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Quarterly Bulletin of Gammon Theological Seminary 1917

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Quarterly Bulletin of
Gammon Theological Seminary

Seminary Motto:

(Written for the Seminary by John Greenleaf Whittier.)

Light, Freedom, Truth, be ever these our own:
Light to see Truth, Freedom to make it known,
Our work, God's work, our wills, His will alone.

NOVEMBER, 1917

Published Quarterly by Gammon Theological Seminary.

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CALENDAR 1917-1918.

1917.

September 26, Wednesday—Registration; Examination and Classification of Candidates for Admission.

September 27, Thursday—First Chapel Exercises at 2:30 P. M.; Organization of Classes at 9:00 A. M. and 2:30 P. M.

October 25, Thursday—Matriculation Day. Address in Gammon Chapel 2:00 P. M.

November 29, Thursday—Thanksgiving Day.

December 3, Monday, to 5, Wednesday—First Term Examinations.

December 5, Wednesday—First Term Closes.

December 6, Thursday—Second Term Opens.

December 23, Sunday—Founder's Day. Address in Gammon Chapel.

December 25, Tuesday—Christmas.

1918.

January 1, Tuesday—New Year's Day.

January 25, Friday—Day of Prayer for Colleges.

February 11, Monday, to 13, Wednesday—Second Term Examinations.

February 12, Tuesday—Lincoln's Birthday; Frederick Douglass' Birthday.

February 13, Wednesday—Second Term Closes.

February 14, Thursday—Third Term Opens.

February 22, Friday—Washington's Birthday.

February 22, Friday—Middle Class, Public Recitals.

March 15, Friday—Stewart Foundation Prize Contest, Gammon Chapel.

April 19, Friday—Class Day and Lyceum Public Program.

April 21, Sunday—Baccalaureate Sermon.

April 21, Sunday Evening—Anniversary of the Stewart Missionary Foundation for Africa; Annual Address and Announcement of Prizes by the Secretary of the Foundation to the Successful Contestants in Churches, Academies, Colleges, and the Seminary.

April 22, Monday—Alumni Day; Annual Address.

April 23, Tuesday—Reunion of the First Class that graduated in 1886; the class of 1888, and of the class of 1918—Banquet at 8:00 P. M.

April 24, Wednesday—President's Annual Reception.

April 25, Thursday—Commencement Day.
Already ninety-three students are enrolled for the year's work at Gammon, with others yet to come. The fact that, in spite of the war and the exodus of our colored people from the South, our theological school is able to report so fine an increase in the number of men who have devoted themselves to careful training for the Christian ministry should gladden the heart of every true friend of the Negro.

Our Government was wise in exempting from military service all theological students who were enrolled prior to the seventeenth of last May. For, however, much this little group of men might be able to do for their country by fighting now in the ranks, they will be able to contribute far more as leaders of their people in the days of reconstruction which must follow the war. What conditions shall we face when at last the tragedy of this world struggle shall be complete and peace shall come again? What barriers will be broken down, what forces will be loosed, what ideals will be dominant, what cauldrons will be seething in that new Democracy of which men are now dreaming? God only knows! But of this we may be sure: we shall face a world of thought and feeling and action so eager and assertive with new life, that men of vision and power will be needed to guide this new life as they have never been needed before.

What a sad thing is this now happening in Russia. A small minority of shallow and ignorant men, who, in the blindness of their self-conceit, arrogate to themselves the name "Bolsheviki." "The majority" have pushed themselves to the front; and, because no worthy leaders of the people have yet emerged from the chaos of the revolution, have seized the reigns of government, and are driving headlong to destruction. So soon has the new liberty degenerated into accursed license.

And what shall be the issue of the new liberty which surely is coming to the Negro—coming with signs more clear and with strides more swift than in any other days—coming as the fruitage of this world-cataclysm—the gold of this melting pot whence the old provincialisms with their clanishness and caste and blind hatreds are being thrown out with the dross? Whither shall be the leadings of this new liberty? Who shall be its prophets? What shall be its life? Shall we have here, also, experience of folly from ignorant guides, in wanderings and sorrow and death? Or shall we have men, calm-eyed in the vision of truth and strong in the gifts of the Spirit, who shall discern the leadings of the Allwise, and shall bring the people by His paths into the fullest liberty of righteousness and holiness? To this our Christian schools must give answer, for they were founded for the training of leaders.
Let us pray that God's will may be well done in all these schools; and let us be thankful that so many men are now at Gammon, "The School of the Prophets," getting ready for God's day of larger hope.

P. M. W.

MATRICULATION DAY.

The Matriculation Day exercises were held on October 25th and were of more than ordinary interest.

A larger company than usual gathered for the first service which was held at 10:30 A. M. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was most impressively administered by President Watters, assisted by the Faculty. It was indeed a holy hour and heaven seemed near.

At 2:30 P. M. the address of the day was delivered by Dr. John Hope, president of Morehouse College, the right man with the proper message for this serious occasion.

He spoke of present conditions, of the unrest among the people and of the great world strife. He made reference to the terrible destruction of life and property and the number of years and the great amount of money and thought that will be required to restore Europe from the merely material point of view. When the loss of life is considered the problem of reconstruction becomes even more enormous, but mere life is nothing as compared with the moral and spiritual reconstruction that has to be made. Looking at it from this point of view an especially heavy burden is resting upon the men and women in our schools and colleges today, especially upon the younger ministry, who will be coming forth and taking hold of the world's problems just about the time the war is over.

It is to be regretted that the whole of this most helpful address could not be given.

The formal recognition of the large class of Juniors in the Seminary and the School of Missions followed, President Watters, assisted by the faculty and others, using the ritual prepared for the occasion.

This most delightful day fittingly closed with a reception held in the Refectory in the evening.

STATEMENT ON MINISTERIAL SUPPLY.

Adopted by the Board of Education in Annual Session, December 14, 1917.

With reference to the problem of ministerial supply we would first of all record our conviction of the supreme importance of giving prayerful attention to this great matter. We would urge that our Church be summoned in the following directions:

First. To larger obedience to the Savior's call to prayer—"Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into the harvest." Until the feeling of the
Church in this cause makes its way into the prayer-life of our pastors and people, we are certain to have an increasing problem.

Second. We urge the official force of the Epworth League and the promoters of the Epworth League Institutes to continue earnestly the splendid service of their Life-Decision days, and to call the other agencies of the Church to their aid, as may seem to them best.

Third. We promise cordial co-operation with any commission or committee that may be appointed by the bishops; and we beg to suggest the appointment of a special Sunday, to be known in our churches as Life-Decision Day, and to be observed by our pastors in presenting the special claims and privileges of ministerial and missionary work.

Fourth. We urge likewise that, as soon as possible, special literature, dealing with the nature of the call to the ministry, the exalted character of that life-work, and the wonderful opportunities offered by this sacred profession in our day, be prepared for wide use throughout our church.

Fifth. We would urge, also, that all possible efforts be made to place the importance of this matter before the presidents and faculties of our colleges; and that our leaders be requested to use all proper occasions, in appearing before our student bodies, to present the appeal for lives to be devoted to the ministry and other forms of special religious work.

Sixth. Most of all, would we urge the fathers and mothers of our church to build up and maintain the family altar; to keep before their children the highest ideals of Christian life; and solemnly to dedicate their children to the work of the Lord, counting it a peculiar honor if any of them shall be called to dedicate themselves to the ministry or to any other form of distinctly spiritual service.

WILLIAM F. McDOWELL,
EDWIN H. HUGHES,
Committee.

A MESSAGE OF HOPE.

Reprinted from the Journal of the French Academy, following the devastation of Belgium.

Let us forget the greatest calamity and the most crying injustice of history, that we may think only of our approaching deliverance. . . . . . . Tomorrow we shall return to our homes. We shall not weep to find them in ruins. They will rise more beautiful from the heaps of ashes and rubbish. We have known days of heroic misery, but we have learned that misery does not sadden souls which enshrine a great love and which nourish a noble thought. We shall re-enter with a high head, regenerated in the midst of a regenerated Europe, rejuvenated by a magnificent misfortune, purified by victory and stripped of the pettiness which formerly veiled the sleeping
virtues that we did not know we possessed. We have lost the things that perish, but they will rise again as easily as they have perished. In exchange we have gained that which shall never die in our hearts.

Our eyes have been closed to many things; now they are open to wider horizons. Our gaze had been confined to our riches, our little comforts, our petty customs. Now it is detached from the earth and raised to summits that we have not hitherto perceived. We did not know ourselves, we did not love one another enough. We have learned to know ourselves in the amazement of glory and to love ourselves in the dolorous ardor of the most immense sacrifice that a people has ever accomplished.

We had forgotten the heroic virtues, the untrammelled thoughts, the eternal ideas that guide humanity. Today we not only know that they exist, but we have taught the world that they triumph ever, that nothing is lost while faith remains, while honor is safe, while love subsists, while the soul does not surrender; and that the most monstrous powers can never prevail against those ideal forces which are the happiness, the glory, and the sole reason of the existence of man.

—Maeterlinck.

**SURSUM CORDA.**

By Marion Couthouy Smith.

In every version of those wonderful documents the ancient Liturgies, which are used in part or on occasions by nearly every church in Christendom—there is a passage of deep solemnity in which the minister turns to the people, saying, "Lift up your hearts." The response is, "We lift them up unto the Lord." This occurs after a confession of sins and humble expression of repentance. The adjuration and response have in them a profound note of hope and exaltation. The significance is that only the lifted heart, held high in faith and courage, can bear the weight of guilt and chastening which would otherwise bring fear and discouragement. Also the heart is lifted in reverence toward the great Power "to whom alone belong the issues of life and death."

Now, in the terrible hour of destiny, when all the hope of the world depends on the bloody struggle and unstinting sacrifice of the people who see and know the truth, and are willing to suffer and die for it, the time has come for the "Sursum corda." Only the lifted heart can lift the load and believe steadfastly in the ultimate triumph of right over wrong; only the lifted heart can "endure unto the end." The time is dark with doubt and terror; sometimes the balance seems almost even, as the strife rocks back and forth. Then come the voices that say, "We can never win. There must be a compromise." And the faith of men is assailed by the dreadful outcry for peace—the demand for the treasure before it has been earned by the last and utmost effort.
It has been well said that this war will be won by the people whose morale remains unshaken. The spirit that fails and gives way before evil, as in Russia, is the deadliest menace among all the foes that assail us, both within and without. Faith, and faith only, will remove this mountain of woe. In whatever way your faith is manifested—with whatever prayer or song or act—it is your greatest element of strength on the rough road to victory.

Lift up your hearts and keep them lifted, and help others to lift theirs. Every discouraging word, every sign and shake of the head, is so much strength taken away from your own soul or another’s. No one can yet measure the magnitude of the task ahead of us, a task for which, in this country, we have been shamefully unprepared. But destiny still waits; and with double effort we can fight our way to the goal. Only believe that a Power ultimately invincible fights with us for a just and mighty cause; and that, since humanity can no more live without justice, mercy and truth than without air to breathe, so the way to these vital things will at last be made clear. We are on this planet; we must play our part in its destiny, every one of us. If we shirk, if we cry and mourn, if we predict evil, or by any means encourage it, we postpone by so much the great day of peace and light. Every mother’s tear, every word of grief or despair, helps to fling back some striving spirit. Every soul now has a sword and a shield in hand and the shield is the “shield of faith.”

Be strong then, and help others to be strong. Keep the vision before your eyes; and when the voices of God and your highest destiny call to you—“Lift up your hearts!” Be ready with the swift and solemn response. “We lift them unto the Lord!”

If there is one thing against which a theological professor needs to be especially on his guard it is against becoming a mere bookworm, a dry-as-dust dealer in abstractions, a prey to the idols of the den. This is perhaps most emphatically true of those whose business it is to teach Greek and Hebrew exegesis and systematic theology. Some such we have known who had sunk into mere language machines, caring more for a Greek accent or a Hebrew title than for any vital message of the Word; more interested in the discussion of some metaphysical question or philosophical quibble in theology than for the great truths by which men live. One good antidote against this would be for the incumbents of such chairs frequently to get out into the practical world; rub up against the rough and tumble of life; gird up the loins for the actual work of soul-winning and of building up the church and whole kingdom of God; to test their theories as scientific men do theirs in the practical matters of life. We have often thought that if the German professors had been compelled thus to work at the task of saving men from sin and guilt, to comfort the sorrowing, cheer the dying, and pilot the wandering into the paths of life, they
might have spun fewer cobwebs of theory that have so often, with damaging effect, found their way into the brains of American imitators.

Partly for this reason Professor G. H. Trever often spends his summer vacations in the actual work of the pastorate. He has again and again taken charge of churches for periods of from two to five months. He has thus ministered to the largest churches in Chicago, and to a number in his own conference, notably in Milwaukee, Wis. The past summer he spent in this fashion. Early in May he was importuned to take the pastorate of a church in Milwaukee and to get there as quickly as possible. He therefore took up his duties in that city, amongst old friends of his pastoral days there, on the last Sabbath in May and remained until the meeting of his conference in September.

With Mrs. Trever he occupied the new bungalow parsonage which the ladies supplied with the necessary furniture. He performed all the duties of a pastor, preaching twice every Sunday, pastoral calling, teaching Sabbath school, conducting prayer meetings, pushing the work of the Epworth League, taking collections for benevolences, baptizing, comforting, smoothing out troubles, trying to inspire the people to noble living and earnest service. He was gratified to find that the old pastoral knack had not forsaken him. After a summer spent with his people, he left the congregations largely increased, the spiritual life quickened, the church greatly more harmonious, some families long estranged brought back, some souls saved, finances in good condition, and the tide setting much more strongly toward real church success. Mrs. Trever performed well her part, being especially helpful in promoting peace and good will. At the request of the church she gave an evening of readings which netted a nice purse of gold for the Sabbath school.

Professor Trever also spent a week at his conference camp meeting at Camp Byron; delivered, by special request, an address at the West Wisconsin Conference on "The American Democracy and the American Negro;" one at his own conference at the Educational Anniversary on "Lawrence College and the Commonwealth;" one before the Layman’s Association on "What Could Laymen do in the Annual Conference," and one before the Milwaukee preachers' meeting on "The Unification of Methodism." After a summer thus spent in business for the kingdom, he returned to his chair better fitted than ever because of another period of direct practical labor out in the needy field.

G. H. T.