

THE UNION SEMINARY REVIEW

VOL. XXVI.

JULY, 1915.

No. 4.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1915.

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As one grows older Assemblies seem to grow younger. It takes one who has passed the meridian of life some time to adjust himself to the thought, expressed by Wordsworth, "The young are old, the old are in their graves."

It has been pithily observed that "fifty is old age to youth and youth to old age." The first impression received from looking on the Newport News Assembly was the youthfulness of the commissioners as compared with those sent to the Assemblies of earlier years. It is true that one saw here and there, and with rather startling frequency, the "good gray head" of a contemporary, but the shock was mitigated by the counter-suggestion that this canescence was premature. The cumulative effect, however, of looking out on so many hoary heads day after day for a week, made it next to impossible to regard them as just so many precocious crowns of glory, or as a select gathering of old heads on young shoulders. Precocity ceases to be precocity when it becomes the general rule. The apparent youthfulness was evidently a sort of optical illusion—the eyes that looked were not quite as young as they used to be.

The Assembly of 1915 was not absolutely younger in its make-up than the Assemblies of one or two decades ago, but only younger relatively to the age of the generation that attended its first Assemblies in those days. "Why not confess yourself an old man?" asks the Latin poet, Martial, "be content to seem

DR. THOMAS REESE ENGLISH.

Address by DR. W. W. MOORE at the Memorial Service in the Seminary Chapel, May 2, 1915.

Thomas Reese English was born in Sumter County, South Carolina, November 12, 1850. He was the son of the Rev. Thomas Reese English and Eliza Brearley, his wife—the only son in a large family. He had seven sisters, four older than himself, and it was from these older sisters that he received most of his early education.

His father was an unusual man. Descended on the paternal side from the substantial, thrifty and spiritually minded Quakers who, in the eighteenth century, had settled on the banks of the Wateree, and on the maternal side from the sturdy, energetic, God-fearing Scotch-Irish, he inherited sterling qualities of body, mind and spirit, which in turn were transmitted to his son. The father was educated at the College of South Carolina, was admitted to the bar, and began the practice of law at Sumterville. Quickly recognizing his merits, his fellow citizens elected him at a very early age to a seat in the legislature of the State. But in answer to the prayers of his mother who had in his infancy dedicated him to a higher service, praying that God would call him into the ministry, his heart was soon turned to that work. He put aside his worldly ambitions, studied theology privately under approved divines, and at twenty-six years of age was licensed to preach. For thirty-seven years as pastor and evangelist he prosecuted an active and fruitful ministry in the Presbytery of Harmony. His home, beautifully situated on the banks of the Black River, ten miles from Mayesville, was the abode of piety, refinement and hospitality.

There our Dr. English was born, and in the atmosphere of that Christian home he grew up. One of the two great forces in the making of character is heredity. We have seen how highly favored Dr. English was in this respect, sprung as he was from a long line of godly forebears. The other great factor

is environment, and to no other class of boys on earth does God give a richer blessing in this way than to the sons of the manse. Besides being a minister's son and being brought up in a minister's home, young English's *general* surroundings also were wholesome, for he lived in the country and on a farm. The boy who is raised on a farm is not only exempt from many of the unwholesome distractions and excitements of the city during his formative period, but he also learns innumerable things of practical value that the less favored town boy never knows. To Dr. English's country rearing we must attribute much of his resourcefulness, self-helpfulness and mechanical skill. He was emphatically a man of his hands. He could do more things with tools than any man of liberal education I have ever known. And it was not the crude work of an amateur. He made all manner of useful articles with a strength and finish that few professional workmen could excel. He was on occasion a painter about his own premises. He papered the walls of his residence. He bound many of his own books and periodicals. He manufactured all his filing cases for pamphlets and important documents. He was an excellent carpenter and joiner. He made for the seminary the great oak cases in the library for the accommodation of the very large bound volumes of our old-fashioned blanket-sheet church papers. He built the book shelves in his study, and made most of the articles of furniture in it, such as the revolving book case and the Morris chair. Machinery had a powerful fascination for him. When he purchased a motor car, for which, by the way, he built the garage, he was not only his own chauffeur but his own engineer, too. He made himself master of the mechanism. On one occasion he took the whole engine to pieces and then put it all together again. He was the only owner of a car known to me who was quite independent of the repair shops. All this not only saved much expense but also afforded him necessary recreation. All the work he did in his overalls promoted his happiness and efficiency. And I may add that the driving of his car, the change of scene, the fresh air, made a distinct improvement in his health. It would be a good thing for every

minister and man of books, every man who leads a sedentary life, to have some useful hobby by means of which he can unbend the bow and thus conserve his mental elasticity and freshness. The lines of Dr. English's life-long recreations were laid in his boyhood on the farm.

After the schooling which he received at home he entered the academy of the brothers Strong at Mayesville, by whom he was prepared for college. He was matriculated at Davidson College, North Carolina, in 1868, three years after the Civil War. It was the darkest period of our country's history. The South, overwhelmed, impoverished and bleeding, was suffering the infamies and horrors of Reconstruction. His own state was a political inferno. Carpet baggers, scalawags, thieves and thugs were plundering and trampling the prostrate commonwealth. Never did a youth come to the threshold of manhood at a time of deeper gloom. The conditions were the worst our country had ever known. The future was uncertain and forbidding. Even youth was not care free and gay in days like those. Instead of the usual light-heartedness of college boys he and his contemporaries at Davidson, sobered by the calamities of the time, must have entered upon their studies with a deep seriousness of purpose. He at least improved his advantages to the full. Among his classmates there were a number of men of marked ability, such as Judge Frank I. Osborne of Charlotte and the Rev. Dr. James Y. Fair of Richmond. Of the thirty-nine who entered with him only thirteen graduated. Mr. English led his class and was the valedictorian, in spite of the fact that in his first year he had been called home by the death of his father in April and had been unable to resume his studies till the next fall. It devolved on him to put his father's affairs into shape. Being the only son, the family was in a sense dependent on him. That by the way was one reason why he did not offer himself for work as a foreign missionary. He was reluctant to enter the ministry. He was strongly drawn to chemistry or civil engineering. But the call of God came to him and he was never the man to be disobedient to the heavenly vision. He entered the Theological Seminary at Columbia in 1872. That his work at college had been of unusual excellence

was shown not merely by his winning the first honor, as we have seen, but also by the offer while at the seminary of a post as instructor in the department of chemistry at Davidson. This offer of useful work in the line of his natural bent must have been a tempting one, but the conscientiousness which characterized him throughout life held him true to the divine call and the offer was declined. The Faculty at Columbia in his time was a very strong one. It included a number of men of remarkable personality, commanding ability and ample learning, such as Dr. Geo. Howe, Dr. Wm. S. Plumer, Dr. John B. Adger, Dr. James Woodrow, and Dr. Joseph R. Wilson, father of President Woodrow Wilson. Dr. English carried with him through life the impress of their character and teaching.

On his graduation from the seminary in 1875 he began his ministry as an evangelist in the Presbytery of Charleston, with his headquarters at McClellanville near the coast and labored here for nearly a year. He then accepted a call to Cuthbert, Ga. He was ordained in the First Church, Columbus, the church of which Dr. Isaac T. McElroy is now pastor. For four years (1876-1880) he served the church at Cuthbert, preaching also at Whitney and Fort Gaines. Then began his great pastorate at Yorkville, S. C. He went to Yorkville in 1880 in the prime of his early manhood just as he "began to be thirty years old." He labored there happily and fruitfully for thirteen years. By his staunch character and deep spirituality, by his earnest preaching which sounded the note of admonition and warning as well as persuasion, by his steadfast stand against the rising tide of worldly conformity, by his diligence and tenderness as a pastor, he won not only the respect and confidence of his people but also their abiding love. It was a severe wrench to their hearts and his when in answer to another call of duty he left them in 1893 to become professor of the English Bible and Pastoral Theology in Union Seminary.

For some years after coming to Hampden-Sidney where the institution was then located, his health was not good, but he worked steadily on in the persistent, punctual, methodical way for which all his colleagues and students have ever held him in

honor. In all the twenty-two years of his service in the Seminary he missed only one month's time from his classes, two weeks once when threatened with pneumonia and two weeks at another time when a serious attack made it necessary for him to leave home for a while. On this latter occasion just before he left, an observant student, knowing Dr. English's zeal for a reverent attitude in public prayer, remembering his antipathy to the invitation so often given by traveling speakers at students' meetings "Let us bow our heads in prayer"—and noticing that the doctor kept his seat during a prayer, made the remark that when the minister in charge said "Let us pray" and Dr. English did not stand up he knew there was something serious the matter. Happily his health gradually improved.

After fifteen years in the professorship of the English Bible and Pastoral Theology Dr. English was transferred to the Chair of New Testament Exegesis in 1908 and has taught this department for the last seven years. Conscientious, careful and thorough as his work had been in his first chair, it is not too much to say that he came to the maximum of his power as a teacher in the department of Greek Exegesis. He was at his best in the work of the Middle and Senior years. How his work grew on the men and how thorough and convincing his exegetical methods were may be illustrated by the remark of a careful student in the present Senior Class who said to me the other day, "When Dr. English has handled a difficult passage and then announces his conclusion I write on the margin of my Greek Testament that that is the meaning of that passage."

Two things created difficulties for some of the students in connection with Dr. English's work. One was the fact that in his English Bible course it fell to him to teach the least familiar and in some respects the most difficult portion of the Old Testament, viz: the Minor Prophets. The other was that some of the men who undertook his course in New Testament Exegesis as candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity had no adequate preparation for it, because as a result of the unhappy application of the elective system in the colleges they had little or no knowledge of Greek. The consequence was that

more men failed to pass in his department than in any other. This was a source of disappointment and chagrin to them and of great distress to him. He did everything he could do for such men. But he was too conscientious to pass them when they had not done the work and along with his colleagues he utterly refused to degrade this Seminary to the intellectual level of some others and to violate his conscience by declaring that men had done work which they had not done. The difficulty as to Greek Exegesis is one which all the standard seminaries have felt for years. Greek in the colleges has fallen on evil times. The true course for men who have not taken Greek in college is either to postpone their entrance into the Seminary till they have learned Greek or to forego voluntarily the degree of Bachelor of Divinity and take a good diploma course without Greek. It is unreasonable for men who are ignorant of Greek and yet insist on taking Greek Exegesis to complain against the professor when they fail to pass. Yet these complaints, unreasonable as they were, caused Dr. English much pain. But while they were trying to his feelings they seem never to have ruffled his temper. I mention these facts,—unusual in an address of this kind—in order to emphasize a very notable virtue in Dr. English's character. He excelled in the rare and beautiful grace of patience. I have seen him in many most trying situations, but I do not remember to have ever seen him evince any irritation or to have ever heard him speak any impatient or passionate word. While always firm in his convictions he was always calm in their expression.

The difficulties to which I have referred of course did not emerge in his teaching of such subjects as Pastoral Theology and Homiletics. Coming to the Seminary as he did after eighteen years of enriching experience as pastor and preacher, and supplementing the general knowledge thus acquired with careful and prolonged special study of these subjects, he handled them with marked force and fullness and with manifest profit to his students. His criticisms of their sermons were comprehensive, keen, discriminating and at times drastic. He said that if sermons were criticised at all they ought to be

criticised thoroughly, so he hewed to the line. But, if his comments sometimes gave momentary discomfort they were always valuable. They not only pointed out faults of manner and defects of treatment, sometimes with flashes of humor, but they were constructive. He was especially intolerant of the misuse of texts in senses other than that which the sacred writer intended. He inveighed without ceasing against illegitimate interpretations. He insisted on the real meaning of the passage, and he contributed no little to the maintenance of the high ideal of exposition which has always characterized this institution and which has given rise to the saying about "the Union Seminary type of preaching"—the intelligent, faithful, convincing interpretation of the Word. In all this we see his dominant characteristic—conscientiousness.

He was not less candid and severe with himself than with others in his homiletic methods. He was first and last a preacher. Preaching was to him the main business of life. Ever since coming to the Seminary he has preached regularly in addition to his work as a professor. For many years he supplied the Douglas Church, six or seven miles from Hampden-Sidney. After coming to Richmond he took charge of the Westminster Church and to his faithful ministry of ten years that congregation rightly attributes much of its remarkable growth. Later he preached during a whole winter in the Porter Street Church. For nearly two years past he has been the minister of the church at Ashland.

As a preacher Dr. English was substantial, instructive, edifying. His sermons were full of evangelical matter. He was always thoroughly prepared. He presented the truth of his text and nothing else. He never trifled with the divine Word. In earlier years he preached from notes, but latterly I think invariably without them. His style was plain and direct. His manner was earnest, solemn, impressive. The great verities of religion were to him so real that in listening to him one was often reminded of that unforgettable expression of Richard Baxter, who said of himself, "I have always preached as a dying man to dying men."

Not only was Dr. English thus an example for young ministers in the selection and treatment of his subjects and in the spirit and manner of his preaching, but his example in certain minor matters also may well be followed by all who are beginning their ministry. For instance, he kept a careful record of all his sermons, writing down with ink in bound blank books the text, the subject, the date, and the place where each was preached, noting also the number of people present and the condition of the weather if inclement or otherwise unusual, and mentioning all special occasions, such as Preparatory services, Communion services, Thanksgiving Days, Election of Elders, Installation ceremonies, Bible Society Meetings, Week of Prayer services, College discourses and the like. These records brought down to March 21st, 1915, when he preached for the last time at Ashland the Sunday before his death, show that during the forty years of his ministry he preached over 4,000 sermons, more than two a Sunday for the whole period.

While a pastor he recorded also all marriages, baptisms and burials, giving the names and dates. Such records are of great value to every pastor. His accurate knowledge of facts like these in the experience of his people gives him an approach to their hearts that he cannot afford to neglect. Yet it is strange how many ministers there are who keep no such memoranda and who have no accurate knowledge of their own past preaching and ministry and of the anniversaries of great joys and sorrows in the lives of their people, and of the notable events in the history of their congregations. I am not now referring to the kind of men who get into the ministry somehow, and who blunder along somehow, with no system about anything, with everything at loose ends, preaching hurried and half baked sermons, never ready and never masterful, fumbling ineffectually with everything belonging to their great office. I am referring to ministers who are men of real force and in many respects efficient men, but who do not attain to their whole potential efficiency because they do not attend to details such as I have spoken of and are not as systematic in all things as they are in some things.

For years Dr. English was the clerk of the Faculty and showed in that office the same promptness, carefulness and thoroughness in recording all its proceedings and issuing all its reports. As a presbyter also and Chairman of the Committee of Home Missions he was always the same—unhurried, punctual, methodical, reliable. Nothing was neglected. When he had papers or reports to prepare you could always count with absolute certainty on their being presented at the time they were due.

The files of the Union Seminary Magazine show that in addition to all his other valuable service to the church Dr. English did much good work with his pen, publishing a steady stream of penetrating book reviews and occasional extended articles of permanent value. This afternoon I took down the bound copies of the Magazine and glanced over some fifteen extended articles of his on such subjects as these: A Call to the Ministry, The New Testament Idea of the Ministry, Conditions of Success in the Gospel Ministry, The Decline in the Pulpit, The Pastor in his Study, The Pastor in his Pulpit, The Pastor among his People, The Pastor as a Leader, The Elders and Deacons in Scripture, How an Elder May Help His Pastor, Doubt-ers and How to Deal With Them, The Sabbath, The Text: Its Use and Abuse.

You see then that his life was a full and busy one and many sided, yet unhurried and orderly.

A favorite wall card seen in many homes says:

The Beauty of the house is Order.

The Blessing of the house is Contentment.

The Glory of the house is Hospitality.

The Crown of the house is Godliness.

All these graces were conspicuous in Dr. English's House—Order, Contentment, Hospitality, Godliness. He and his beloved and devoted wife made it a model Christian home. On December 23rd, 1875, shortly after the beginning of his ministry Mr. English married Miss Sarah Peck of Columbia, S. C., and hand in hand, heart to heart, they walked together through

sunshine and shadow for nearly forty years. "House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: but a prudent wife is from the Lord." "Who can find a woman of worth? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, and he will not see his store grow less. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also and he praiseth her." Six children blessed their union, two of whom died in infancy. Three daughters grew up into lovely womanhood, married ministers and made homes in other communities after the pattern of that in which they had themselves been reared: Mrs. D. P. McGeachy of Lewisburg, W. Va.; Mrs. W. E. Hill, of Atlanta, Ga., and Mrs. J. M. Walker, of Marlinton, W. Va. The only son, well known and much beloved in our community and a general favorite with all his business associates, having just reached the threshold of mature young manhood, with every prospect of success in his chosen profession, was called from earth to the "full grown energies of heaven" in his twenty-seventh year.

For many years I have lived next door to these dear friends and I know whereof I speak when I say that theirs was a model home. Dr. English, staunch, wise, kind, thorough, systematic, saintly—Mrs. English, active, capable, cheerful, warm-hearted, sharing fully her husband's love of order and her husband's all-controlling and all-permeating faith—together they made such a home as is all too rare in these days of feverish hurry and strain. We are all friends here to-night and it will not seem indelicate I trust, for me to mention these things and to say that when the hour for family prayer came in that home before breakfast, the members of the household were all there and together they began the day with God. In like manner they were all in their places at church on Sunday before the services began, never coming in late. Religion was to them the first thing in life—the main thing—not a mere incidental. Order is heaven's first law, and in both their domestic and religious life that law was supreme. Mr. Spurgeon said that one of the words

which best described the apostle Paul was the word "Ready." When on one occasion a prophet predicted that if he went up to Jerusalem he would be bound and delivered to the Gentiles he held steadfastly to his purpose, saying, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." There was his readiness for suffering. When writing to the Romans before he had ever visited their city and preached at that post of danger he said "I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also." There was his readiness for service. Years after when he lay in a dungeon in that same city just before his execution he said, "I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand." There was his readiness for death. I have often thought the same about Dr. English. The word "Ready" described him as well as the apostle Paul. And it held good to the last moment of his earthly life. On the morning of March 25th he rose at his usual hour, dressed with his customary care, went to his study for his invariable morning communion with God, sat down in his chair by the window, took his Bible in his hand—then "God's finger touched him and he slept"—without pain, without wasting, without sadness of farewell—a veritable euthanasia, more like a translation than a dissolution. Remembering the manner of his life and seeing the manner of his death all of us felt at once that just one passage of Scripture described both: "Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him." Ready, perfectly ready, in life, in death. And why? My brethren, do you get the true lesson of the life of this man of God? Do you recognize the one great quality which stands out above everything else? It was *Fidelity*. One of his colleagues who knew him long and intimately once said in a public address, on a notable occasion in the history of this Seminary, "I think of Dr. English as the most faithful man I ever knew." No higher encomium is possible, and with that encomium we close, adding only the prayer that God will enable us who remain for a time to be like him faithful unto death, that like him we too may be given the crown of life.