

# The Seminarian

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

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Volume II

February 1938

Number 3

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## OLD TESTAMENT PREACHING

I have heard the remark from more than one contemporary divine that it is very difficult to preach on Old Testament texts. And all of us in this present generation have probably noted the result of that fact in Lutheran pulpits. Either we have heard very few Old Testament sermons, and ourselves preached less than we had heard from others, or else we have heard a good many that had better not been preached.

But it was not always so. To the Apostolic Church there was but one Scriptural source for texts: the Old Testament. It alone was the Bible from which our Lord adduced the proofs of His Messiahship on the Emmaus road, as also it alone had provided the Word by which He lived as Man. And so likewise with the Apostles. The Old Testament's "more sure word of prophecy" was basic both to their own faith and to their instruction of others. The Old Testament meant more, it would seem, than even their own experience of discipleship with Jesus! They who had actually walked with Christ and heard His voice on the mountain, yet searched the Scriptures, the Old Testament Scriptures, for the revelation of God's Word! Although St. John wrote of what he had himself seen and handled of the Word of Life, he remembered to record Christ's bidding, "Search the Scriptures...they are they which testify of me." Although the Apostle Paul had his Gospel

not from men but by the revelation of Christ Jesus, he admonished Timothy to "give heed to reading." Their texts were primarily Old Testament texts.

Luther was an Apostolic and Evangelistic preacher and teacher chiefly on the basis of the Old Testament too. Scan his collected works in the Library and note how many thousands of pages more are devoted to Old Testament exegesis than to New. The proportion is about eight to three. Of course these works reflect his University lectures rather than his pulpit preparations. But it was clearly the Old Testament on which the bulk of Luther's Biblical studying was done. Perhaps this was simply a division of labor with Melancthon. The proportion of Melancthon's exegetical lectures is about eight to one in favor of the New Testament. Be that as it may, and admitting that Luther's sermons and postils were overwhelmingly on the New Testament, it is none the less significant that he put in so much time and effort on the books of the Old.

Our United Lutheran Church, however, has declined in Old Testament scholarship and interest, especially in the past two generations. Many of the tomes from C.P. Krauth's original library which now gather dust upon the shelves all winter (they are taken down and cleaned in the summer) bear witness at once to his enthusiasm for studies in this field and to our apathy. A number of men from Mt. Airy have made their mark in the academic world as Semitists, it is true. And we have a reputation as a Seminary where Hebrew is well elected, as compared with other institutions, and large opportunities offered even the few who become advanced students. But what has our Church produced? No Old Testament commentaries, and less and less preaching on Old Testament texts, or even illustrations from Old Testament literature. Where is the Old Testament equivalent to the twelve-volume set of commentaries on the New Testament which H. E. Jacobs edited in 1895-98? Or even to the one-volume New Testament

Commentary edited by H.C. Allen in 1936? And how about this matter of the difficulty and consequent diminishing of Old Testament preaching?

Now I submit that the sum total effect of the Church's preaching must be the proclamation of Christ's Gospel. That was the glory of the Apostolic and Reformation preachers. Now each of those ages had its own method of utilizing the Old Testament for evangelical preaching. And our day has the method of modern exegesis. That method calls upon us to tread with bated breath the same dusty Galilean roadway, at Christ's side, which the wondering disciples trod, to live the same kind of laborious days and nights of study and prayer that Luther once lived. But more, it requires that we shall satisfy the modern mood of scientific thinking in historical investigation, the mood of criticism. For unlike the Apostolic and Reformation ages in their simple piety, ours can see in the Old Testament only an indirect connection with Christ's saving Gospel. To ignore this is to be forced to allegorize. And to be stumped by it is to have to cut out the whole Hinterland of the Gospel. (The term is George Adam Smith's in his Beecher Lectures, "Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament," a book I would heartily recommend.)

Down through that Hinterland flows the stream of divine grace which issues finally in the New Testament. But the stream had well-nigh run dry in the last few centuries before Christ's coming. How can we explain its flooding in the Gospel, full to overflowing, except by recalling that far off at its fullness, God had been raining? To seek out the Old Testament sources of the Gospel and trace their tortuous ways, is, indeed, a difficult task, but one of the greatest importance to the preacher of the Gospel today.

A LAMENT

I have just returned to my room from a visit to a Professor's home. It was my first meeting with a Professor of Mt. Airy. And now I have been a student here for almost three years. I am elated over this visit, because I came to know that Professor not only as a preacher and teacher, but also as a Christian gentleman and sympathetic friend. I left his home enriched in that he called my attention to a particular wrinkle in my personality that needed straightening. So impressed was I from this first visit that, realizing what I and others here are missing by not getting to know our Faculty outside of the classroom, I was compelled to bring your attention to this factor of student life that is so terribly neglected.

If anyone of us would take a few moments to think over the years in College and High School, he would see that what is outstanding in his mind is not the subjects taught but the personalities who taught them. He may have forgotten all he once heard in the lectures, but the power of the personality which inspired, urged, provoked him to deeper thought will never be forgotten. In College we had the various fraternities where the opportunity to come into close contact with the Professors was presented to the Students. It may be foolish to join a variety of clubs, but the fool will never regret the intimate associations with greater minds than his own. It is needless to elaborate upon the values of such contacts; they are obvious.

The Seminary has disillusioned me in one respect and that is my one lament. While in College Mt. Airy Alumni told me that here I would find closer relations with the Faculty than at College, that a Professor was appointed to each man who visited you in your room and with whom you could talk over your problems. My first analogous experience to these promises I just mentioned above. I believe that each of us who is soon going into the

ministry, needs and desires to know men who have had experiences in the field. Our Faculty, of course, is composed of men who are outstanding and exceptional among our Lutheran clergy. Therefore, their counsel, suggestions, and personal interest are the more valuable.

I realize that attempts have been made to answer this need, but they have been, generally speaking, failures. Last year we had a tea now and then, but this was not supported because it was not a man's business. We do have an occasional party, but here the best one can do is to make a round-robin, spending a few minutes with each Professor. The new Practical Seminar was promising, but its fault lies within its formality and class-like style. Perhaps my suggestion is not original. I suggest that one Professor hold an open house once a week at his home, and that a different Professor conduct it each week. It should not be held in Graduate Hall or in the Library, but in the home where the informal and friendly atmosphere will produce heart-to-heart chats. The subjects to be discussed might be similar to those voiced at the Practical Seminar. Since the Students would not expect refreshments, no charge should be levied. Attendance should be optional. Students at such an Open House should feel that they may stay just so long as their free time permits. Of course, no one would remain beyond a proper limit. Such a meeting each week would not only bring us closer to the Faculty but would even bring the Students into a closer fellowship.

The first Semester is about over; not many weeks of this year remain—not many to build up a warm friendship and close understanding with a Faculty. Yet, there is still a chance to do something, by whomever will take the initiative—the Faculty or Student Body. I say, it is almost three years and I have had only one friendly chat with a Professor. As I look back over the three years at the Seminary, my one lament is—"Faculty, I know you as Teachers only, not as men."

John R. Brokhoff, '38

## FIFTY YEARS AFTER

The Father Heyer Missionary Society has reached the golden age of fifty. Let us pause a few minutes and consider whether or not it has proved its right to exist. Of late, questions have arisen in the minds of Seminarians as to the worth of Father Heyer. These have been voiced particularly when a request was made for contributions to the work of the Society.

In considering such a question we must first determine just what is the Father Heyer Missionary Society. Does it happen to be any individual who for one short year is at the head of it? Is it that group of four which constitutes its executive committee? It is neither of these, nor is it any class or group of classes that might be attending Mt. Airy at any particular time. The Father Heyer Missionary Society is a living tradition constituting every man who has passed through the doors of Mt. Airy into the work of the gospel ministry. Fellow students, you belong to that army of the servants of Christ who call Mt. Airy their Alma Mater. As such, and for no other reason it is your duty to support Father Heyer and to see to it that it proves its worth.

However, a further answer is needed, so we'll turn back a few pages of the years gone by to see what Father Heyer has accomplished.

The paramount achievement has been that for these fifty years it has kept alive among the Faculty and the Student Body the zeal for Missions, but they Foreign, Home or Inner Missions. Men of Father Heyer are serving abroad as missionaries and at home on the Board of Foreign Missions.

In earlier days it was the Father Heyer Society that took care of student assignments to churches here in Philadelphia. The value of that work was shown when the Seminary authorities took it over. It was the Father Heyer Society that sent representatives from Mt. Airy to the Student Volunteer Conventions and other student groups.

Later on the Society decided that it would like its influence felt in foreign mission fields in a more direct way. Voluntarily it undertook to support a Parish abroad. All that is asked of us now to continue this work is that we contribute \$110.00 a year. This is not a huge sum, and if each student would contribute \$2.00 the work would be well cared for. Unfortunately, this year, only half of our students have seen fit to pledge, and if it weren't for the continued interest of the members of the Faculty, Father Heyer would not be able to meet its just obligations. Fellow students, this is your project. Your support is needed. Make your pledge today.

About seven years ago men of Mt. Airy, fired with zeal for missions, felt that still more could be done, and a "Life Membership" campaign was started. Graduates offered to contribute \$10.00 or more each, so that a fund might be established, the interest of which would support a missionary. One thousand dollars was contributed and invested in what were at one time sound securities, but along with other things, the Father Heyer bond dropped one half in value. The present executive committee is hoping to reinvest and recuperate our lost securities. But, the "Life Membership" drive is not over. Shortly, letters will go out to the Alumni and to you also, when you graduate, asking for your support to this cause. The aim has been slightly changed for this project. This money will be given to the Board of Foreign Missions to build a school or hospital or some such permanent structure that is needed. We shall build it! And in building it bear witness to our Church in India that the spirit of "Father" Heyer is not dead.

The future of Father Heyer rests in your hands. Horses can be led to water but they can't be made to drink. This year several evening meetings were held which were poorly attended considering the size of our student body. Attempts have been made

to start student discussion or round table mission groups. These have not been met with the desired enthusiasm. The executive committee has attempted to stimulate interest in mission work by bringing speakers to the chapel service, and now urges you to lend your heartiest support to an important work.

In thinking about Father Heyer think not of the Society but of your relation to it. Has that been vital, or have you in indifference passed by a worthwhile opportunity? Father Heyer has proved its worth over a period of fifty years. Are you doing your part?

Walter R. Harrison, '38

### MISSION BOARD SURVEY WORK

Knock—Knock—Knock

Every time my knuckles gave way to this familiar tune my mind was full of anticipatory questions: Who will answer the knock? Will it be the lady of the house or will it be her husband? Perhaps it might be a boy or a girl. Will I get a warm reception, or will a cold and cutting response end with the door slammed in my face? Will the person be glad (for some are) to talk about religious affiliations or will he tell me that it is none of my business? These are a few of the questions that flooded my mind every time I knocked at someone's door. It is out of three months of such work with the Board of American Missions that one begins to see the attitudes of many of our people towards the Church, and hear the excuses which many people offer in attempting to justify their neglect of church attendance.

It is in the large cities that one cuts across the life of all types of people. Here one gets varied and frank expressions of opinion regarding the church, for they do not know they are speaking to a seminary student.



Many people whom I visited in apartment houses have little care for the church. They want to live secluded from the interference with what they deem the expression of their liberty and the leading of their own lives. Not a few have had church contacts and affiliations, but they are frank in admitting that they are no longer active members. Especially is this true of our Protestant groups to whom neglect of church attendance is less disturbing than to those who are members of the Roman Catholic Church.

Often there are children in a family who are made to bear what seems to be thought of as "the brunt of religion." More than one person has admitted that he does not go to church any longer but that the children go to Sunday School. People seem to think that the children can earn religious merit for the entire family. They do not realize that, by their own example, they are telling the children in the loudest terms that the church is all right for them as children but that they will have little use for the church as adults. One wonders just how many of those children who now go to church because mother and father send them have already formed opinions as to what they will do when they get older. Happily, there is another side to the picture. In many cases where there are children there is a greater possibility of both parents and children attending Sunday School and Church. In more ways than one children are the means of getting parents into church, for few parents reject the responsibility of developing a Christian character in their children.

In a large city there is more likelihood of finding your eyes blinking rapidly at a door which a few seconds before was open to you. The mere mention of a religious survey seems to close some doors in no uncertain terms. Many times it is impossible to interview the lady of the house, (although you have in reality just seen her ladyship scamper from the room) for the maid informs

you that she is not at home. To ask a maid any questions concerning the religious affiliation of the family is usually futile. However, there are many cases where the people co-operate willingly.

Naturally most of our information came from the ladies, for it is to be expected that the men are at work. In a few cases the man would come to the door. While there were a few who would quickly give the desired information, the majority soon had me answering so many questions that I was in doubt as to who was taking the census. Generally it was more difficult to get the desired information from the man than from the lady of the house.

Does this sound to you like a discouraging task? Then you have been sent to a town to make the survey and the chief of police forbids you from doing so you might become discouraged. Then a great number of people refuse you information or slam doors you may wish the day were over, but really these occurrences are merely details making up the background of an interesting picture.

One has the opportunity to see the Lutheran Church at work beyond Pennsylvania and New York. It is when one sees the Missouri Lutherans, the Norwegian Lutherans, the American Lutherans, and the United Lutheran Church working side by side (even though in opposite camps) in our United States that the study of the Lutheran Church in America becomes more than just a seminary elective course.

It is when one faces the people in their everyday dress that one really learns what they think of their pastors and expect of them. It is when one hears countless excuses and apologies for the neglect of church attendance that one realizes how many people recognize the value of the church but have simply drifted from the church. There is indifference, to be sure, but as future pastors we must do all we can to arouse those people from their lethargy, and bring them back into the active Christian church. This is valuable experience.

And so, to any of the Middlers who may be offered the opportunity to work with the Board of American Missions this summer, may we who have already worked with this Board say that you can do no better than to give such an opportunity your careful and prayerful consideration.

Charles P. Crossman, '38

### VIGNETTES OF MT. AIRY

(Editor's note: This is the second of a series of articles on the history of the seminary grounds.)

I have often wondered what our friend, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, out there on the lawn, would have said in 1917, when he was so carefully placed on soil where there once existed a fine school for Frenchmen. I have often wondered, with some little glee, what some of our rabid Pacifistic brethren in the Student Body would think of this site of our Seminary, upon which existed one of the best known Military Schools in the country in its time. Or again, some of our friends from up-country might open their eyes to learn that Mt. Airy, at one time was known only for its fine Catholic school. Well, all of these things are true. The soil is certainly a mixture. May it also broaden our outlook upon the world about us.

In the morning edition of the Aurora, January 29, 1807, one might well have read about the opening of a new school in Philadelphia. Rev. Francis X. Brosius S.J., a scholar well-known in these parts, had been urged by his friends to open a school where students could be taught history, geography, mathematics and the languages, but the predominant language was to be French. The University of Göttingen, but had volunteered

his services as a missionary priest to America. In 1792 he set out for Boston accompanying the Russian Prince—Priest Gallitzen in response to a promise made to the latter's mother. In his wanderings about from one Catholic station to the next, Brosius constantly came upon Frenchmen, his fellow countrymen, and he was much stricken with their plight. Many were refugees from their own country, during that reign of terror which drove the nobility into forced exile. There were few men who were so qualified to care for the children of these refugees as Father Brosius, and in response to many requests, he decided to found a Seminarium. He secured for this purpose "a beautiful house, called Mt. Airy, about eight miles from Mt. Airy, which for healthfulness and situation cannot well be surpassed." Here in Mt. Airy, the former residence of Judge Allen, standing on the street, in front of the present Gowen building, the Mount Airy Seminary was born in April, 1807. Perhaps it would be well for us of this generation to refer to our present Seminary as the Philadelphia Seminary, for otherwise one might well ask if any Seminary could change from a French flavor to a German flavor in a single century. How long Father Brosius' school was in full swing we don't know. It seems to be one of those enterprises which is loudly heralded, and then quickly passes into a mist, and is lost to view. At any rate, when in 1815, the mist rises, we find Brosius in Boston, publishing his work on A New and Concise Method of Finding the Latitude by Double Latitudes of the Sun. Brosius later became the Priest of the old historical Conewago Chapel, which today is one of the most interesting landmarks in our state. There, in the cemetery, near the city of Hanover, is the grave of this learned Jesuit.

Among the French nobles who fled from their native country at the time of the Revolution, were two men who undertook to take over the

property at Mt. Airy, and continue the teaching of French, mathematics and science on a larger scale. One of them was a certain Mr. Bouchard. When he arrived in this land where the fear of detection was no longer present, he took back his old surname—Roumfort. His partner was a certain Mr. Constant who in 1813 took over the entire management of the school. In his faculty were two men who later made names for themselves. John A. Quitman, the Professor of English, later became a General in the Civil War, and then Governor of Massachusetts. Col. A. L. Roumfort, the Mathematics Professor from 1818-1826 was the son of the founder of this new school. When he was seven years of age, his family was driven out of France and came to this country. Young Roumfort, although always somewhat French in all his mannerisms, became Americanized very soon. He was graduated from West Point in 1819. In 1826, Roumfort purchased the school from Constant and shifted its emphasis from the French language to his own department of Mathematics. It became the American Classical and Military Lyceum. The new organization was based on that at West Point, for its avowed purpose was to prepare men for West Point. The classics were left out of the curriculum entirely, and mathematics and engineering became the major points of interest with a minor in French. Courses in navigation, trigonometry and nautical astronomy were offered for those who wished to train for the navy—a clear survival from the days of Brosius. The importance given to the teaching of French and the Romance languages brought many students from the West Indies and the Southern States to this Military Lyceum. Mt. Airy College was known as a high-class school. Its 150 pupils were from the best classes. The haughty attitude of these high-born students towards the plain country-folk of Germantown occasioned many a lively fight between Town and Gown. The people of Germantown reciprocated in

their dislike of these 'Spanish and French gentry,' and they took every occasion to put them in their proper place.

The students wore a uniform — gray in winter, white in the summer. Their heads were covered with caps of black leather with a bell crown some seven inches high, upon whose summit was a cockade with a yellow eagle. They were a pretty sight on Sundays, when in orderly fashion they marched from Mt. Airy to St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Germantown. Episcopalians they must be, for Col. Rounfort himself was a member of this congregation.

The Colonel was highly feared and respected among the student body. According to all accounts he was very large and correspondingly handsome, and was easily the leader of the faculty. There seem to have been seven instructors at first, and then an added number as the school grew. Tuition was \$250 a year. This amount covered board, washing, mending, fuel, and lights.

It is hard to believe that on these very grounds General George G. Meade of Gettysburg, General Beauregard of Fort Sumter fame, and Admiral DuPont received their first military training. Other students of note were James S. Biddle, Constant Guillou and Rev. Dr. F. W. Conrad, later the editor of the Lutheran Observer. In 1834-35 the school received a blow, when President Jackson appointed its head Superintendent of Military Stores in Philadelphia. Rounfort closed the school and sold the property to a Mr. Rogers, while he devoted the rest of his life to politics. He rapidly rose to a position in the Pennsylvania State Legislature and then was elected Mayor of Harrisburg. During part of this time, he was the Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and Head of the Bridesburg Arsenal. He died and was buried in Harrisburg in 1878. As with old Judge Allen, our only reminder today to his connection with Mt. Airy is the street which bears his name — Rounfort Road.

The residence which as the mansion of Judge Allen had been the showplace of the section was now in need of repair. Even a finely built house must give way before the trickery and everyday rascality of adolescent boys. And so, Mr. Rogers in 1843 after using the building as a summer residence for ten years sold Mt. Airy to the Goren family. Of the later history of the property we will speak later. Enough has been said to call to our minds the many scenes which have been enacted here. Let us hope that our own institution, which is foremost in our minds today, may not some day slip into the mists of the past and cause some poor writer another headache, which is bound to result from separating truth from mythical tradition.

Henry T. Horn, '36

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

The staff hopes the March number of the Seminarian will carry a full discussion by our readers of the problem presented in the editorial on the following page.

EDITORIAL

The staff sees in the article, "A Lament," appearing in this Seminarian the raising of a timely issue. We hope that this article will not represent the final decision on this problem, but expect that it will stimulate more thought along this line. To further that end, the following questions are proposed:

1. What beside the difference in subjects studied should make a theological seminary different from another graduate school?

2. What has the faculty a right to expect from the students?

3. What does the student expect from a professor?

a) Teacher.

1. Knowledge of facts and their correct interpretation.

2. Methods of study.

b) Prophet.

1. Inspiration and stimulation.

2. Impartation by contagion of a strong faith.

c) Pastor.

1. Help in meeting problems.

2. Father Confessor.

3. By his example learning what the Christian life is.

d) Friend.

4. Which relations are the most desirable? Which are the more fruitful in producing consecrated pastors?

5. In what phases of these student-faculty relations do we feel the greatest weakness?

6. If we are not satisfied with some of the relations, how much of the fault lies with the faculty? How much with the students?

7. What specific remedies do we suggest to attack the problem on all fronts?