

BOYCE AND BROADUS, - FOUNDERS OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEO-
LOGICAL SEMINARY.

Founders Day Address, delivered Jan. 11, 1941, by David M. Ramsey.

I must be sincere and fair to myself in saying that I have great pleasure in being invited to speak on Founders Day. There are several facts that conspire to make it a pleasant and enjoyable occasion, the invitation coming from the President, my classmate and life-long friend. While many things have changed, and wholly changed, about the appearance and location of this Institution, still there are many delightful recollections suggested. It's just like a visit to the old home, where mute, objectless ecstasies thrill the soul, or like being awakened on a moonlight night by a lover's serenade, or like the strange delight of literary flavor by the return of Tom Brown to Rugby.

I must not forget that I am a man under orders. The President tells me that my theme and task are to reconstruct, by recollecting experiences and incidents, the period of our Seminary life. Nothing could give me more pleasure than the attempt. At the same time, he suggests that I be not forgetful of two or three other striking personalities in the faculty of those days. That, too, is not difficult.

There looms up before my mind the gentle and scholarly Manly, everybody's friend. How strange that a highwayman, on a dark road at night, should have slugged him, shortening his days. One is reminded of the passionate exclamation of grief of the mother of President Garfield, when she was told of the assassination, - "Who in the world would have wanted to kill my baby?"

There, too, in the faculty, was that genius, William H.

Whitsett, whose magnetism was so great that imitation of him was irresistible. A charming public speaker! One Sunday night, in the old Seminary days at Greenville, speaking in the First Baptist Church to a representative Greenville audience, he was heard by John A. Broadus, and when the service was over, the latter turned to the group of students nearby and said, "The stars came down to-night!".

It was an eventful day at one Seminary Opening, when a gifted boy from Virginia, George W. Riggan, registered as a student, with recommendations from the faculty of ~~the University of Richmond~~ ^{College} to the effect that no student ever surpassed him. When he graduated from the Seminary, he was at once placed in Dr. Broadus' Department of Homiletics and Greek. Soon after ^{Dr. Riggan became Assistant Professor} ~~becoming a Professor~~, Dr. Broadus, on leaving the Seminary for a New York trip, asked him to prepare for the class three lectures on Tennyson's In Memoriam. The young man gained plaudits worthy of Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley. I heard them. The impression was so great on me that when invited several years later to deliver the first Alumni Anniversary address, I deduced a theme from the In Memoriam, which I called "Love, the Purpose of In Memoriam". But at a very early age this brilliant youth was cut down. At midnight I sat by his ~~casket~~ ^{CASKET} ~~testage~~, amazed at the mysteries of this human existence, ^{that} as so great a young man should have been cut off at this early age. His successor was the man we all honor and love, who after making an international reputation as teacher and scholar is to-day President of the largest Protestant Seminary in the world, John R. Sampey.

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Now, after this detour, let us get on the main road of the theme assigned to me, - the two founders of the Seminary, Boyce and Broadus.

Keep in mind, please, that I am not giving a biographical sketch of these men, nor a general appreciation, but I shall endeavor to describe the men as I saw them in my Seminary days.

James Pettigru Boyce, born in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1827, was truly a great soul. Who is the great man? Not necessarily the man with the largest abilities, the heaviest strokes of genius, though these are of great value, but the man who puts under contribution his extraordinary gifts in some large helpful way for mankind. From the start, young Boyce was a material builder with spiritual aims. The Citadel Square Baptist Church, Charleston, is a noble monument to him. One Sunday afternoon, when his brother-in-law, the very eminent Judge Pressley, and Dr. Boyce stood on Marion Square, Boyce said, "Right there where all the currents flow by is where we must have the greatest Church in this city!". He planned the architecture, and he and his family gave \$40,000 to the construction of the edifice. It was provided that the high, graceful spire, towering above all others in the city, was so constructed that ships coming to port should see its beauty.

Then there is the First Baptist Church in Columbia, a perfect example of Greek architecture. That, too, is to be credited to the genius and liberality of the same source. When young Boyce was being examined for the Ministry, he was asked ^{by} the questioner

who knew he was the only son of a rich man, if he intended to remain in the Ministry. He answered, "Yes, unless the way opens up for me to lead in the building of a Southern Baptist Seminary."

The history of that superb endeavor, through the cruel days of the Civil War, through the dark, depressing days of the Reconstruction, as this man emptied his purse, drove in his buggy through the muddy roads of Georgia and the Southern Carolina, to raise funds for the endowment of the Seminary and the education of youth, - the story deserves mention along with that of Robert E. Lee, riding along the banks of the James River from Appomattox, on Traveler, laying plans to go to Washington College to give a new chance for an education to the youth of the South.

Now in striking contrast with this building program of Dr. Boyce is his strong spiritual emphasis on the supremacy in human life of God. Not once nor twice in our Theology class did the discussion become so intense on what is known as Calvinism or Election that the whole hour would be taken up without progress in the recitation of the hour. No man tried harder than he to recognize man's free agency along with the high authority of God. To him, God alone was great. One Sunday at the Seminary dinner, a bunch of students came in from Church, saying, "We heard the greatest sermon of our lives to-day."

"Who preached it?"

"Jim Peter." *(The nick-name for Dr. Boyce).

"What was his text?"

"God".

"What was his theme?"

"God!"

"What were the divisions of the discourse?"

"God!"

That was the man.

Now I wish to give two or three illustrative stories setting forth the qualities of this noble soul. A great man is known by the small deeds of his life. These at last are the acid tests of character.

Dr. Boyce was a gentleman. Not a man born and reared on that aristocratic Battery in Charleston was ever a more perfect gentleman at heart. He made no apology for insisting that his students should care for the smaller amenities of social and religious life. He delivered lectures to that end. He was the soul of hospitality. One day, at the close of the class, he called me to his desk. I was then the purchasing agent for the Hotel that the students occupied. He said, "Mr. Ramsay, Thanksgiving Day is coming, and I desire that all of these young men shall have the best Thanksgiving Dinner they have ever had. Go out yourself. Purchase plenty of fat turkeys, cranberries, ~~Yams~~, fruits, fruit cake, old-fashioned pound cake, mince pie. Let there be no stint, and bring me the bill." Rest assured that his orders were obeyed. Now there was a fine gentleman!

But the good doctor was just as careful and scrupulous in protecting the reputation of his students as he was of his own good name. One Sunday morning, the Courier-Journal came out with a picturesque story claiming that one of the theologues was arrested in the "red light" district the night before, and

fined for disorderly conduct. The next day at dinner, Dr. Boyce was there with the two policemen who had given the story to the newspapers. He adverted to the article of the morning, - "Gentlemen, you shall not rest under such charges." He required the men to pass out of the door slowly, each one passing before the policemen, looking them in the face. When they had all filed through, Dr. Boyce looked inquiringly at the policemen. "He is not here.", said the spokesman. "I knew he wasn't", said Dr. Boyce. It turned out later that the offender was a young medical student.

Again, Dr. Boyce expected others to treat him as a gentleman should be treated. It fell on a Sunday morning in the beautiful blue grass country of Kentucky, that one of the choicest of all of our graduates was to be ordained to the Ministry by a Church to which he had been called as Pastor. It turned out that the Church Letter of Membership had not arrived from a *Louisville Church* ~~southern state~~, but all things were ready for the ordination. Dr. Boyce and the brethren had a council, and decided that inasmuch as everyone concerned was satisfied to go forward with the ordination, and since everyone knew the candidate, the mere detail of the failure of the letter to arrive in the mail should not interfere. But some of the strict constructionists raised a great howl over the irregularity, and, through the Western Recorder newspaper, waged an ugly controversy against Dr. Boyce. He was deeply distressed. I recall that our class in Theology became very indignant ^{over} ~~against~~ the unjust procedure against Dr. Boyce. A present was purchased. At the end of a

class hour, I was requested to present him in strong terms our appreciation and this token of love and confidence. With some preliminary words expressing our attitude and feelings, I ~~finally~~ concluded, "Dr. Boyce, we have read in the paper the criticisms against you, and I am instructed to say that no difference ~~what~~ others may say or do, all of which is nonsense and ingratitude, this class is going to stick to you always, with every pledge of loyalty and love!" With that, I reached under the desk, and pulled out a big ebony staff golden-headed cane, and fitting the act to the words, I thrust the stick at him. This strong man stood there speechless for a time, great tears rolling down his cheeks. I think I saw more men in tears at that time than I ever saw before or since.

As I turn to the discussion of Dr. John A. Broadus, the road we travel can be shprtened due to two circumstances. One is that he is so well known, the other that he was so charming that all things connected with him have an added interest. I undertake to make a distinction between a genius and a man of talent. If you take men of high ability, those whose minds flash and scintillate may be called geniuses, and those/^{whose} qualities move along well-regulated, intellectual lines are men of talent. Dr. Boyce was a man of talent, - Dr. Broadus, a man of genius. The men of talent, as a rule, are the world's best leaders, especially in administrative work. Men of genius are jaded with business details, and plunge out into the realm of the ideal. Usually they are the best scholars.

It is interesting to note that in carrying forward the

great enterprises of life, usually men go in twos, and not infrequently is the pair made up of a man of talent and a man of genius. Be that matter as it may, nothing could have been more fortunate than the yoking together of James Pettigru Boyce and John A. Broadus in this matchless Seminary enterprise. To strengthen my suggestion, I cite Moses and ^{Ar}~~Am~~, David and Jonathan, Paul and Peter, Luther and Melancthon, Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt. As in the case of Dr. Boyce, so with Dr. Broadus, I undertake to give a few illustrative examples of his dominant principles and qualities.

Dr. Broadus had a fine social nature. It is true that no student undertook to take his arm while walking down the street, or engage him in light, worthless conversation. Life was too earnest with him for that, but when it came to dealing with a youth in a fine wholesome fashion, bringing out the best that was in the lad, he was a past master. I have sometimes thought that the finest test of a great man's greatness is his ability to make an apology when necessary. One rainy night at the Walnut Street Church in ^{Louisville} Richmond, George Braxton Taylor of Virginia asked Alice Broadus, a miss in her early teens, the privilege of walking home with her from Church. She said ~~to~~ "Speak to her father". He did. The doctor said, "No, George, Alice is just a High School girl, and should not have beaux". The next day, Dr. Broadus made an humble apology to the young Virginian, saying that his course had been unwise and unnecessary. One evening in a social group at Dr. Broadus' home, he joined with a party in old-fashioned games. One was known as

"Admiration". Taking the words in the letters of the alphabet as you came to them for answering the question put by the other players. Dr. Broadus was sitting near me. I "admired" him for his daughter. He took it pleasantly, and when his turn came to "admire" me with words in the letter G, he said, "Mr. Ramsay, I admire you." When I asked him what for, he answered, remembering my former remarks, "I admire you for your Gumption". When Dr. Broadus was lecturing with wonderful thrill and enthusiasm on Saul of Tarsus at the feet of Gamaliel, the greatest Hebrew scholar, an impulsive youth from Missouri broke out in the lecture, saying, "Dr. Broadus, you remind me of Gamaliel.". In a very curt way, the lecturer, who did not like to be disturbed, said, "Well, Mr. Johnson, do you want me to say that you are like Saul at my feet?". Dr. Broadus realized at once that he had been a little severe. At the close of the class, he asked Johnson to come to his desk. I waited outside, as Johnson and I had walked to class together. Presently, the young Missourian emerged, with husky voice and moistened eyes. He said, "You know, that great man begged my pardon". It takes a big man to do that, but Dr. Broadus could do that when it was right. No man I have ever known was quite equal to Dr. Broadus in thoughtfulness of all the members of a social group. One evening at his own home at supper, when a number of educators were discussing in a technical way the problems of their calling, several seemed to be left out of the conversation. Presently, a bride timidly made some remark along the line the doctors were discussing, and then looked embarrassed. When there was a pause, the doctor turned

to the bride and said, "I was very much impressed by your observation". I have reason to know that that bride was puffed up over that recognition through the years, and perhaps thought herself quite equal to the great educators. The bride was Mrs. Ramsay.

There is another incident in my Seminary relations with Dr. Broadus which I hesitate to relate for patent personal reasons, but which I am venturing to give, since it shows the great teacher at his best in dealing with undeveloped students. The first subject in our Homiletics class was a sermon on Repentance. When my paper was returned, it had a reasonably favorable comment in the pale, red ink of young Sanpey's pen. Below this criticism was one by Dr. Broadus, in ink of deeper dye, which started off with a pleasing compliment as was his custom when his really strong "stuff" was to follow. The adverse comment was to the effect that the discourse was not analyzed in a worthy way. I went to the young professor for an explanation of the criticism, and also to Dr. Kerfoot, who had come back from Baltimore for some special work. They were silent. With great fear, I went to Dr. Broadus' home on Fourth Avenue. He met me at the door. I told him meekly that if this paper were not analyzed, I did not know how to work on the next subject. He adjusted his glasses, glanced over this paper twice, then, with that sweet, subdued voice and manner all his own, said, "I am wrong. I was tired and sick when this paper was read to me, and I failed to catch the divisions"-- He marked out the adverse criticism. Much touched by the goodness of the

great soul, I begged him to erase also ^{the} ~~to~~ compliment, ~~++~~ which he declined to do. Evidently, he thought it was better to develop the crude boy, than to maintain his reputation as a faultless Homiletics teacher. That was the best lesson he ever taught me:-- the boy is worth more than the mule he plows.

I must not fail to mention another quality in which this great man excelled all other men that I have known. It was in the matter of giving helpful advice to young people. Most of us shrink from this course. Not he! Not long did it take him to see some definite gift that a youngster possessed, and with the greatest tact he would advise the methods for developing such qualities. All his life long he poured out his strength in helping young preachers in getting work they were suited to do, urging them to abstain from the tasks they were not fitted to or^s ready for.

What a man of prayer Dr. Broadus was! Not strange the story of how he prayed for hours ~~in the old Church at Greenville~~ while Dr. Boyce went on to Atlanta to ask Governor Joe Brown for the \$50,000 which was procured to save the Seminary in the dark days after the War.

Let me give a little story of the remarkable tact of Dr. Broadus. Along with him, I was spending the night in the home of a wealthy man near Louisville, Kentucky. The man was able, but not educated. His second wife was a rather finicky former school ma'm. The gentleman of the house told a very interesting story of killing a wild animal in former times, and called it a b'ar, whereupon the wife said, "Now, Mr. S....., you must not say

that was a 'b'ar". The husband was chagrined by this rebuke, and somewhat ill at ease, whereupon Dr. Broadus spoke up, "Why Mistress S....., I'm sure you will agree that this case is an exception. It would never do to tell an old-time Kentucky story and not call that animal a b'ar". Peace was restored.

Since walking over these grounds and viewing the superb buildings of this education plant, I've been thinking how they fulfill the dreams of these two men who founded the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I shut my eyes and see the old site where the first lectures were held, in a little Chapel, hard by the Laurens and Greenville Depot, on McBee Avenue, in Greenville. I thought of Johnny Broadus with a one-horse wagon, hauling up wood on a Saturday afternoon, at the approach of a blizzard. I thought of that great area of the handsomest streets and residences in our mountain city, the streets of which now bear the names of our Seminary professors, - Pettigru, Manly, Broadus, Toy, Whitsett, Williams, - much of which property was sold to keep the Seminary doors open. I wish they could be here to-day to see what has been wrought into material form out of their rosy dreams. There's not a spadeful of earth taken out of the foundations for these buildings, not a brick in all the walls, not a trowel of mortar placed in the walls, not a shingle on the roof, that does not proclaim the glory of James Pettigru Boyce. There is not a book which has been written by this scholarly faculty, not a preacher that has gone forth from these halls, not an outstanding scholar produced in faculty or student body, that does not call for all of us to stand with

uncovered heads, as the name of John A. Broadus is pronounced.