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Toronto Bible College



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Recorder

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My Course in the Toronto Bible College

(Notes of an address given at the Alumni Conference, by
Rev. Wm. McLean, '24.)

There are two fields of activity which will be kept in view in this testimony, that of a missionary to seamen at the port of Montreal, and the Christian ministry.

I. *The Course in the Light of My Experience as a Missionary to Seamen.*

In my experience as a missionary to seamen, two values stand out as supreme. These are the power of prayer and faith in God. It may be said that students learn how to pray and to know something of the power of prayer while at the Bible College; also, that the practical work of the College in mission halls, Sunday schools and hospitals develops faith in God; faith that knows no defeat; faith which is sure that no matter how besmirched and degraded by sin, no matter how

abandoned the lives of men and women may be, God is able to save all who come unto Him through Christ; faith also in the possibilities of development in the lives of men and women when once given over to the Lordship of Christ.

All missionary work is difficult and discouraging, but the missionary who has these two supreme values for bulwarks is able to surmount all difficulties and discouragements.

Alongside these two values there is another which, as far as my own experience is concerned, was for a time discounted. I mean purely social contacts and activities. Perhaps it was because of the supreme place of the first two that there came to be a sort of impatience with anything which could not be called out and out spiritual work. In the missionary's zeal for

the salvation of souls, there was a neglect of the many approaches to the social nature. Out of this experience the writer learned that all activity wisely used for the help of man, born out of a love for God and expressed in a genuine love for men, has in it spiritual values. In the power of prayer and faith in God we have the hidden activity, while in social dealings we have the living and doing part of our work.

In his attitudes to people, the worker expresses his faith in God. Only one thing makes good in hand-to-hand dealing with men and women, and that is sheer goodness of heart. Talents are not enough; knowledge of personal work methods is not enough—only goodness will avail. And, brethren, if the grace of God does not make us good, what avails? Nothing. We ourselves defeat the purposes of God.

II. *The Course in the Light of My Experience in the Ministry.*

While it was not the intention of the founders of the Bible College to equip men for the Christian ministry, it has turned out that we who have entered that calling follow a succession of graduates who have been called to it from practically every graduating class since the College began. This is significant. Our founders builded better than they knew, for while they did not plan to train men fully for the ministry, there is that in the courses given here which is indispensable to the man who is to be a minister. I mean the systematic study of the English Bible. Here in the College the Bible is central. The courses given are Bible courses. There are probably a few theological seminaries which make provision for this sort of study, but many do not. While it is necessary that a minister should be acquainted with the philosophic and critical approaches to the Scriptures,

more than this is necessary if he is to be a fisher of men.

In the study of man, for example, a visit to the dissecting room is helpful and even necessary; but when all the parts have been placed separately upon the table, it simply is not true to say, "Lo, there is man!" It is only when these bones and tissues and flesh are brought together into a harmonious whole and a soul is inbreathed by God that you have a man. And so with the Bible, it is when we study it in its parts and as a whole, devotionally and exegetically, that we discover God's mind regarding us and our salvation in Christ Jesus.

So in making its courses center in Christ and the Scriptures, this College is making an essential contribution to the training of ministers. Such training makes for sound Biblical preaching and there is great need for this sort of preaching today. A man trained along Biblical lines can go anywhere and find people hungry for that sort of ministry. And what is more, in the average parish or district, in city or country, it will be found to be new and attractive because on the whole it is the one type of ministry which is the most neglected. The writer recalls a conversation with a Lutheran pastor in the West, in which the pastor said that his success in his life work was due to the fact that he had been building all the time on the "Word of God." Said he, in parting, "Give the people the Word of God." That advice has proved to be sound.

Of course there are perils connected with this particular ministry, developments which are not normal. Two of these will be mentioned here. The first may be indicated by the following illustration. A good lady in the West once said to another student-missionary with whom I was visiting, "Mr. M— is a very deep preacher." At the time, I was just vain enough to think that the speaker was paying me

a compliment. But was she? No, it would be more true to say that the good woman was finding difficulty in understanding me. The fault was that there was not enough experience behind the preacher to make the big themes with which he was grappling, living issues to the hearers. Because the preacher failed to present the great doctrines of the Bible clearly and simply, the people felt that these things were too deep for them.

The other development to which I would refer is perhaps worse than the first, because it is inexcusable. In the first instance, the young preacher was taking himself too seriously; in this case, he does not take himself or his work seriously enough. A friend once said to me, "I never hear so-and-so preach but I feel he is just giving out some of the lectures he got in College." That is fatal. Not that the lectures were not what they should be, but as far as the man in question was concerned, they had missed their objective. Truth is alive to the extent that it possesses the life of the one holding it. Sound doctrine cannot be easily acquired or lightly held; it must be developed to become useful. There is no transforming power in meticulous accuracy of doctrinal belief. To be effective, the preacher must not only possess the truth, he must be possessed by it. He must be so possessed by the truth and by the Spirit of truth that daily he will be making these sublime truths the very brain and brawn of his spiritual life. You have effective preaching only when the words of the preacher are as words from God, quickening, life-giving, used by the Holy Spirit to set on fire in the breasts of the hearers a sense of the need of God and salvation.

The redemption of men cost God His Son, and it will cost us all that we can pay in mental and spiritual effort to make that salvation our own, so that we in turn may give it to the

world. "Jesus paid it all—all to Him I owe." We readily recognize the first part of the quotation, but we come short in the practice of the second part. In all this we are simply trying to say that mental laziness is one of our dreaded enemies, and that if we have not the will to study hard when we leave College, then we are a discredit to that God-honoured institution. Our beloved College is not intended as a place where we can gather together a complete set of ready-made outlines of sermons to be used when required. But the courses are intended that we should get what Theophilus got from Luke (Luke I: 1-4), namely, that we should get things straight in our minds and, having done that, we should follow on to think for ourselves along true Biblical lines.

III. Part of the purpose of this address was to suggest ways by which the courses of the Bible College might be strengthened. It is not the part of a graduate of a few years' experience to presume to deal with such a matter thoroughly. However, some such suggestions as the following may have value.

In view of the fact that many students go on to further study for the ministry, special consideration might be given to such students. For men with the ministry in view, Old Testament Hebrew and New Testament Greek (if not both of these, certainly one of them) should be part of the regular course and no longer optional subjects. Courses in English Literature now being given might be extended and developed. The course in Pastoral Theology might take under its care a systematic study of the economics of the Christian ministry. In view of the ever-increasing variations in the field of Psychology more time might be devoted to this study, especially in its bearing upon methods of the religious education of the young.

Summer in the Old Land

By Principal McNicol

It was the pleasant and profitable privilege of Mrs. McNicol and myself to spend three months of the summer in a trip across the Atlantic. We left Toronto on the 6th of May and returned on the 6th of August. The purpose of the trip was not only to enjoy an extended holiday, but also to see something of the religious life and Christian work of the Old Land. We were four weeks in Scotland, four weeks in England, and, to crown our holiday, we had two delightful weeks in Switzerland.

Arriving in Scotland, we made Glasgow our first base of operations. There we could get in touch with Scottish life and from there we could take short trips into other parts of the country. We went up into the heart of the Highlands and walked through the Pass of Killiecrankie. We had two glorious days in the Isle of Arran, the gem of all the islands of the Scottish coast. One lovely May day we spent motoring with Mr. T. R. Sorton of the class of '09, who is now settled in Stirling and who gave us a royal welcome to his home in that old royal city. We found him the same cheery, fun-loving "T. R." the students of his time in the College knew so well.

One of the important spiritual forces in Scotland is the Bible Training Institute in Glasgow, where Principal W. D. McIntyre is carrying on such steady and fruitful work. It was a pleasure to meet Dr. and Mrs. McIntyre in their own rooms in the Institute. Mrs. McIntyre is a daughter of the Rev. Dr. Andrew A. Bonar, whose saintly ministry was a benediction to the Scottish churches and whose remarkable "Memoir" of his friend Robert Murray McCheyne is known throughout the Christian world. McCheyne was one of the saints of Scotland, and the record of his brief life

and ministry nearly a hundred years ago has been a fountain of spiritual power and blessing ever since. It was deeply interesting to turn over the pages of McCheyne's study Bible which is now in Mrs. McIntyre's possession, and to see his manuscript notes, written with such unburied, conscientious care that they seem like copperplate.

The annual meetings of the China Inland Mission were held in Glasgow shortly after our arrival, and we were particularly impressed with the large numbers of interested and eager young men and women who attended them. The evening gathering filled Reufield Street Presbyterian Church. Among the speakers were Mr. Arthur Moore, who visited the Bible College last session, and Mrs. Graham Anderson, who went out to China from Toronto over thirty years ago.

We spent a week in Edinburgh immediately after the meetings of the General Assembly. The city was so crowded we did not venture there during the Assembly week. It was the first General Assembly of the newly formed United Church of Scotland and the proceedings, which were fully reported in the daily press, were followed with deep interest everywhere. This union has evidently made a profound impression upon the country. It was not an ordinary case of union, but the healing of the old breach caused by the Disruption of 1843. We attended a communion service in old Free St. George's, where Dr. Alexander Whyte, the last of the great Puritans, carried on his long and notable ministry. We visited Charlotte Chapel, the church of Dr. Graham Scroggie, who is in great demand as a Conference speaker and who is so well known to the T.B.C. family as the writer of

the notes in the Scripture Union leaflets. Dr. and Mrs. Scroggie entertained us in their home and gave us a delightful motor ride over the hills and moors south of Edinburgh.

A remarkable spiritual movement known as the Group Movement had been going on for some time among the students and young people throughout the land. It had reached Edinburgh and we found it stirring the city with a deep and eager interest. We saw something of it at a crowded meeting in a large hall on Princes Street, where representative members of various groups gave their testimonies as to what they had found in Jesus Christ. The programme was very simple, but the interest never flagged. Men and women of all classes, in frank and unassuming statements, free from cant or emotionalism, told of the joy and freedom that had come into their lives when they had given up their pride and self-will and surrendered themselves to Christ. It was the simplest thing in Christianity they were talking about, the very essence of apostolic Christianity, but they had come upon it in their own way and it had the freshness of a new discovery. It was the joy and gladness of it which they wanted to share with others in this unconventional way. A movement like this is exposed to peril, as the best things in Christian life are always exposed, but it has vast possibilities of good for it has the marks of a real movement of the Holy Spirit.

From Scotland we moved on into England, visiting the North and the Midlands, and then making a longer stay in London as our final headquarters. Here, at the very heart of the Empire, there are unlimited opportunities of observation. One looks out not only upon England, but upon the world.

There is a world-consciousness in Britain, and one becomes sensible

of that peculiar quality which has made the British people different from all others. This quality may not be noticed at first, for they do not talk about it, but it comes out wherever the British conscience speaks. No one can read day after day such papers as the Glasgow "Herald", the Edinburgh "Scotsman", the Manchester "Guardian", and the London "Times" without coming to feel that he is in touch with the soul of a people who think as much of their national obligations to the world as they think of their national rights in the world. They realize that nations who share a common world should be willing to share a common life, and they follow that principle themselves. With all her faults, this is what makes Britain unique among the nations. It is the secret of her sturdy moral leadership.

Is not this due most of all to the place which the Bible has held in the life of the nation? Although the Bible is no longer read and expounded as it used to be, either in England and Scotland, or anywhere else, yet there was a time when, as Green the historian says, the English people were "the people of a book and that book the Bible." It is as true of nations as it is of individuals that "no man liveth to himself"; and no nation which makes self-interest supreme can be truly great or can exert a permanent moral and spiritual leadership in the world.

The conditions of church life in the Old Land differ very little from those which prevail on this side of the water. There are the same problems about deficits and empty churches and the lack of men for the ministry. There is the same feeling that the wheels of the ecclesiastical chariot are running heavily, and the same groping for spiritual reality and prophetic leadership. Things are not well with the ecclesiastical system. One has the suspicion that many of the churches with

famous histories, where the tourists gather, are really living on their past.

And yet one gets the impression that, with all the apathy towards the organized church, there is a profound respect in Britain for that which the church represents. It is not Christ and Christianity that people are indifferent to. Britain is an unfruitful field for superficial and impractical movements, and no one has ever stampeded any large number of the British people into extreme or emotional forms of Christianity. There is a vast amount of genuine Christian work going on outside the regular church channels. Some of the most aggressive spiritual centers are the independent chapels. No more effective evangelistic work is done anywhere than that which goes on quietly in the city of London.

One of our happiest experiences was a few days' visit in an Anglican rectory

in a lovely part of rural England, twenty-five miles north of London, where Rev. T. C. DesBarres is carrying on a spiritual and evangelical ministry in the heart of Hertfordshire. Mr. DesBarres is the son of the former rector of St. Paul's Church, Toronto, who was one of the leading evangelical ministers of the city during the last generation.

Our visit to Switzerland was in the companionship of Mr. E. K. Simpson of Ipswich, a layman who devotes his fine scholarship and ability to the Gospel of Christ and the sacred Scriptures. His grandfather and great-grandfather were noted Independent ministers, and he himself preserves in his own life and work the finest qualities of the old Puritans. These two men represent the real strength and true character of Protestant England, both in the Church of England and in the Free Churches.

The First Alumni Picnic

In the late spring of the present year, it was suggested by one interested in the development of T. B. C. that a picnic be held during the summer, as a sort of "get together" during the College recess. The suggestion came before the Alumni Executive, who took the matter in hand, securing the co-operation of the Day and Evening Class students and resulting in the formation of a strong committee. Mr. R. H. Chappell of '26 was appointed chairman and energetically devoted himself to making this first Alumni outing a decided success. All graduates and students living in or near Toronto whose addresses were known were notified of the event by mail; others were reached by telephone and personal solicitation. The committee worked out a fine programme of sports and made ample provision for meeting the physical needs of the friends.

The date chosen for the picnic was

Saturday, June 28, and the place, Area 8, Exhibition Grounds. The weather was ideal for the occasion, warm air and sunny skies adding to the enjoyment of the day. Fully three hundred people were in attendance during the afternoon and evening, and two sittings had to be arranged to accommodate the crowd which remained for supper. The tables were daintily arranged on the south side of several large shade trees. There, with the lake in full view, we gave thanks for the goodly fellowship of T.B.C. and for all God's temporal gifts. Those of a meditative frame of mind must have wandered in thought to the Gospel narrative which depicts Jesus and the disciples by the lake side.

Baseball formed an important part of the afternoon programme. "Bob" Simpson, '32, twirled excellent ball to gain a decided victory for his team, and Mr. Burns, '16, also led his team-

mates to triumph by a narrow margin over a strong opposition.

The many novelty races attracted widespread interest, particularly the pie-plate race, the leap-frog race, blind man's buff, and the rolling pin contest for ladies only. My, how these girls can wield the rolling pin!

It was unanimously agreed to cable the greetings of the company to Principal and Mrs. McNiocol, who were holidaying in Britain.

The Summer Prayer Meetings

At the commencement of the summer session, a circular letter was sent out to all day and evening students remaining in the city whose addresses were available, calling their attention to the summer prayer meetings. That this letter has borne fruit can be seen from the attendance at the meetings, this being much in advance over last year.

A special feature of these gatherings has been the holding of one missionary night each month, with a representative present from a missionary society to bring the message. Up to the middle of August there have been four of these missionary nights, taken by the Sudan Interior Mission, the China Inland Mission, the Ceylon and India General Mission and the Evangelical Union of South America. At all these meetings the plea for more earnest prayer has been the main theme.

Mr. Oliver, '22, of the Sudan Interior Mission, spoke of the hardships and trials of the missionary's life and the strong tendency of the conditions on the foreign field to pull down the spiritual life, on account of which much prayer is needed, and he earnestly requested an intelligent interest in our prayers on behalf of all missionaries and their work.

Rev. W. T. Gilmer, of the China Inland Mission, made a strong plea for

At the close of these events, the prizes were distributed by Rev. D. A. Burns, after which Mr. E. Shildrick led the company in a brief service of sacred song as the twilight fell once more on a tired and weary world. "Blest be the tie that binds" was sung to bring the happy occasion to a close about 10 p.m., after which Mr. Burns led in prayer, commending all to the love of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

a more yielded life in all Christians and much real prayer, and illustrated the necessity of this by experiences on the mission fields of China.

Miss Clark, of the Ceylon and India General Mission, read several letters direct from the field, showing the work of God in definite answers to prayer, and also stressing the constant need for more prayer in missionary endeavour.

Mr. F. W. E. Story ('11), of the Evangelical Union of South America, read some recent letters from workers on the field and gave some incidents from his own experiences.

On the first evening of the summer prayer meetings, Mr. Burns, '16, brought a helpful and enlightening message on "The Seven Glories of the Lamb", and the remaining meetings have all been taken by our own students. Each night a different speaker is secured, and, as far as possible, a different leader as well, making each service more of a gathering of the whole student body.

A summary of the attendance is as follows:

Number of meetings held	15
Total number attending	518
meetings	518
Average attendance	35
Largest attendance	47
Smallest attendance	19

H.H.L.

News of the Toronto Bible College Family

Ruth Jordan and Albert Edward Elliott were married in Toronto on June 21st. Their address is Guelph, Ontario, where Mr. Elliott is in charge of the work of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

Ruby Swift, an evening class student, was married on April 12th to Robert Allan, who attended the day classes during the sessions of 1927-1928 and 1928-1929. W. R. Warring of the class of '30 was best man and the ceremony was performed by Rev. J. F. Holliday, B.A., of the class of '21.

Mr. George E. Page, '23, of the United Church Hostel at Norval, was married on June 5th to Florence Christina, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Sercombe, of Toronto.

Kathleen J. Swayze, ('30), and William R. Warring ('30), were married in Hamilton on August 14th. They are living in the Sailors' Institute, Montreal.

Stoffelena Hoogstad ('26), was married on July 28th, at her home in Chesley, to Dr. J. H. Downing, of Toronto. Dr. and Mrs. Downing are spending their honeymoon in the old country.

Mr. Melchie Henry ('27), who since his graduation has been acting as pastor of Medina Baptist Church, Hagersville, Ontario, was ordained to the Christian ministry on July 8th.

Mary Catherine, twenty-two months old daughter of Rev. G. H. ('16) and Mrs. (Laura Bates, '18) Booth of the China Inland Mission, died on June 19th. Mr. and Mrs. Booth will have the sympathy and prayers of the Bible College family in their sad bereavement. Mr. Booth, it will be recalled, is

immediate past president of the Alumni Association.

Miss Marie Timpany, who has been teaching at Springfield since the College closed in April, has decided to accept a position in that school for the coming year.

Miss Edith Peake ('28) is teaching school in Northern Ontario and carrying on Christian work in the district. She reports a most sympathetic response on the part of parents and children.

Mr. Rowland Simpkins ('29) is spending the summer at Manilla, Ont., where he is serving under the Home Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec.

Mr. and Mrs. George C. Reeve have arrived home from Africa on furlough.

Miss Miranda Brown has received an appointment as supervisor in the Battleford School Home, Battleford, Sask., under the United Church. Miss Brown will take up her new duties on September 1st.

After September 1st Miss Aileen Ratz will be engaged in Community Mission Work in the Drumbeller Valley, Alberta, under the United Church of Canada.

We were glad to have a call from Miss Edith Watt ('20) recently, who has given up her work in Kentucky on account of ill health. She is living at home in Detroit at present.

Rev. D. I. Jeffrey '15, Superintendent of the French Indo-China and East Siam district of the work of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, has moved his headquarters to Hue, the capital city of Annam.

The Opening of the Session

The Thirty seventh Session of the College will open on Tuesday, September 16th, with a devotional service at 10 a.m., to which all friends and former students of the College are invited.









