out of the Judean Hills — the Star, the Manger, the Angels, the Child. Of these the last holds first importance, in fact, the only importance; for if the Child had not "increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man" until he became the Jesus his first disciples knew as "both Lord and Christ" we today should never have heard of the Star, the Manger and the Angels. We today, like those disciples of the first century, accept the legends and traditions about Jesus' birth because we first accept him for what he was then, has continued to be, and eternally is in the experience of the human heart.

In looking for the origin of Christmas in the Judean Hills we must be honest with ourselves by first being honest with the records of that event which we Christians

believe to have been the greatest in all history. The birth of Jesus may be viewed from different angles or points of interest. The vast literature on the subject may be classified roughly into three main groups:

First, there is the vast and ponderous literature of Christology in which learned theologians through the centuries have tried to explain the person and work of Jesus in metaphysical, philosophical and theological concepts and language. Second, there is an equally vast and varied literature of art, poetry, symbolism, pious imagination and adoration which extols, exalts and reverences Jesus' birth because men came to know him as the Son of God, the revelation of the Father's eternal and redemptive love. Third, but basic to all the rest, is the critical literature which seeks to examine and appraise the New Testament accounts for their textual accuracy and historical reliability. What do the various records in the New Testament actually tell us of the facts of Jesus' birth? For example, the literature of art, poetry and symbolism, especially the hymnody now used in our Christian churches, rests primarily upon either or both the Gospel stories of Jesus' birth and the concepts of theology and the creeds.

Our first duty, then, is to take account of the historical and scientific examination of our Gospel records. And at the very outset let

us accept the fact, now generally recognized by New Testament scholars, that apart from the Birth Stories in Matthew and Luke our New Testament knows nothing of what we call the Virgin Birth of Jesus. Paul, the earliest writer in the New Testament, introduces the idea of the pre-existence of Jesus as does John, perhaps the latest writer, but neither shows any knowledge of the Virgin Birth tradition. Furthermore, we must recognize the fact that the two main documentary sources of Matthew and Luke know nothing of the Virgin Birth. One of these sources is our Gospel according to Mark which begins with the preaching of John the Baptist and Jesus' Baptism and Messianic Call. The second source of Matthew and Luke, a document now lost but known in the early church as Matthew's *Logia*, usually designated now for convenience by the letter Q, also began with the preaching of John and the Baptism and Call of Jesus. Matthew's *Logia* may be dated as early as 50 A. D. and Mark not later than 70 A. D.

A third fact must be recognized, namely, that Matthew and Luke give two almost wholly different accounts of Jesus' birth, accounts which cannot be harmonized historically in spite of the fact that both have been compressed into one unified story both by theology and by art and hymnody. Both Matthew and Luke locate Jesus' birth in Bethlehem but Matthew (2:11) puts it in the home of Joseph while Luke (2:7) says in a stable manger; Matthew reports the visit of the Wise Men many months later guided by a Star while Luke gives the visit of the Shep-

herds, instructed by an angel, on the night of Jesus' birth; Matthew reports Herod's decree to kill all Jewish males two years old and under and the flight of Joseph and Mary with the infant Jesus into Egypt while Luke knows nothing of these events and has no place for them in his story; Matthew has Jesus and his parents return from Egypt and move their residence from Judea to Galilee their future home while Luke sends the family very shortly back to "their own home" in Nazareth. Matthew knows nothing of Luke's parallel story of John's supernatural birth.

Contemporary history has left us no hint of the visit of the astrologers from the East or of Herod's slaughter of Jewish male infants as told by Matthew, and Luke is most certainly in error as to the date of the enrollment ordered by Augustus. Furthermore, Luke's stories of the births of John and Jesus are consciously parallel to cherished Old Testament stories of the miraculous births of Isaac and Samuel, each born of aged parents past childbearing without "the help of the Lord."

Here, in Matthew and Luke, we have all the materials found in folklore and wonder tales associated in early times with the great: "The child of promise, appropriate descent, appropriate birthplace, accordance with precedent or prophecy, heavenly signs, dreams, angels, narrow escape, fortunate timing," including "what we should call both the natural and the supernatural, the providential and the fortuitous, miracle and coincidence." (1) At the center of this story is "the motif of the unmarried mother." In Luke the child of an

unmarried mother, found in a stable manger by lowly shepherds, proves to be the child of destiny. In Matthew, this child, discovered by astrologers from foreign lands and peoples, fulfills the Greek mistranslation of Isaiah 7:14, namely, that this "savior of his people from their sins" (Jesus) is born of an unwed mother — a virgin.

Matthew's genealogy (1:1-17) was produced undoubtedly as a specific apology for the story of Jesus' Virgin Birth. Jesus is a descendant of David, the great king, and of Abraham, the ancestor of the race. Matthew has artificially arranged Jesus' pedigree into three sections of fourteen generations each, fourteen being the numerical value of the name "David" in Hebrew. Contrary to usual Jewish custom, he also introduces the names of five women, the first four of unsavory reputation, though three—Tamar, Rahab and Ruth—were ancestresses of King David and the fourth—Bathsheba—was the wife of David and mother of King Solomon; these four, open to serious criticism as not conforming to the Hebrew ideal of wifehood, are introduced as a defense of the fifth, Mary, whom the Jews maliciously and blindly criticised as bearing an illegitimate child.

The Jewish Talmud slanderously asserts that Jesus was a bastard (*mamzer*), whose father, Pantherus, a Roman soldier, seduced a Jewish girl named Miriam—This aspersion, besides being reflected in the opening chapter of Matthew's Gospel in the Jewish retort to Jesus: "We were not born of fornication."

(John 8:41). (2)

Luke's genealogy, very different from Matthew's presents no such defense of Mary as the unwed mother. It is concerned only in presenting the Davidic descent of

Jesus through Joseph, and not through Mary as has been claimed since the fifth century, for when he (3:23) refers to Jesus as "being the son of Joseph" he inserts the parenthesis "as was supposed" in order to make his genealogy harmonize with the Virgin Birth story. Besides, Mary is presented as a cousin of Elizabeth and therefore a Levite—not a descendant of David.

The final and crucial test as to the historicity of these Virgin Birth stories in Matthew and Luke is to look in vain elsewhere in these same Gospels for any evidence that Mary's attitude toward her son was in the slightest respect colored or determined by her knowledge of his Virgin Birth or of his promised destiny as the savior of mankind. She and his younger brothers did not approve his public ministry; they, like his friends, thought he was crazy, "beside himself," and sought to take him home with them (Mk. 3:20-35). There is no evidence in Matthew, Mark or Luke that any member of Jesus' family understood him or became his disciple. Elsewhere in the New Testament (Galatians and Acts) we find a brother, James, as head of the Jerusalem church due, no doubt, to the appearance of the Risen Jesus to him (I Cor. 15:7). "Mary the mother of Jesus" and "his brothers," according to Acts 1:14, are present with Jesus' disciples in Jerusalem at Pentecost. The unavoidable conclusion is that they became his disciples only after his death.

Once more, the date of Jesus' birth is unknown. The earliest observances of his birthday were in the Spring, March 28, April 18 or 19, and May 29. Our present date, December 25, was probably un-

known before 300 A. D. and it was fixed by a most curious calculation utterly devoid of historical reliability.

Space does not permit even a brief survey of the literature of art, poetry, symbolism and pious imagination to discover what it has done with and to the Birth Stories in Matthew and Luke. We know that the results are as widely varied as the cultures, the nationalities and the centuries which have used them. The cautious words of a distinguished scholar must suffice here.

Christian Art has rightly delighted to reproduce with a wealth of colour and imagination the events attendant on our Lord's birth derived from Matthew and Luke. Rightly has Christian Art attempted this, because one of the functions of Art is to capture and preserve the fleeting aspects of significant form and in that significant form to present

ideas and ideals which the recital of historic facts fails to transmit to ordinary minds.

Whether these nativity scenes be the actualities of history, or the creation of prophetic imagination and of adoring love, has vexed, and is vexing, many devout Christians today. Yet ought it to do so? It is a matter of extreme difficulty to determine today beyond all possibility of doubt what is historical and what is not historical in these narratives.

If the view be adopted that they are largely the creation of the primitive Christian imagination, it must be recognized that, in that case, they embody in most perfect literary form the attitude of the primitive Christian Church towards its Head, and that this attitude constitutes reality of the most precious kind. Angelic songs proclaim His birth, prophetic voices foretell His significance.

In these Gospel scenes the infant Jesus is presented as not only human but Divine: He constitutes a link between the world of history and the spiritual sphere which is the originating centre of the creative process. The events recorded in Luke as attending His birth symbolize the sacredness of His personality and the scope and quality of His mission. (3)

Because the Roman pontiff, Pius XII, on November 1, 1950 promulgated as a dogma of the Church the assumption to heaven at the time of her death of the physical body of the Virgin Mary, it is important for us Protestants to recognize what theology has done to the simple and beautiful story of Jesus' birth. As suggested above, the student of the New Testament must readily recognize the fact that the primitive Christians, convinced by their experience of the risen Jesus that he was the Messianic "Son of man" and the divine "Son of God," began to create a miraculous or supernatural origin for him. Paul introduced the idea of Jesus' pre-existence and John the idea of the eternal Logos, while others, using both Hebrew and Greek traditions as to the origin of greatness, gave us the beautiful symbolic and

poetic stories preserved in Matthew and Luke.

Not long after the close of the New Testament arose the theological demand for the *perpetual virginity* of Mary. The Roman Catholic, considering the relation of the doctrine of the Incarnation to that of the Virgin Birth, concluded: "The more the Church pondered over the Incarnation, the clearer became the necessity of the Immaculate Conception." (4)

Thus the belief in the sinlessness of Jesus, his Virgin Birth and his Incarnation became so theologically interdependent that at least one branch of the Church found it necessary to hold the Virgin Birth essential to the Incarnation, and the Immaculate Conception an added necessity to Jesus' sinlessness. The

Roman dogma of the Virgin Birth "teaches that the Blessed Mother of Jesus Christ was a Virgin before, during, and after the conception and birth of her Divine Son." (5). Thus what the Protestant calls the Virgin Birth is regarded by the Roman Catholic as more accurately designated by the phrase "miraculous conception" to which must be added a marvel of the most incredible kind, namely, that the Divine Child left the womb "without the seal of Virginity having been broken."

The dogma of the *Virginitas in partu* (or Virginal Birth) may be regarded as another instance of the facility with which historic facts are manufactured under the impulse of dogmatic prepossessions. The worship of Mary, and the setting her up as a symbol of Virginity, necessitated the idea that she should have remained in the most absolute sense a Virgin throughout her life. (6)

This dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception was another theological effort to manufacture a historical fact, namely, Mary's sinlessness as a further guarantee of Jesus' sinlessness. This dogma was pronounced in 1854 by Pius IX who declared that Mary "in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the human race, was preserved from all stain of original sin." The Church calendar had had for centuries a day for celebrating this doctrine. Recently a bishop of the Roman Catholic Church defined this dogma as follows:

It is not the Virgin Birth. The word "immaculate" is taken from two Latin words meaning "not stained." "Conception" means that at the first moment of her conception the Blessed Mother in the womb of her mother St. Anne, in

virtue of the anticipated merits of the Redemption of her Son, was preserved free from the stains of original sin. (7)

Thus the doctrine of "original sin" which nowhere shows itself in the Birth Stories of Matthew and Luke became one of the grounds for transforming these beautiful, idyllic stories into dogmas and creeds, the acceptance of which the Church has made mandatory for the salvation of the soul.

To further divinize Mary as the Virgin Mother of Jesus and to further prove her free from the stains of sin, the present Roman pontiff, Pius XII, on November 1, 1950 proclaimed as a dogma of the Church a doctrine for centuries taught by the Church, the assumption of Mary's body to heaven at the time of her death. For this dogma as for the dogma of the Immaculate Conception there is not a shred of evidence in Scripture.

Another historical debate resulting from the doctrines of the Virgin Birth, the Immaculate Conception and the perpetual virginity of Mary arose as to the identity of the other members of Mary's family called in the Gospels "the brothers and sisters" of Jesus. Three different views have been and are now held by the main divisions of the Christian Church.

First, the earliest view, known as the Helvidian, dominated the first two centuries of the Christian era. This view understood the terms "brother" and "sister" in their natural sense and thus recognized the four brothers and the two or more sisters of Jesus as younger children of Joseph and Mary (Mk. 3:31f; 6:3 and parallels; Jno. 2:12; 7:3, 5, 10).

The second view, advocated by Epiphanius (376-377) attacked the

first view as a heresy, for in certain apocryphal writings had appeared the story of Joseph's former marriage during which these children were born. Thus they were older half-brothers and half-sisters of Jesus. The origin and rapid spread of this view was clearly due to the feeling of veneration for the Virgin Mary which has produced through the centuries so vast an overgrowth of legends about her. Apocryphal writings gave Joseph's age at the time of his betrothal to Mary as above eighty years! This view is now held by the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches and by some Protestant groups.

A third view, promulgated by Jerome (382-385), was that these "brothers and sisters" were in fact only cousins of Jesus. Jerome, the official translator of the Latin Vulgate Bible, and the Western Catholic Church were zealously espousing the doctrine of the *perpetual virginity* of Mary. They were also promoting asceticism and monasticism so that monkish asceticism thus sought to preserve the *perpetual virginity* of both Joseph and Mary! According to this view Joseph was betrothed in the vigor of his sexual powers, "a young man, strong, virile, athletic, handsome, chaste and disciplined" and not, as in the Epiphanian view, in the senility of old age! The *perpetual virginity of Mary* must be preserved at any cost: by the theory of a Joseph chaste and pure by senility, or a Joseph chaste and pure because he kept his sexual powers in chains for God's holy purpose—which? Only a celibate theology could think up such a misunderstanding of the clear meaning of "brothers and sisters" in the Gospel records of Jesus'

family. But this view—the "cousin theory"—is now the established tradition of the Roman Catholic Church.

While Protestants generally until the middle of the nineteenth century held either the "half-brother" or the "cousin" theory, they now, due mainly to the historical and critical study of the Bible and theology, accept the earliest or Helvidian view that "brother" and "sister" mean younger children of Joseph and Mary, as the Gospels clearly state.

- (1) Cadbury, H. J., "From Evangelists to Popes" in the *Official Register* of Harvard University, Sept. 21, 1951., Vol. XLVIII, No. 23, p. 36.
- (2) H. D. A. Major, "Incidents in the Life of Jesus" in *Mission and Message of Jesus* by Major, Manson, and Wright (E. P. Dutton & Co., 1938), p. 228.
- (3) *Ibid*, p. 266f.
- (4) Quoted from *God and the Supernatural* by C. J. Wright—*Miracle in History and Modern Thought* (Henry Holt & Co., 1930), p. 383.
- (5) *Ibid*, p. 385.
- (6) *Ibid*, p. 386.
- (7) Sheen, Fulton J.—*The Immaculate Conception*. A radio address, March 11, 1951. (National Council of Catholic Men, Washington 5, D. C.)

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for the Trustees of Gammon. The organ is one of the best and is a great help in the worship services in the chapel.

With the singing of the Gammon hymn the commencement exercises were over save for the picture taking, good byes and hurried, and some not-so-hurried, exits from the campus. We are proud of this year's class.

A Year and a Quadrennium

TO THE ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF GAMMON:

Commencement 1952 ended both a year and a quadrennium at Gammon. Both periods were busy ones for us, but as we look back now we can safely say that both have been good. During the year we achieved our immediate goals, and during the quadrennium we made much progress toward the ultimate solution of some of the problems that for so long have delayed the advancement of the School.

We had sixteen graduates this year, three women, thirteen men. This was a fairly large number. The attendance at Commencement exercises was the largest we have seen, and the number of returning Alumni was the greatest yet. Nothing is more encouraging than to see former students and friends back at school again, some coming far distances, to share in historic moments of their school life.

Though seriously short-handed in faculty by the death of Prof. Grannum, whose loss we still feel, and the absence of Prof. Thomas, away on study, we were able to maintain a full curriculum and still carry on the many informal activities for which Gammon is justly and widely known. This meant doubling up for many on the faculty.

During the quadrennium the physical plant has been thoroughly renovated and beautified. Just about every building on the Campus as well as the grounds have had their faces lifted. The academic standing of the faculty has been improved, salaries have been increased, a pension plan has been instituted for both faculty and staff, and above all, through generous cooperation from Conferences and individuals, our financial condition has been at least somewhat improved. We still have great needs, but we are getting a much more generous response in meeting them.

I cannot speak too highly of the new Organ which the Alumni are placing in the Chapel. This, I think, is indicative of the new spirit in the hearts of Gammonites and it is a fine tribute to the leadership Rev. Dubra is giving as President of the Alumni Association. Perhaps I should mention too, the "new look" and content which the *Foundation* has recently acquired.

's Newsletter

As we face the new quadrennium, we have much to do. New housing for married students is an immediate "must." Several buildings need to be replaced because they are now inadequate for present needs. The Library is a good example. We need a building about twice its size for adequate housing of our books and resources. The heating plant needs modernization. We are now working on this.

We envision, beginning this year, an in-service program that will make the Seminary of greater service to the men in the field, both in our own Church and in others, too. We hope to cooperate with the Negro Methodist bodies to help them achieve accredited theological education for their ministers.

Our greatest need, as we face the future, is of course, more students. These we must have. They must be found and directed to Gammon by you. We have a wealth of recruiting materials on hand to help you. Let us know what you need for your appeals to young people, and we will send them at once.

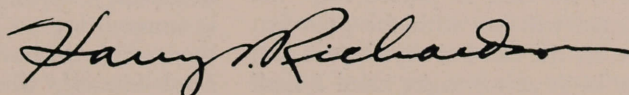
These are some of our aims as we face the next four years. We shall need your continued interest and prayers for their fulfillment.

I close with this word. Last year Gammon received eighteen thousand dollars from the United Negro College Fund Drive. We are hoping for as much this year, or more. It makes the difference between a balanced budget and a heavy deficit. You can imagine how helpful this sum is to our work. Our hope of new buildings rests heavily with this Fund when it undertakes its drive for capital funds.

The colleges in the Fund are now before the Nation, asking for aid in the work they are trying to do. Gammon is among them. Won't you help as you can with your time and your contribution? Remember that in helping the Drive, you are helping Gammon.

May you have a summer of rest and progress.

Yours in Christian fellowship,



Brief Notes on Some Familiar Bible Texts

By JOHN R. VAN PELT, Ph.D.

The texts here chosen for consideration are weighty, but they seem to have been often misread. The notes are far from exhaustive. They are offered with an earnest desire to incite the reader to undertake a thorough understanding of the texts and of truths which they point out.

I

**The fool hath said in his heart,
There is no God. —Psalm 14:1**

The right understanding of this familiar text hinges upon our gaining a clear apprehension of the meaning of the word "fool." For as used in the Old Testament the word has a sense different from that which it bears in our current usage.

In the Old Testament the "fool" is neither an imbecile nor a madman. He is the bold, reckless sinner, the man who despises the restraints of society and of the law of God.

We hear that some man has committed an outrageous wrong. The knowledge of its occurrence shocks all good people. "How could he do it?" we ask. "How could any man in his senses thus throw himself away?" The psalmist gives the answer: "Within himself he says, There is no God." At all events (he thinks): "God will not require it, will not punish me." There is no God to fear, and I think I can evade the eyes of men. So it was with Shakespeare's Falstaff. In the midst of a mean and cowardly deed he says to himself: "Nobody sees me." And God is not in all his thoughts.

The same general approach to the question of our accountability to Almighty God is seen in many places in the Bible. But we need not here multiply citations. I will add but one to those already given. While the reckless sinner continually says to himself "There is no God to punish me," the godly man will say with the psalmist: "I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8).

II

**Co-workers in the service
of God. —I Cor. 3:9**

The Authorized Version here reads: "We are fellow-laborers with God." By universal consent among New Testament scholars this rendering is inaccurate and even misleading. In the whole passage Paul is striving with all his might to impress upon the church in Corinth that neither he nor Apollos nor any other bearer of the gospel witness is, of himself, anything. "We are but ministers through whom you became believers. We are working together in the service of God. You are *God's* field, *God's* building. In this service I planted and Apollos watered; but it is God alone who causes the seed to spring up and grow."

No doubt the phrase, so often sounded in our ears, "We are partners with God," is quite acceptable *if rightly meant and rightly understood*. But as very often used it must be condemned as thoroughly unbiblical and confusing. Certainly it is God's gracious plan to use us in the spreading of the mighty word and in the establishment of truth and right in the world. But that we have anything of our own to contribute to the capital of the partnership is a fatal delusion. It is all of God. "But (some one may say), have I not at least myself to give?" This is indeed most right: I can give myself, 'tis all than I can do." But even this is possible only by the grace of God. We are not only God's creation but also, in Christ Jesus, his new creation. Paul is unremitting in his insistence upon this truth. He has learned it from our Lord himself, who declared: "Apart from me ye can do nothing."

III

My little children, keep yourselves from idols. —I John 5:21

The Revised Version here has "guard" instead of "keep." Moffatt translates: "My little children, keep clear of idols." Evidently the apostle laid immense stress upon the admonition, his closing word of his wonderful Epistle. In his day it was judged to have tremendous significance. Has it no such value for our day? Many fondly fancy that the warning can have no practical interest for us, that our modern enlightenment has lifted us far above the temptation to fall down before stocks and stones. But may there not be a subtle form of idolatry by which the children of our time are specially liable to be ensnared?

Let us ask ourselves: What, then, is the essence of idolatry? Is it not the putting of any object, whether it be material or ideal, in the place of God?

It is quite true that our modern enlightenment has brought us to a point far removed from crass idolatry. But has it set us securely upon a lofty plane far above the temptation to idolatry of every sort? A more fatal error cannot well be imagined than to think it so. The spirit of idolatry has only assumed a subtler and deadlier form. While we scorn the worship of stocks and stones, we are very prone to worship the ideal creations of our fancy.

That we may feel the full weight of John's admonition we must remind ourselves of the grand sweep of his thought of God. In all his writings, the Gospel, the Epistles, the Apocalypse, he makes signal use of certain great words, which shine forth as beacon lights in all his teaching concerning God. "God is *light*." "God is *love*." Still another word of like infinite scope and depth is *life* (or *eternal life*). Also this tremendous concept: *the word*. "In the beginning was the Word." "The Word became flesh and we beheld his glory." "His name is the Word of God." Inseparably bound up with the thought of *the word* is that of *witness* God, who sends into the world his Son, the Living Word,

bears witness to his Son, that he sent him in very truth. The Son then bears witness, in the unity of word and deed, to the Father. And then the church, the company of believers, bears witness to Christ, in and through whom we know God. In him we have the *true God* and *eternal life*. And here we have still another of John's great words: *true* and *truth*.

He who knows the true, the real God, and possesses him, should be secure from every temptation to idolatry of every sort. "This is life eternal, that they know thee, the only true (real) God, and him whom thou hast sent, even Jesus Christ." By letting our whole thought and life be ruled by the light of God in the face of Jesus Christ we shall keep clear of idols.

What are the idols which highly civilized men are tempted to worship today? From the beginning of human history men have worshipped money. It is not merely that they have highly *prized* money, they have looked to it for benefits that only God can bestow. Even ancient poets and philosophers untouched by Hebrew prophecy or Christian teaching have seen in the love of money the debasement of the religious faculty. Is not this implied in Virgil's use of the word *sacra* in the oft-quoted phrase: *auri sacra fames*?

Yet, deadly as the love of money surely is—the root from which springs evil of every kind—it cannot be deadlier than many another idol. We hear it said continually that materialism is the greatest foe to the true life of rational beings. But most earnestly I would put the question: Can it anywise be deadlier than a false idealism? Now ideals are our beacon lights for the voyage of life. As such they are, to us, of infinite importance. But to have any real value they must be in essence focal points of the outshining of the One True Light. If they are products of our own fancy, they are but false lights, soon to fade. While still shining they are but the *ignis fatuus* to lead us to our destruction.

An ideal can have real value only if it is the image or reflection of eternal reality, not yet real in ourselves but real in the nature and mind of God!

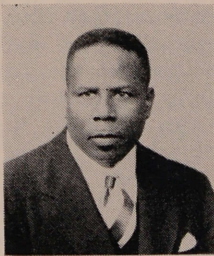
And when we glimpse some eternal value, seeing from far its beauteous light, let us not say: "It is not for me; I can never attain to it." Rather let us assure ourselves that the "exceeding great and precious promises" are

not given to mock us. Let us remember that in the end we are to be conformed to the image of God's Son. Therefore, having the picture of the Ideal-Real set before us, let us purify ourselves as he is pure.

Alumni News

The Alumni Association has again elected Rev. Charles H. Dubra, of the class of 1932, as its president. He has been especially active during the past year in raising funds for the alumni organ which was presented to the Seminary at Commencement. Bro. Dubra is one of the assistant secretaries of the Board of Temperance of the Methodist Church and is also active in cooperation with Bishop Brooks in caring for the school for accepted supply pastors in the New Orleans Area held for ten weeks each summer at Gulfside, Miss.

Dr. Charles B. Copher, of the Gammon faculty and a member of the class of 1939, has been active during the past year speaking at colleges and churches in the interests of Gammon.



REV. E. E. GAULDEN

Rev. E. E. Gaulden, of the class of 1935, is serving still on his second pastorate since leaving the seminary. He served the Bethlehem Baptist Church in Newberry, S. C., for eleven years. Then he became pastor of the Welch Zion Baptist Church of the same city and also

Dunn Creek Baptist Church at Ware Shoals, S. C. He also serves as a principal of one of the elementary schools of the state of South Carolina. He says, "I am grateful to God and to Gammon for the success that has been mine to enjoy. I hope that more young men of our denomination might be inspired to come to Gammon for further training in the field of religion."

Rev. Collie L. Moore, of the class of 1951, is the pastor of a brand new Methodist Church in the Central Alabama Conference. In Tuskegee, Ala., there is a large group of Methodists without a church so he is organizing the new church at the request of Bishop Bowen. The church has been named the Bowen Methodist Church. They have purchased two lots on which to build and are already ministering to congregations numbering nearly one hundred. We hope the venture proves highly successful.

It may come to some of you alumni with a start to be reminded that even though we have graduated eleven Methodists this year, two of them being women who will not be pastoring churches we lost among Gammon Alumni by death during the past twelve months thirteen men. They are as follows: George Deslandes, 1899; H. E. Burns, 1903; T. J. Robinson, 1905; Frank Quick, 1907; R. F.

Freeman, 1908; J. W. A. Butler, 1909; E. S. Johnson, 1914; A. D. Holden, 1924; H. W. A. Mitchell, 1924; J. J. Mitchell, 1926; V. V. Richardson, 1928; E. L. Briggs, 1929; and M. P. Johnson, 1937.

The four Thirkield-Jones lectures delivered in March by Bishop Willis J. King, of Liberia, will soon be published in the PHYLON, the Atlanta University publication.

William T. Handy, Jr., of the class of 1951, has completed a year of study at Boston University for an advanced degree. He will be taking a pastorate in the Louisiana Conference.

Professor James S. Thomas, of the class of 1943, will soon be returning to Gammon from Cornell University in Ithaca, N. Y., where he has been studying on his Ph.D. for the past two years. It will be pleasant to have him and his lovely family back on the campus again.

Romans which his students had put into a volume and published so as to satisfy their longing for a system of theology. This book, published by Melancthon's students, established a pattern of *Loci*, or chapters, which was followed by all great Protestant theologians—be they in the North (Lutherans) or in the West (Reformed) of Europe. And so, Professor Heppe still followed this general frame of Protestant thinking when he first published this book in 1861 at Elberfeld in Germany.

When, in 1924, the University of Bonn, Germany, called a mighty Swiss preacher, by the name of Karl Barth, to teach theology, he did not know exactly what to teach. And so, Karl Barth fished out of obscurity this manual of Christian beliefs and had it reprinted so that his students might find out what real Protestant thinking is. This book is now offered in English. Its reader will find here twenty-eight chapters on the essential ideas of Holy Scripture, God, Man, Christ, Sacraments, The Church and Glorification.

We feel that it is not an exaggeration to say that students of Protestant Thought will find this book to be a sort of second Bible.

PAUL T. FUHRMANN

BOOK REVIEWS

REFORMED DOGMATICS

By HEINRICH HEPPE

English Translation by G. T. Thomson
721 Pages

New York The MacMillan Co.

This handbook of Protestant Beliefs is very important because it offers the general frame of permanent Protestant thought. To make a long story short, we must recall that Luther and Calvin were not interested in theology but simply in expounding the Bible. Their position was indeed simply that of Bible professors. If we care to look at one of their sets, we would see that it consists mostly of expositions of books of the Bible. The originals of Protestant theology were purely biblical. Its first manual was Melancthon's *Loci Communes*, 1521. These *Loci* were simply biblical topics, or places. That is, the book originally was made of portions of Melancthon's course on

THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE

Editors, George A. Buttrick, Nolan B. Harmon, et. al. Vol. 8—*The Gospels According to St. Luke and St. John.*

The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952
Price \$8.75

Volume 7, containing 14 general articles on the New Testament and the Exegesis and Exposition of the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Mark, was reviewed in *The Foundation*, Fourth Quarter, 1951, page 16. Volume 8 is the second of the twelve to appear and fully maintains the high standard set by volume 7. It covers 811 pages devoted to Luke and John as compared to volume 7 with 690 pages devoted to Matthew and Mark, plus 227 pages of general articles on the entire New Testament.

The work on the Gospel of Luke is divided as follows: Introduction and
(Continued on Page 16)



Left to right, James S. Dial, Benjamin F. Bradforu, Jr., Robert D. Sherard, Thomas L. Strayhand, James W. Wilson, Miss Margaret Bess, Mrs. Sarah E. McGhee, Mrs. Julia P. Borders, Clifton N. Bonner, Thomas G. Blue, Jr., Lee R. McMillan, Simon Snell, John C. Jackson, Jr., Richard A. Leonard. (Freddie A. Robinson and Roosevelt W. Moore are absent.)

Graduating Class

1952



Some of the members of the middler and junior classes at Gammon during the past year.

President Harry V. Richardson, Rev. Charles H. Dubra, President of Alumni Association, Dr. Charles W. Abington and Dr. John A. Simpson both of the class of 1898 who were recipients of the Alumni Citation.



BOOK REVIEWS

(Continued from Page 13)

Exegesis by S. MacLean Gilmour, Professor of New Testament Literature and Criticism in Queen's Theological College, Canada; Exposition chapters 1-6 by Walter Russell Bowie, Professor of Homiletics in the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia; Exposition chapters 7-12 by John Knox, Professor of New Testament in Union Theological Seminary, New York City; Exposition chapters 13-18 by George Arthur Buttrick, the General Editor and senior minister of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City; Exposition chapters 19-24 by Paul Scherer, Professor of Homiletics in Union Theological Seminary, New York City. The work on the Gospel of John is divided between two—Introduction and Exegesis by Wilbert F. Howard, Principal of Handsworth College in England, and Exposition by Arthur John Gossip, Emeritus Professor of Christian Ethics and Practical Training in the University of Glasgow in Scotland.

Space does not permit specific comments on the work of each scholar but the rather thorough examination of this column was a most rewarding, often a genuinely exciting, experience. The Introduction to Luke (pages 3-26) by Dr. Gilmour, and the Introduction to John (pages 439-463) by Dr. Howard could hardly be excelled for critical comprehensiveness, sound judgment, and brilliant insight. Their Exegetical work is equally full and satisfying.

The Expository work on Luke represents the thought and experience of four great American preachers of as many denominations while that on John contains the brilliant wisdom and warm experience of one of Scotland's greatest pulpитеers. Lesser shepherds who feed their flocks on the Word of God from week to week will find here a storehouse full of good things. Again we heartily recommend this volume as we did volume 7.

FRANK W. CLELLAND

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY FOR TODAY

Edited by Alan Richardson and W. Schweitzer. Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1952.

Price \$4.00

The sub-title of this very important volume is: "A World Council of Churches Symposium on 'the Biblical Authority for the Churches' Social and Political Message Today.'" The volume contains four parts:

1. The Authority of the Bible—a statement of "fundamental considerations" by representatives of the Greek Orthodox, Methodist, Congregationalist, Baptist, Reformed, Lutheran, and Anglican churches.
2. Biblical Theology and Ethics Today—a survey of the world position by Dr. Schweitzer, one of the editors.
3. Principles of Interpretation by five scholars representing somewhat differing viewpoints. This part contains (section 6) the "Guiding Principles for the Interpretation of the Bible as accepted by the Ecumenical Study Conference, held at Wadham College, Oxford, from June 29th to July 5th, 1949." "We have found a measure of agreement that surprised us all," reported the members of the Conference, who submitted a "general consensus" on four points: (1) The necessary theological presuppositions of Biblical interpretation; (2) the interpretation of a scientific passage; (3) the discovery of the Biblical teaching on a specific social or political issue; (4) the application of the Biblical message to the modern world.
4. The application of the Biblical message to the modern world.

The Foreword says: "this book will demonstrate some of the differences which actually exist among us in our approach to the Bible and in our methods of interpreting it. We had no intention of concealing them. . . . Many points need still to be reconciled with one another. We hope our symposium will be read as an invitation to study these problems further."

The World Council of Churches, composed of all the leading branches of Christendom (except the Roman Catholic) with many differences in organization, doctrine, and worship claim to unite in recognizing the Bible as God's Word to men, both the Christian individual and the community. But does the Bible contain the same authoritative Word for the life of societies, nations, and cultures? Lack of uniformity in the answers to this question and in the methods of interpreting the Bible called forth this study.

This is an exceedingly important volume for every man and woman who works and prays for the unity of Christendom. Even partisan denominationalists should read this book to acquaint themselves with the Biblical views of other denominationalists.

FRANK W. CLELLAND

INTERPRETING THE NEW TESTAMENT

By ARCHIBALD M. HUNTER
Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1952
Price \$2.50

Dr. Hunter, the Professor of New Testament at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, has added another volume to his series on the New Testament which includes "The Message of the New Testament," "Intro-

ducing the New Testament," and "The Work and Words of Jesus." His newest volume reviews the principal activities and findings of New Testament scholarship during the first half of the twentieth century (1900-1950). He has sought to mediate to the layman in non-technical terms the major conclusions of scholars regarding every portion and personality of the New Testament and at the same time provide a "briefing" in the New Testament for scholars in related fields. Both purposes have been well served.

In ten brief chapters, the author has described important problems and their solutions in such areas as the Text, Translation, and Theology of the New Testament, the Synoptic Gospels, the Life of Christ, St. Paul, Johannine Literature, and other Apostolic Writings. Dr. Hunter makes no claim to completeness for his survey but the critical as well as the lay reader will find here a suggestive and vivid account of the varied products of the best scholarship both in English and other languages, with naturally a disproportionate attention given to British scholars with whom he is more familiar.

This volume was first published in Great Britain in 1951 and is now reprinted in this country. All students and ministers will profit greatly by reading this survey.

FRANK W. CLELLAND

