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THE EVOLUTION OF HOMILETIC INSTRUCTION AT THE
SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY FROM
JOHN BROADUS TO CHARLES GARDNER

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
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May 2024

APPROVAL SHEET

THE EVOLUTION OF HOMILETIC INSTRUCTION AT THE
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Defense Date: February 27, 2024

To my wife, Marla,
and our two boys, Liam and Ethan.

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PREFACE

As this thesis will more than likely be the end of my academic career, it seems right to confess my indebtedness to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the institution, aside from the local church, most responsible for who I am today. At SBTS, I discovered a love for systematic theology and church history and discovered a model of counseling that took Scripture seriously. More germane to this project, at SBTS, I caught a vision of preaching as the central task of the church and her shepherds in each generation.

I also want to thank the members of First Baptist Dover, who allowed me this opportunity to further my studies. I hope to repay your patience and generosity toward me throughout my pursuit of this degree with increasingly better food from the pulpit.

To the kind men and women of the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives in Nashville, your knowledge and professionalism greatly assisted my research. Finally, I owe a large debt to Dr. Adam Winters, archivist at the Boyce Centennial Library at SBTS. Taking on a project requiring significant archive research in the middle of COVID, and a multi-year library renovation could have been disastrous. Instead, Dr. Winters enabled my research to move forward uninhibited.

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Dover, Tennessee

May 2024

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For over 150 years, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) has been training preachers. At its inception, the “chief object” of the seminary was to produce “preachers of the gospel and pastors of the churches.”¹ Such a high calling cannot be taken lightly. In his epistle, James warns, “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness” (Jas 3:1).² Since teachers in the local church, of whom pastors/preachers are foremost, will be judged by God with greater strictness, surely that also applies to those who teach generations of preachers in the classroom. SBTS and its faculty are entrusted with a weighty mission by the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. How, then, has it taught preachers to preach?

As students of the seminary’s history know, SBTS has endured major theological and philosophical transformations since its founding in 1859. These transformations can broadly be described as moving from a more traditional form of Christian orthodoxy at its founding toward theological progressivism and back again.³ There are numerous ways to trace these changes in the life of the seminary and their effects on the seminary’s mission, but one of the easiest places to see them unfold is through the one school within the seminary explicitly tasked with instructing students in

¹ *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860* (Charleston, SC: Steam-Power Presses of Evans & Cogswell, 1861), 27. Though the seminary used “catalogue” to describe its early publications, this thesis will use the modern spelling (“catalog”) currently used by the seminary.

² Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the *English Standard Version*.

³ Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 230, 546.

how to preach: the School of Homiletics.⁴

Like other departments at SBTS, the School of Homiletics has seen its share of change over the years. Some of those changes, though intriguing, are less significant than others. For instance, at different times, homiletics was joined with other disciplines or sub-disciplines. Initially, the School of Homiletics had only one class lasting eight months.⁵ At the end of those eight months, students who passed an exam would earn a diploma from the department.⁶ Initially, the School of Homiletics was responsible for instructing students in “hymnology” and “the conduct of public worship.”⁷ In the early decades of the seminary’s existence, significant time was devoted to elocution until this practice faded out in the early twentieth century. Practice sermons were frowned upon for much of the seminary’s history. Instead, a strong emphasis on the more generic discipline of public speaking was a part of the homiletics course until public speaking formed its own department.

Beyond these small but noticeable changes, substantial philosophical and theological shifts occurred early in the seminary’s existence. The School of Homiletics began with a commitment to rich orthodox expositional preaching. By the time the seminary was fifty years old, a distinctive type of psychological preaching pervaded the classroom. The shift is closely linked to the succession of the first three men who held positions as professors of homiletics at SBTS: John Broadus, Edwin Dargan, and Charles

⁴ The original eight schools were (1) Biblical Introduction, (2) Interpretation of the Old Testament, (3) Interpretation of the New Testament, (4) Systematic Theology, (5) Polemic Theology and Apologetics, (6) Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, (7) Church History, and (8) Church History and Pastoral Duties. The School of Preparation and Delivery of Sermons was also referred to as the School of Homiletics. For simplicity’s sake, it will be referred to as the School of Homiletics throughout the remainder of this work.

⁵ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 30.

⁶ Students earned diplomas for each class they successfully completed at SBTS. Students who earned diplomas in all eight of the original schools earned a “general diploma” from the seminary. See *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860*, 28.

⁷ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Sixteenth Session 1874-1875* (Norfolk, VA: J. C. Deming, 1875), 15.

Gardner. These professors and their views on preaching shaped generations of young men. This thesis will answer the questions: How did homiletic instruction evolve during the tenures of John Broadus, Edwin Dargan, and Charles Gardner? What was preserved between them? and What was altered or jettisoned altogether?⁸

Familiarity with Literature

To demonstrate how the School of Homiletics changed over time, this thesis will focus on four types of types of historical records: (1) institutional records containing detailed information on the School of Homiletics; (2) the surviving works of Broadus, Dargan, and Gardner; (3) the textbooks required by each professor; and (4) various seminary histories compiled over the years.

Institutional Records

The seminary's catalogs, spanning the length of its existence, are preserved at the Boyce Centennial Library of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and provide a road map for this thesis.⁹ Contained in each is a description of that year's homiletics course, including the names of presiding professors and assistants, typical assignments, required texts, course objectives, and other miscellaneous data. Most relevant to this study are sixty-six catalogs covering the years James Broadus, Edwin Dargan, and Charles Gardner taught homiletics at SBTS.

The Works of the Homiletics Instructors

The second set of works relevant to this study are those composed by Broadus,

⁸ Basil Manly Jr. served as a professor of homiletics for three years, from 1868 to 1870, due to Broadus's poor health. Manly kept the course close to what the course was under Broadus before handing it back to him in 1871. Broadus, Dargan, and Gardner all served over a decade at their posts and therefore are arguably the first three major figures in the School of Homiletics.

⁹ Though originally published separately, today these catalogs are bound together in volumes roughly equaling ten years each. See the bibliography for a full listing of the course catalogs under John Broadus, Edwin Dargan, and Charles Gardner.

Dargan, and Gardner. Each professor authored books during his tenure and made at least some of his works required reading for homiletics students. These works provide valuable insight into each man's views on the discipline of homiletics as well as the specific content of the course.

A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, henceforth referred to as *Treatise*, is Broadus's seminal work. From the beginning, it received a wide reception. By Broadus's death in 1895, *Treatise* was used as a textbook in numerous seminaries, was in its second edition in England, and had been translated into Japanese and Portuguese.¹⁰

In 1897, twenty-seven years after its initial release, Dargan produced a revised edition of *Treatise*, which was eventually used in Dargan's class and Gardner's to follow. In the preface, Dargan maintains that Broadus charged him with revising his beloved classic and that most of his changes were either at the direct request of the author or corrections of simple errors. He admits some changes were never discussed with Broadus, but these were "comparatively few," and no changes were made "without consultation with members of the author's family."¹¹

Aside from his revision of *Treatise*, Dargan also composed a history of preaching and used it as a required text in his class starting in 1904. Prior to this time, Broadus's work on the history of preaching was used in the course. Dargan's *History of Preaching: From the Apostolic Fathers to the Great Reformers* is dedicated "to the cherished and revered memory of John Albert Broadus, a pupil's greatest offering."¹² In the preface, Dargan speaks glowingly of his time studying preaching under Broadus,

¹⁰ John Albert Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, rev. Vernon L Stanfield, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), iii.

¹¹ John Albert Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Smith, English, 1871), vi.

¹² Edwin Charles Dargan, *A History of Preaching: From the Apostolic Fathers to the Great Reformers, A.D. 70-1572* (New York: A. C. Armstrong, 1905).

serving as his assistant, and finally replacing him on the faculty. Because Broadus's lectures on the history of preaching also survive, they can be juxtaposed with Dargan's work to compare the two men's thoughts. All signs point to a man who unashamedly saw himself continuing in the same paths of thought as his predecessor.

In 1918, after a decade at the helm of the School of Homiletics, Charles Gardner published *Psychology and Preaching*, providing a window into his thinking and instructional content. In the preface, Gardner says that the book grew "out of the author's effort to teach homiletical psychology to young ministers."¹³ He laments the lack of a basic understanding of psychological principles among his students and the amount of class time it requires to cover these principles before he can proceed to the topic of preaching. Laden with psychological theory, Gardner's work was a significant shift in how homiletics was taught at SBTS. Whereas much of Broadus's *Treatise* enjoyed continuity with works that came before and after, Gardner's work, based on the shifting sands of contemporary psychological theory, had a foundation that could not sustain it more than a generation in terms of relevance.

Course Required Reading

During Broadus, Dargan, and Gardner's tenures, approximately twenty different works were used as main texts in the School of Homiletics. Not including works by the professors themselves, these works included (1) *Sacred Rhetoric or Composition and Delivery of Sermons* by Henry Ripley and Henry Ware; (2) *Homiletics: The Theory of Preaching* by Alexander Rodolphe Vinet and Thomas Skinner; (3) *Elements of Rhetoric: Comprising an Analysis of the Laws of Moral Evidence and Persuasion, With Rules for Argumentative Composition and Elocution* by Richard Whately; (4) *Yale Lectures on Preaching* by Henry Ward Beecher (first series); (5) *Pulpit Eloquence of the*

¹³ Charles Spurgeon Gardner, *Psychology and Preaching* (New York: Macmillan, 1918).

19th Century by Henry Fish; (6) *History and Repository of Pulpit Eloquence* by Henry Fish; (7) *Lectures to my Students* by Charles Spurgeon; (8) *Orthophony or Vocal Culture: A Manual of Elementary Exercises for the Cultivation of the Voice in Elocution* by William Russell; (9) *Hymns and Hymn Makers* by Duncan Campbell; (10) *Sursum Corda: Hymns of Comfort* by Mary Wilder Tileston; (11) *Evolution of Expression: A Compilation of Selections Illustrating the Four Stages of Development in Art as Applied to Oratory* by Charles Wesley Emerson; (12) *The Romance of Preaching* by Charles Silvester Horne; and (13) *Vital Elements of Preaching* by Arthur S. Hoyt.¹⁴

Seminary Histories

Also valuable to this study are two histories of SBTS completed over the years. Completed for the school's sesquicentennial, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009* by Gregory Wills is perhaps the most complete and reliable history of SBTS in existence.¹⁵ Wills's work sheds light on the early years of the seminary and offers fascinating insights about some of the school's homiletic instructors. Also of note is the work of another SBTS professor, William Mueller, who wrote *A History of Southern*

¹⁴ Henry J. Ripley and Henry Ware, *Sacred Rhetoric or Composition and Delivery of Sermons*, 4th ed. (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1859); Alexandre Rodolphe Vinet and Thomas H. Skinner, *Homiletics: The Theory of Preaching*, 3rd ed. (New York: Ivison & Phinney, 1866); Richard Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric* (Boston: James Munroe, 1839); Henry Ward Beecher, *Yale Lectures on Preaching: First Series* (New York: Fords, Howard, and Hulbert, 1872); Henry Clay Fish, *Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century: Being Supplementary to the History and Repository of Pulpit Eloquence, Deceased Divines; and Containing Discourses of Eminent Living Ministers in Europe and America, with Sketches Biographical and Descriptive* (New York: M. W. Dodd, 1857); Henry Clay Fish, *History and Repository of Pulpit Eloquence [...] of the Several Preachers and Their Discourse* (New York: M. W. Dodd, 1856); Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students*, 4 vols. (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1883); William Russell, *Orthophony or Vocal Culture: A Manual of Elementary Exercises for the Cultivation of the Voice in Elocution*, ed. Francis Thayer Russell (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1882); Duncan Campbell, *Hymns and Hymn Makers*, 4th ed., Guild Library (London: A & C Black, 1908); Mary Wilder Tileston, *Sursum Corda: Hymns of Comfort* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1884); Charles Wesley Emerson, *Evolution of Expression: A Compilation of Selections Illustrating the Four Stages of Development in Art as Applied to Oratory*, 4 vols (Boston: Emerson College of Oratory, 1895); Charles Silvester Horne, *The Romance of Preaching*, Yale Lectures on Preaching (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1914); Arthur Stephen Hoyt, *Vital Elements of Preaching* (New York: Macmillan, 1914).

¹⁵ Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Baptist Theological Seminary in 1959 at the behest of then-President Duke McCall.¹⁶ Mueller's work contains helpful biographical material relating to Broadus.

Void in Literature

In addition to general histories, much of SBTS's history is covered by existing works, with the institution's founding, various transitional periods, and many of SBTS's notable faculty having received tremendous attention. However, the development and progression of various schools within SBTS, including the School of Homiletics under its earliest professors, is one of those areas where no substantial treatment exists. Compared to Broadus, Dargan and Gardner are relatively obscure figures. Broadus's position as one of the founders of SBTS, his well-known work *Treatise*, and his renown as a Southern Baptist statesman created greater interest over the years than Dargan and Gardner received. Yet they are all connected by succession within the School of Homiletics. To date, no work has brought these three men and their shepherding of the School of Homiletics together in one unified work.

Thesis Statement

This thesis will argue that relative stability existed in the overall theory and instruction of homiletics between the first two School of Homiletics instructors, John Broadus and Edwin Dargan, with significant changes being introduced by the third, Charles Gardner. Gardner introduced early twentieth-century functional psychology as a major component of his homiletics course, a questionable addition in terms of its theological compatibility with biblical preaching. This will be demonstrated by (1) an examination of the descriptions of the homiletics course, its goals, contents, and structure, as recorded in the seminary's course catalogs, (2) an examination of each professor's

¹⁶ William A. Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959).

written works also used as classroom texts, (3) a survey of the additional required reading in the course, and (4) a comparison of other materials connected to each man.

Outline of Chapters

The following chapters explore the history of the school of theology under the leadership of its first three professors, progressing chronologically through the specifics of each man's thought and practice.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The opening chapter begins with the origins of SBTS and the School of Homiletics. It describes the void in the literature concerning changes in this department over time and introduces the thesis that the most significant change between the first three generations of professors was Charles Gardner's introduction of early twentieth-century psychology.

Chapter 2: John Broadus and the School of Homiletics

This chapter examines the years that John Broadus taught preaching at SBTS. First, it gives a brief biographical sketch of Broadus's life. Second, it describes the goals of the homiletics course and the instructional methods employed during Broadus's tenure. Third, it discusses Broadus's writings that were required reading. Fourth, it describes additional required texts that were not the work of Broadus.

In Broadus's final year at SBTS, the major subjects covered in the homiletics class included (1) the selection and interpretation of texts, (2) the collection of general materials for preaching, (3) the arrangement, style, and delivery of sermons, (4) the history of preaching, and (5) the conduct of public worship.¹⁷ Broadus's vision for the

¹⁷ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Thirty-Fifth Session 1893-1894* (Louisville: Baptist Book Concern, 1894), 37.

course was so wide-ranging that, at times, it also included lectures in English literature, and significant time was spent on elocution and general public speaking.

Chapter 3: Edwin Dargan and the School of Homiletics

This chapter examines the years that Edwin Dargan taught preaching at SBTS, providing a brief biographical sketch of Dargan's life, the goals of the homiletics course and Dargan's instructional methods, a discussion of Dargan's writings that were required reading, and a description of additional required texts that were not Dargan's work. During Dargan's final year teaching the course, the class's major subjects included (1) the theory and history of preaching and (2) elocution.¹⁸ Despite the narrower focus during his last year, for most of Dargan's tenure, the school taught the "conduct of public worship" and "hymnology." Also significant was the amount of time given to elocution (two of the five lectures every week) and Dargan's loyalty to Broadus's original vision for the course.

Chapter 4: Charles Gardner and the School of Homiletics

This chapter examines the years that Charles Gardner taught preaching at SBTS. After a brief biographical sketch of Gardner's life, the chapter describes the goals of the homiletics course and Gardner's instructional methods, discusses Gardner's writings that were required reading, and describes additional required texts that were not Gardner's work. Gardner's course became the most narrowly focused of the three men, largely because of other departments picking up extraneous material. At the end of Gardner's time at SBTS, the course's subject matter was defined as simply "the theory and history of preaching."¹⁹ However, despite the narrower focus, Gardner's course made

¹⁸ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Eighth Session 1906-1907* (Louisville: Seminary Press, 1907).

¹⁹ *Annual Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Seventieth Session 1928-1929* (Louisville: Press of the Western Recorder, 1929), 49.

a substantial and unique addition by adding psychology as part of his “theory of preaching.”²⁰ This addition would consume a quarter to one-third of the class’s instruction time.

Chapter 5: Precursors of Change in the School of Homiletics

This chapter examines various factors linked to the stability and instability of Broadus’s original vision for the School of Homiletics. Factors include those intentionally put in place as guards against change but ultimately failing in that endeavor, as well as some that may have played a role in preserving Broadus’s vision for a time.

²⁰ Gardner, *Psychology and Preaching*.

CHAPTER 2

JOHN BROADUS AND THE SCHOOL OF HOMILETICS

John Broadus was the first to lead the School of Homiletics at SBTS. The Broadus era spanned 1859 to 1894, from the school's opening day to Broadus's death. It was a groundbreaking era of uncertainty, heroic perseverance, and rigorous standards under the influence of arguably the greatest professor the School of Homiletics has ever known. What follows in this chapter is a brief overview of Broadus's early life and shaping influences, followed by a broad timeline of major events within the school, and finally, a detailed account of Broadus's instructional methods and course content.

Early Life and Shaping Influences

Broadus was born on January 24, 1827, in Culpeper County, Virginia. His parents, Major Edmund Broadus and Nancy Simms, were both well-respected members of their local community. Major Edmond was a farmer but also served terms in the Virginia legislature; he was a member of the state militia, where he received the title Major. The occupation of farming was typical of many of Broadus's kin, though there were also doctors, lawyers, railmen, and enough teachers to justify saying that "teaching ran in the Broadus blood."¹ As to religion, "the family [was] Baptist to the core."²

Broadus's earliest schooling took place at the Black Hill Boarding School in

¹ Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1901), 3.

² Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 3.

Culpeper County, where his uncle was a teacher.³ Broadus came to faith in May of 1843 after attending a revival meeting at Mt. Poney Church and was baptized shortly afterward by the noted Virginia preacher Cumberland George.⁴ Soon, friends and relatives began to suspect Broadus was called to preach, but Broadus himself was not easily convinced. Writing to his father in 1845, young Broadus said, “I am troubled . . . by the fact that I cannot decide what to make of myself.”⁵ Again, this time writing to a friend in 1846, he questioned both the presence of a call and his own abilities as a public speaker:

You inquire if I never think about preaching, I do; but I always come to the conclusion that preaching is not my office. Not because I believe a call to the ministry to consist in some supernatural intimation, for I believe that to be very little more than an earnest and ardent desire for the work, but because I do not think I am qualified for it . . . I was not cut out for a public speaker I have not that grace of manner and appearance, that pleasant voice, that easy flow of words, which are indispensably necessary in him who would make impressions on his fellows by public speaking.⁶

Broadus’s early assessment of gifts is stunning given that he would become one of the greatest preachers of his age, but one can already pick out elements of Broadus’s view of preaching. For Broadus, preaching was a subset of public speaking, and he would press home to his future students the importance of cultivating the very attributes of a good public speaker that he believed—at least at that time—he lacked. Shortly after writing that letter and just before the start of his studies at the University of Virginia, Broadus received an unmistakable call to preach.⁷

The University of Virginia proved to be a massive influence on young Broadus. He was exposed to an elective system of higher education where students had

³ David S. Dockery and Roger D. Duke, eds., *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, Studies in Baptist Life and Thought (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2008), 14.

⁴ Dockery and Duke, *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, 126.

⁵ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 45.

⁶ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 48-49.

⁷ Dockery and Duke, *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, 126.

some choice in picking courses within a particular program of study.⁸ He would later advocate and implement a similar system at SBTS.⁹ He also encountered several influential teachers who would shape his pedagogical style. A. T. Robertson, Broadus's future son-in-law and seminary colleague, described Broadus's memories of these pivotal figures:

Professor Courtney would patiently repeat his original clear statement until the man saw it; Professor McGuffey would seek to get the student's point of view so as to point out the difficulty and remove it; Professor Harrison, with his brilliant imagination, would turn every color of the rainbow on the subject till it flashed before the student's mind.¹⁰

As so often happens, teachers and students become reflections of those who taught them. These vivid descriptions of three professors at the University of Virginia fit well with future descriptions of Broadus as a seminary professor and teacher of homiletics.

Broadus graduated from the University of Virginia in 1850 with the highest degree offered in America in those days, a Master of Arts.¹¹ He began to teach Latin and Greek at his alma mater and later became the campus chaplain.¹² In 1851, Broadus took on his first pastorate at Charlottesville Baptist Church, a position he would hold until he left Virginia for Greenville, South Carolina, in 1859.¹³ However, the combined work of pastoring and teaching at the university created problems for Broadus's health.¹⁴ This would prove to be a major theme throughout his life, a plague that accompanied his productivity.

⁸ Dockery and Duke, *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, 54.

⁹ John Albert Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce* (Louisville: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1893), 156.

¹⁰ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 63.

¹¹ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 61.

¹² Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 169.

¹³ Dockery and Duke, *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, 3.

¹⁴ William A. Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959), 62-63.

The summer before SBTS opened, in a gesture of goodwill to a founding member of the first Southern Baptist seminary, Broadus was awarded two honorary Doctor of Divinity degrees, one from Richmond College and the other from The College of William and Mary.¹⁵ At thirty years old, with one earned degree, two honorary degrees, and almost a decade of experience as a pastor and teacher, the Broadus era began.

The Broadus Era Begins

When SBTS opened in Greenville, South Carolina, in 1859, Broadus was one of four founding faculty members, including James P. Boyce, Basil Manley Jr., and William Williams. Due to the size of the school, each man was required to teach multiple disciplines. This was not an issue for Broadus, a veritable polymath with a command of Latin, Greek, New Testament, systematic theology, and homiletics. His first title was Professor of Interpretation of the New Testament and Preparation and Delivery of Sermons.

Opening Days to the Start of the War

Unique to SBTS was its employment of an elective system, something no other theological school had instituted and, as noted, a system Broadus “patterned after . . . the University of Virginia.”¹⁶ The seminary’s first catalog described the intent of an elective system:

In each of these schools a separate diploma shall be given to those students who exhibit, upon due examination, a satisfactory acquaintance with the studies of that school. In those schools which comprise two classes, a general and special course, the diploma shall require a competent knowledge of both; while to those whose attainments extend only to a general or English course, there shall be awarded a Certificate of Proficiency.¹⁷

¹⁵ Dockery and Duke, *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, 135.

¹⁶ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 156.

¹⁷ Although the seminary catalog described some schools as having two classes, “general” (English language) and “specific” (classes requiring use of non-English languages), the School of

A student completing the general and special courses in all of the seminary's schools would receive the distinction of a "Full Graduate" degree. In 1876 an additional diploma, "English Graduate," was added for students who had completed all the general courses only.¹⁸ In the early years of the seminary, this arrangement meant that many students completed only a few classes and were recognized for their work in those courses, thus "finishing" their seminary education.¹⁹ However, a quick perusal of the early catalogs listing students and their enrollments reveals that Broadus's early homiletics students also took other seminary classes; none took his class alone for merely a diploma or certificate of proficiency. The elective system was intended to improve Baptist preaching in general. Although the seminary recognized that some students would attend for only one or two courses instead of a full program, they also realized the importance of giving men the opportunity to receive at least some advanced theological training. This especially benefited students constrained by limited means or by time or family circumstances. W. M. Wingate of Wake Forest College, writing to Broadus in 1859, shared his hopes for the program and its benefit to Baptist preaching:

I like very much the feature [elective system] proposed in your letter. . . . Our [Baptist] theological seminaries have been based too much upon Presbyterian theories of preaching, and they have on that account been of very little use to Baptists. We must help men a little who cannot or will not be helped much, or they will preach without help, and why should they not? For one, let me express the hope that prominence will be given to this [elective system] feature.²⁰

In other words, men in Baptist churches were going to preach, with or without seminary training. It was better they receive some training than none.

Another innovation SBTS pioneered was the "mixing of college and non-

Homiletics had but one course in English. See *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860* (Charleston, SC: Steam-Power Presses of Evans & Cogswell, 1861), 28.

¹⁸ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 161-62.

¹⁹ Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 30.

²⁰ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 169.

college men in the same courses,”²¹ intended to make theological education attainable to a greater number of men by not requiring prior studies. This meant that Broadus’s homiletics classes had a diverse group of men, some highly educated and some not. It was Broadus’s experience that “real difficulties are found to be very slight, compared with the great advantages of throwing all the students together. . . . The less erudite men soon find that work will tell, and that they can often share very comfortably in a recitation with some college graduate.”²² Yet, of all the men in the homiletics class that first year, likely none was more nervous than the one giving the lectures.

Early in 1859, Broadus was incapacitated with “dyspepsia,” a form of indigestion that resulted in a three-month absence from the classroom.²³ His future son-in-law, A. T. Robertson, ascribed Broadus’s sudden bout of ill health to the enormous strain of that first year of teaching. Broadus was an accomplished preacher and teacher, but he had never taught homiletics or New Testament. This responsibility, combined with the pressure of opening a seminary and his own high standards, took a toll on his body.²⁴ By March of 1860, Broadus was able to return to at least a portion of his teaching load.²⁵ Whether that was his homiletics course, the New Testament course, or some of both was never specified in his letters.

The Classroom Setting

The setting for early homiletics classes was a small brick building described by Broadus as an “old Baptist house of worship” that “had been divided into two lecture

²¹ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 26.

²² Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 160.

²³ Dockery and Duke, *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, 136.

²⁴ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 170.

²⁵ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 172.

rooms and a library.”²⁶ Furman University bequeathed nearly two thousand volumes to the library from its theological holdings.²⁷ Mercifully, class sizes were small. The whole of the seminary totaled only twenty-six students that first year. Broadus had eleven homiletics students: five from South Carolina, five from Virginia, and one from Alabama.

In 1861, the rumblings of the Civil War began to take a toll on the seminary. Large portions of the student body left in early Spring to ready themselves for service (decidedly in support of the South).²⁸ Despite growing unease, Broadus remained steadfast in his work. The routine helped to calm his mind and improve his health; he wrote in January of 1862 that he had been able to teach all his courses that year.²⁹ However, with plummeting enrollment and the region increasingly engulfed by war, the seminary was forced to close in 1862 and would not reopen until the cessation of hostilities.

The Aftermath of the War

When the war finally subsided, the future of SBTS and its School of Homiletics was in doubt. Lack of funds, a diminished student body, and a demoralized South all contributed to the uncertainty of those years. Broadus, normally a man of hope, was affected deeply: “I conclude not to order any more books, nor to buy anything I can do without until get more money, or see a brighter prospect for the country.”³⁰

The reopening was shaky to say the least. Broadus’s first homiletics class after the war in 1866 began with just two students but quickly fell to one. The lone remaining student was blind, a fact that may not have fazed Broadus in the beginning but appears to

²⁶ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 167.

²⁷ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 168.

²⁸ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 55.

²⁹ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 182.

³⁰ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 216.

have worn at him over time. Writing to his wife in January of 1866, he said, “Mr. Getsinger’s departure leaves me with nobody in homiletics but Mr. Lunn. As it happens, nearly all the remainder of my course is lecture, and he is a good listener.”³¹ Day after day, Broadus taught his lone pupil, unable to assign the standard reading or require the typical recitation exercises. Broadus tediously revised his lectures to better suit Mr. Lunn. In February, Broadus wrote again to his wife, “Really it is right dull to deliver my most elaborate lectures in homiletics to one man, and that a blind man. Of course, I whittle it all down to simple talk.”³² Unbeknownst to Broadus, the drought of homiletics students and the forced revision of his course material proved to be instrumental in producing his magnum opus, his *Treatise*.³³

Uncertainty persisted in the homiletics classroom, and Broadus wrote to his wife on March 2, 1866, “I have reveled all day in books. Some valuable works on homiletics—if I just had someone to teach.”³⁴ Again, in April of the same year, Broadus wrote, “Made my last lecture in homiletics to-day. Quite possible that it will be the last indeed.”³⁵ Little did Broadus know that the greatest days of his time teaching in the School of Homiletics lay before him in just a few short years and in a different state, Kentucky.

By 1869, Broadus’s poor health and additional administrative duties (largely fundraising) caused his second departure from the homiletics classroom. From 1869 to 1871, homiletics was taught by Basil Manly Jr. Though unable to teach, Broadus used the time to compose a work ensuring future students would become well-equipped preachers. In January 1870, he wrote,

³¹ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 216.

³² Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 216.

³³ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 65.

³⁴ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 217.

³⁵ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 217.

Last summer I went to work at a treatise on the “Preparation and Delivery of sermons,” hoping to make a text-book for Manly, and at the same time meet the wants of young ministers who have no course of instruction in homiletics, and give some useful hints to older ministers. I worked at it all summer but have not yet completed it.³⁶

By the summer of that same year, he wrote to Manly that he had completed all but three chapters, hoping to finish the rest within two weeks.³⁷ *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* would be published in 1870 and used in the School of Homiletics well beyond the tenure of the three professors considered in this thesis. Thus, Broadus continued to teach SBTS students the art of preaching, even long after his death.

In 1872, the seminary hired William H. Whitsitt to teach New Testament and Greek, and Broadus was able to resume his beloved homiletics course.³⁸ During this time of financial stress and institutional uncertainty, Broadus was also pressed by many of the leading Baptist churches in America to leave the seminary and “become their pastor.”³⁹ Every faculty member was courted by churches, but Broadus, the most gifted preacher among them, “received the largest number of offers.”⁴⁰ Some of these churches offered Broadus up to four times his SBTS teaching salary.⁴¹ At great cost to himself and his family, Broadus remained resolutely committed to teaching at SBTS.

The Broadus Era in Louisville

Postwar financial issues forced the seminary to move to Louisville, Kentucky, in 1877. Broadus remarked, “There was nothing to move, except the library of a few thousand volumes, and three professors.”⁴² Broadus taught the first homiletics students in

³⁶ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 233.

³⁷ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 233.

³⁸ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 225.

³⁹ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 71.

⁴⁰ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 71.

⁴¹ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 71.

⁴² Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 251.

Louisville in rented facilities. SBTS secured two rooms in the Public Library Hall, later known as the Polytechnic, and students were housed in a local hotel nearby. It was a fresh start for the seminary and the School of Homiletics. At its peak in Greenville, the seminary had reached sixty-seven students, but in its opening year in Louisville, the school had eighty-eight students.⁴³

Broadus's health would continue to be the source of much anxiety to his friends during the first years in Louisville, and the suspected cause was always overwork. Dargan, the man who would one day replace Broadus at the helm of the School of Homiletics, wrote to his friend in 1878, "I fear your burdens are largely increased by the larger number of students, and I can't help but feeling anxious for your health, as often as I think of you. Do you keep up as well as ever?"⁴⁴ Broadus wrote to his wife in 1880, "Senior Greek class the largest I have ever had—Doctor Boyce also attending it. Homiletics too is larger than heretofore. Both these agreeable facts mean more work in correcting exercises."⁴⁵

Adding to the strain was Broadus's almost never-ending role in fund raising for the school. Holiday and summer breaks from the classroom were frequently consumed with travel. More than any other member of the faculty, Broadus's gifts as a preacher meant he was in demand, and that demand meant he was able to raise more funds by agreeing to speaking engagements. Similarly, churches in Louisville realized a great preacher had arrived with the new Baptist seminary, and Broadus was asked to speak in Baptist and non-Baptist pulpits around the city. His homiletics students had no shortage of opportunities to hear their homiletics professor practice what he preached—if they could find a seat. Robertson reports that many of the churches in Louisville had great

⁴³ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 308.

⁴⁴ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 311.

⁴⁵ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 318.

difficulty holding the crowds that gathered to hear Broadus in those days.⁴⁶

Latter Days and Death

In the latter days of his career, Broadus strove to stay fresh for his students: “I am convinced that a professor who is growing old must take very great pains to freshen up his instruction, examine the new books, lecture on new topics, etc., or the students will begin to make the always damaging comparison with his former self.”⁴⁷ After Boyce’s death in 1888, Broadus was named the second president of SBTS. He continued to carry a teaching load that included homiletics until he died on March 16, 1895. As the last of the seminary’s founding faculty to pass away, the Broadus era in the School of Homiletics ran simultaneously with the first age of the institution.⁴⁸

The loss to the seminary was tremendous. Seminary historian William Mueller wrote, “If James P. Boyce was the head of the Seminary, John A. Broadus was its heart.”⁴⁹ With Broadus’s death, both were gone. Tributes poured in from former students, friends, and colleagues. The seminary magazine eulogized Broadus the next year, highlighting his time teaching homiletics:

No man ever heard him preach but understood every sentence; no one ever heard him preach who did not feel the ruth of God sink deep down into his heart. . . . As a teacher . . . of the department of homiletics in the theological seminary, it is perhaps not too much to say that he had no superior in this country. . . . The purity of his diction and the purity of his thought commanded attention.⁵⁰

As to his impact on the larger evangelical world, Mueller said, “It may be safely said that in his day John A. Broadus achieved more recognition beyond his own denomination than

⁴⁶ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 316.

⁴⁷ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 346.

⁴⁸ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 187.

⁴⁹ Mueller, *A History of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 61.

⁵⁰ William R. Harper, *The Seminary Magazine* 9 (February 1896), 289, quoted in Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 83.

any of his brethren.”⁵¹ Contemporary biographer Timothy George agrees: “More than any other Southern Baptist leader of the nineteenth century, Broadus’s appeal extended beyond the bounds of his own region and denomination.”⁵² Boyce, a beloved friend who preceded Broadus in death, said of him, “If the five great living preachers were named, Broadus would have to be included.”⁵³ Broadus left enormous shoes to fill.

Course Content

Now that Broadus’s life and the early history of the School of Homiletics are set in context, this section turns to specific course content under Broadus. The 1859 seminary catalog provided the following description of the first homiletics course:

In connection with examination upon the text books, lectures are given upon such subjects as the following: Requisites to Effective Preaching Benefits and Dangers of Rhetorical Studies; History of Peaching; General and Special Preparation for Sermons; Texts, their utility, selection, interpretation; Subject-Sermons and Text-Sermons; Classification of Subjects; Different parts of a Discourse, [sic] as introduction, &c.; Divisions; Expository Discourses; Style; Delivery, advantages and disadvantages of several methods, viz: reading, repeating from memory and speaking extemporaneously; Cultivating and Management of the Voice Action. Also, upon Illustration, its various uses and chief sources; Originality and Plagiarism; Hymns and Hymn Writers, and Public Prayer. Attention is everywhere directed to the importance of variety naturalness and adaptation, in general, to the true ends of preaching.⁵⁴

A remarkably thorough and wide-ranging course, homiletics bore the unmistakable fingerprints of the man who would produce *Treatise*. A comparison of the 1859 course description and the table of contents for *Treatise*, written a decade later, reveals that every segment of the first course finds a counterpart in *Treatise* except the “history of preaching” segment. He would eventually treat this subject in *Lectures on the History of*

⁵¹ Mueller also records that Broadus received an additional “doctor’s degree” from Harvard University during its 250th anniversary celebration in 1886. Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 63, 65.

⁵² Timothy George, introduction to Dockery and Duke, *John A. Broadus: A Living Legacy*, 4.

⁵³ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 316.

⁵⁴ *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860*, 48.

Preaching. Treatise, then, provides the greatest insight into what Broadus taught his classes on each of these topics.

Homiletics Proper

The homiletics course under Broadus contained many elements that were not, strictly speaking, homiletics proper. These will be treated in due course. However, Broadus had much to say to his students when it came to homiletics proper, as even a cursory look at *Treatise* reveals. Since the next two professors after Broadus also used *Treatise* as their primary homiletics textbook, one may think their views on homiletics and their teaching content and methods were closely aligned, but this was not the case. In his unpublished dissertation, “Speech Education in Baptist Theological Seminaries in the United States, 1819-1943,” Charles Addis McGlon asserts an intriguing thesis, that speech education in Baptist Seminaries between 1819 and 1943 can be categorized into two distinct eras. The first era, from 1819 to 1879, he labels “teaching the student preacher to proclaim the gospel and to teach the Word of God.”⁵⁵ The second era, from 1880 to 1943, he identifies as “teaching the student minister to speak with the people and to supervise church affairs.”⁵⁶ Though Broadus’s tenure bleeds into McGlon’s second period, this dichotomy nicely captures what was happening under Broadus and what would happen in the School of Homiletics in coming days.

Broadus was firmly of the first period, a man who sought to train preachers to proclaim the Word of God to men, not merely ministers who spoke an undefined message to people and equally supervised church affairs. Broadus said preaching is “the great appointed means of spreading good tidings of salvation through Christ. . . . And this, nothing can supersede. . . . Pastoral work is of immense importance, and all preachers

⁵⁵ Charles Addis McGlon, “Speech Education in Baptist Theological Seminaries in the United States, 1819-1943” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1951).

⁵⁶ McGlon, “Speech Education,” 193.

should be diligent in performing it. But it cannot take the place of preaching, nor fully compensate for lack of power in the pulpit.”⁵⁷ Broadus believed people needed the Word of God, and “he [the preacher] stands before the people for the very purpose of teaching and exhorting them out of the Word of God.”⁵⁸

Doctrinally, Broadus was a Calvinist and fully agreed with SBTS’s confessional statement, the Abstract of Principles (hereafter, Abstract). Hershael York notes that the Abstract, “written by Basil Manly Jr. and signed by each of the four founding faculty members, are the clearly defined theological principles that lay behind and supported the preaching and homiletics of John A. Broadus.”⁵⁹ Throughout his career, Broadus never pressed beyond the Abstract’s bounds or questioned its worth in the classroom; because the Abstract was thoroughly orthodox, so was his preaching and how he taught preaching. Though the Abstract today bears the names of some professors who failed to teach within its bounds, and arguably some who never intended to, Broadus and the other founders’ subscription was genuine and reflective of their time in the classroom.

Broadus’s teaching of homiletics was also marked, to a high degree, by the influence of his classical training. If an emphasis on psychology marked Gardner’s classes, Broadus’s were equally marked by an emphasis on classical rhetoric. In his preface to *Treatise*, Broadus gladly acknowledged his indebtedness to Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian.⁶⁰ However, his love of classical rhetoric did not mean needless flourishes in the pulpit. In fact, in his history of SBTS, Mueller claims that W. O. Carver believed Broadus changed “the ideal of the Southern Baptist ministry from eloquence and flashy

⁵⁷ John Albert Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Smith, English, 1871), 17.

⁵⁸ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 51.

⁵⁹ Hershael W. York, “John Albert Broadus: Carefully Expositing the Authoritative Scriptures,” in *A Legacy of Preaching*, vol. 2, *Enlightenment to the Present Day*, ed. Benjamin K. Forrest et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 216.

⁶⁰ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, vi.

oratory to the conversational and expository style of preaching.” According to Mueller, Carver even received a complaint from a Virginia preacher who accused “Broadus with having ruined Southern Baptist preaching” with his new conversational expository style.⁶¹

History of Preaching

Besides *Treatise, Lectures on the History of Preaching* (hereafter, *The History of Preaching*) provides the most insight into Broadus’s instructional content. Though an edited version of lectures Broadus gave at the Newton Theological Institute, Broadus required this text in his course from the time of its publication to the time of his death.⁶² *The History of Preaching* contains five chapters (or lectures): (1) “Specimens of Preaching in the Bible,” (2) “Preaching in the Early Christian Centuries,” (3) “Medieval and Reformation Preaching,” (4) “The Great French Preachers,” and (5) “The English Pulpit.” Of the many preachers Broadus profiled in *The History of Preaching*, the one receiving the most extensive treatment and praise is Jesus. Concerning preaching outside the Bible, no preacher received higher praise than Chrysostom, of whom Broadus remarked, “[Chrysostom] has never had a superior, and it may be gravely doubted whether he has had an equal, in the history of preaching.”⁶³

The Conduct of Public Worship

One fascinating aspect of the early days of the School of Homiletics under Broadus was its responsibility to train students in the conduct of public worship. This subject included (1) public prayer, (2) Scripture reading, and (3) hymnology. Though not part of the discipline of homiletics proper, the conduct of public worship was included,

⁶¹ Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 67.

⁶² John Albert Broadus, *Lectures on the History of Preaching* (New York: Sheldon, 1876), 3.

⁶³ Broadus, *Lectures on the History of Preaching*, 77.

perhaps in part, due to the slim number of classes offered in those years. Broadus expressed no qualms with its inclusion in the course; he recognized the importance of ministers being equipped to lead in these areas. He observed a deficit in the young men who presided over corporate worship, particularly in their lack of musical ability. In *The History of Preaching*, Broadus remarks, “Men in every age have so generally been practical musicians, and this neglect of this in our country is to be deplored. Singing will obviously be of very great profit, in many ways, to all young ministers, and instrumental music must not be considered unmanly or worthless.”⁶⁴ Similarly, a friend writing to Broadus in 1866 urged him to use his post at the seminary to promote singing amongst the aspiring preachers: “Tell the young breather to learn to sing a few tunes, for I have seen some good meetings spoiled for want of some person to raise a tune.”⁶⁵ Again, *Treatise* provides the greatest insight into his instruction in this portion of the class.

Regarding public Scripture reading, Broadus taught his students to “harmonize” Scripture readings with the sermon: “To read a mournful passage, and afterward preach a joyful sermon, or *vice versa*, would be inappropriate. Still, a general harmony is sufficient; great effort to find an exact correspondence is unnecessary, if not unbecoming.”⁶⁶ It was also advisable, he said, for passages to have a general “devotional” character. Students were not to fear reading units smaller than a chapter; after all, chapter divisions were a late addition and often “awkwardly made.”⁶⁷ In sum, careful attention was to be given to the selection and reading of Scripture in services.

Concerning hymn selection, Broadus expected students to have an exceptional level of familiarity with modern and classic hymns. Good hymns, he said, were (1)

⁶⁴ Broadus, *Lectures on the History of Preaching*, 127.

⁶⁵ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 220.

⁶⁶ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 478.

⁶⁷ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 479.

“correct in sentiment,” (2) “devotional in spirit,” (3) “poetical in imagery and diction,” (4) “rhythmical, being correct as to metre, animated and varied in movement, and yet not rugged or halting, but truly melodious,” and (5) “symmetrical.”⁶⁸ Broadus encouraged the embrace of familiar hymns; after all, he said, they were familiar for a reason. He also encouraged occasional reading of hymns to the congregation. Broadus’s view of the purpose of hymns in the worship service is worth noting. He wrote, “Hymns are designed not for instruction, but to express and quicken devotional feeling.”⁶⁹ He therefore warned against trying to align all the music of a service with the sermon text.

Broadus spoke of public prayer in grand terms, calling it “the most important part of public worship.”⁷⁰ Broadus was not teaching that public prayer was more important than preaching; rather, he sometimes used the word “worship” to describe all parts of a service *except* preaching. For instance, he wrote, “A tendency may often be observed in our religious assemblies to neglect *the worship*, and think only of the preaching.”⁷¹ With great clarity he taught his students, “It is a solemn thing to speak to the people for God; is it less so when we speak to God for the people?”⁷² According to Broadus, general preparation for public prayer requires (1) “fervent piety”, (2) “familiarity with the Scripture”, and (3) “study of instructive specimens of prayer.”⁷³

English Literature

One historical curiosity is the addition of a course in English literature, consisting of multiple lectures to the homiletics class during the 1878-1879 academic

⁶⁸ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 487-88.

⁶⁹ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 485.

⁷⁰ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 492.

⁷¹ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 476.

⁷² Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 492-93.

⁷³ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 493.

year. The course catalog for that year identifies Crawford H. Toy as the man tasked with delivering the lectures.⁷⁴ Toy was a dear friend to Broadus but would later be remembered for the controversy surrounding his views on Darwinism and higher criticism. The course on English literature was offered at the height of this controversy. Broadus's invitation to teach part of his homiletics class shows Broadus's high regard for Toy despite their differing views on the inspiration and authority of Scripture.⁷⁵ Ultimately, Toy would resign in May of 1879, and Broadus would write him a letter of recommendation for a professorship at Harvard.⁷⁶ Toy would end his days not as a Baptist but as a Unitarian.

Assignments and Teaching Methods

Broadus used a variety of assignments and teaching methods during his time in the School of Homiletics. A former student, J. F. Farmer, who took at least two classes from Broadus, offered this glowing assessment of Broadus and his instructional methods:

And what a superb teacher he became! Nowhere else did Doctor Broadus seem to me quite so mighty and masterful as in the classroom. . . . He had a marvelous skill in seizing the heart of some great subject on which he had read volume after volume, and giving it to his class in a few pithy sentences of crystalline clearness, Many of us are only gradually finding out the real value of those lectures—the wealth of learning and wisdom they represented. In that class he usually spent half the time in questioning [recitation], and half in lecturing. No time was wasted on foolish questions. It was his custom to dictate the substance of the lecture, and while the students were writing, to keep up a running comment on that. Here the great man was in his element. . . . Everything was orderly. Great thoughts were flung out with in the riches profusion. . . . Sparkling wit, delicious humor, apt anecdote, not infrequently relieved the intensity of the work. . . . It was the spectacle of a great personality ablaze—the finest thing in all the world.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Twentieth Session 1878-1879* (Louisville: Chas T. Dearing, 1879), 16.

⁷⁵ It is difficult to see this arrangement happening by anything other than Broadus's invitation to Toy.

⁷⁶ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 204.

⁷⁷ Farmer's fuller remarks referenced Broadus's English New Testament course, but they are included here because they also shed light on Broadus's teaching style more generally. See Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 339.

Beloved by many students, Broadus's standards were exacting and could tax even the best and brightest. Broadus would not tolerate "slipshod work either in the classroom exercises or examinations."⁷⁸ Even *Treatise*, thought by many to be a masterpiece, was described by some students as onerous. Herschel H. Hobbs, a well-known Southern Baptist of a later era, studied at SBTS some forty years after Broadus. Hobbs claimed to have owned a copy of *Treatise* that had passed through the hands of numerous students. A humorous inscription on the fly page read, "If ever again the earth by water is destroyed, to this book I will fly. For even if the whole world were totally submerged this book would still be dry."⁷⁹ Hobbs's assessment of *Treatise* was decidedly negative as well: "There was no way to make this book palatable. You simply had to *bone* it and get it."⁸⁰

Broadus required weekly written exercises in homiletics; these were "partly essays, chiefly sketches of sermons, with a few sermons written out in full."⁸¹ He labored over these assignments, ensuring each student received comments designed to make him a better preacher. Occasionally, students would trade papers for peer feedback. These "written exercises" were one of three means to measure a student's progress as a preacher. Broadus held a decidedly negative view of students preaching in the classroom. Though not expressly stated in the early course descriptions, by 1874, the description clearly reflects Broadus's view and provides the alternatives to in-class preaching:

Brief speeches are made on either side of the assigned subject and are made in the presence of several Professors, giving occasion for suggestions as to the individual faults of delivery, and practice in the management of "five-minute speeches"; and longer addresses are occasionally substituted. The students have frequent opportunities for preaching in town and vicinity, and sermons heard by the

⁷⁸ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 338-39.

⁷⁹ Herschel H. Hobbs, *My Faith and Message: An Autobiography* (Nashville: B & H, 1993), 75.

⁸⁰ Hobbs, *My Faith and Message: An Autobiography*, 75.

⁸¹ *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860*, 49.

Professors are often privately criticized, but there is no preaching merely for practice.⁸²

The main means, then, for students to hone their preaching skills during the Broadus era were written sermons, classroom speeches (not sermons), and receiving feedback on preaching outside of the classroom.

Recitation, another form of instruction utilized during Broadus's tenure, was a common practice at SBTS.⁸³ SBTS was somewhat notorious for recitation in the early days. Professors like Boyce and, later, Broadus's son-in-law A. T. Robertson, were prime examples of men who gained a reputation for using this technique, which required students to describe, sometimes verbatim, sections of their reading in front of the entire class. However, there is reason to believe Broadus may have been slightly more measured in his use of the technique. Reflecting on Boyce's use of recitation, Broadus shows a keen awareness of the promise and perils of the practice:

It required that the students should analyze every paragraph of the lesson in the text-book, and be ready when called upon, without question from the teacher, to take up one paragraph after another, and state clearly, in their own words, its line of thought or argument. Numerous students have complained of this rigorous requirement. . . . The danger of this method is that it may degenerate into little more than memorizing of the text book or lecture. The teacher has to resist this tendency.⁸⁴

Though students might be made to recite from any or all their required reading, the course catalog specifically mentions that homiletic students performed recitations from the notable sermons they were required to read and, as part of this recitation, offered a critique of them.⁸⁵

Elocution Exercises

From the beginning, elocution, or the art of correct speech, was important to

⁸² *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Fifteenth Session 1873-1874* (Norfolk, VA: J. C. Deming, 1874), 15.

⁸³ *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860*, 48.

⁸⁴ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 267.

⁸⁵ *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860*, 48.

Broadus. However, the emphasis and time devoted to elocution appears to have grown over his tenure. Elocution first appeared as a distinct part of the homiletics coursework during the 1880-1881 school year, with lessons taught by an adjunct instructor, Robert Kidd, the first of many elocution instructors to serve in the School of Homiletics. Prior to the 1894-1895 school year, this part of the coursework was simply described: “Much time . . . [is] devoted by the class, as a whole, in sections, and as individuals to practices in speaking.”⁸⁶ However, during Broadus’s last year in the School of Homiletics, which was co-taught with Edwin Dargan, the description of elocution expands dramatically:

In Elocution the aim is, by instruction in theory and by individual drill and practice in speaking and reading, to secure for each student his own most natural and suitable delivery. Not imitation nor any wooden method of rules, but the teaching of principles and the acquisition of ease and correctness of speaking are the objects sought. To this end the theory of elocution and vocal training is taught, physical exercises are given, and drill of the class as a whole and in section is carefully conducted. Brief speeches before the class are required so that each student will be heard and helped by suggestions suitable to his needs.⁸⁷

This is also the first catalog that explicitly states how much class time was devoted to elocution: “Five Lectures a Week—Three for Homiletics, Two for Elocution.”⁸⁸ Clearly, elocution was of tremendous importance to the early homiletics classes at SBTS.

Exams

Although no copies exist of the final examinations given in the School of Homiletics during the Broadus era, Broadus provided general descriptions of the final examinations given at SBTS during his tenure. Finals lasted up to nine to ten hours.⁸⁹ Broadus described them as “a severe test of a man’s acquaintance with the whole course

⁸⁶ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Twenty-Seventh Session 1885-1886* (Louisville: Chas T. Dearing, 1886), 19.

⁸⁷ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Thirty-Fifth Session 1893-1894* (Louisville: Baptist Book Concern, 1894), 38.

⁸⁸ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Thirty-Fifth Session 1893-1894*, 37.

⁸⁹ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 161.

of study . . . and his power of satisfactorily stating what he knows. . . . Every question is separately valued, on a scale of one hundred for the whole; and his paper must be worth at least seventy-five per cent on the whole in order to pass.”⁹⁰ Many students crumbled under the heavy burden of these day-long examinations, which required intense concentration and hand and wrist strength to write for hours on end.

Required Reading

Under Broadus, the list of required reading in homiletics continued to evolve.⁹¹ At least a portion of the required reading in those early years was available through library checkout and not the responsibility of students to purchase. In 1859, the seminary’s inaugural year, homiletics students were required to read Ripley’s *Sacred Rhetoric*, Vinet’s *Homiletics*, and various printed sermons by such renowned preachers as “Flavel, Doddridge, Johnathan Edwards, Davies, Andrew Fuller, J. M. Mason, Chalmers, Jay, Wayland, W. R. Williams . . . Robert Hall and R. Fuller.”⁹² Thus Broadus’s students were exposed to a broad range of English-speaking preachers, including Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, contemporary preachers, Puritan preachers, American, and British preachers, while non-English speaking preachers were generally relegated to the section of the course dealing with the history of preaching.⁹³ The required reading, not including the sermons of famous preachers, totaled approximately eight hundred pages. The only other change to the reading list before the Civil War was the addition of a secular work, *Elements of Rhetoric*, by Richard Whately, in 1860.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Broadus, *Memoir of James Petigru Boyce*, 161.

⁹¹ For a complete list of required reading throughout the tenures of Broadus, Dargan, and Gardner, see appendix 2.

⁹² *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860*, 48.

⁹³ In *Lectures on the History of Preaching*, Broadus shows a particular interest in and knowledge of French preaching.

⁹⁴ *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860*, 17.

Soon after the end of the Civil War, during the 1869-1870 academic year and under the temporary leadership of Basil Manly, the only text for the homiletics class is listed as *Treatise*. This is intriguing because *Treatise* was first published in late 1870, which should have made it first available for practical use in the 1870-1871 academic year. There is no obvious answer as to why *Treatise* was listed as the homiletics text a year earlier in the seminary catalog. It is possible Broadus produced and passed material to Manly for use prior to official publication, or *Treatise* may have been incorrectly listed in the catalog. However, one thing is certain: students did not have a complete copy of *Treatise* during the 1869-1870 academic year.

Treatise would remain the only required text for three more years until the 1872-1873 academic year, when “Beecher’s volume” was added to the reading list.⁹⁵ It appears that *Treatise* was considered so comprehensive that it rendered the previously required texts superfluous. Of course, consolidation and gap filling were among Broadus’s goals when he set out to write *Treatise*:

As a teacher of Homiletics . . . the author [Broadus] felt the need of a more complete text-book, since a course made up from parts of several different works would still omit certain important subjects, and furnish but a meagre treatment of others. . . . The desire thus arose to prepare, whenever possible, a work which should be fill in its range of topics, and should also attempt to combine the thorough discussion of principles with an abundance of practical rules and suggestions.⁹⁶

During the 1873-1874 academic year, the required reading expanded again, this time to five works along with the aforementioned “various printed sermons.” These included two works by Broadus, *Treatise* and *Lectures on the History of Preaching*, and three additional works, “Beecher’s *Yale Lectures on Preaching*; Fish’s *Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence*, and *Pulpit Eloquence of the 19th Century*.”⁹⁷ Combined, the five books

⁹⁵ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Fifteenth Session 1873-1874*, 1.

⁹⁶ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, iii.

⁹⁷ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Fifteenth Session 1873-1874*, 16.

required that year totaled nearly 2,500 pages of reading.⁹⁸ The required reading stayed the same until the 1875-1876 academic year, when the list slimmed again to two works: *Treatise* and *Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence*. Then, in 1877-1878, the list returned to the five titles required by the 1873-1874 catalog with one exception: students were given an option to read "some volume of the Yale Lectures on the History of Preaching" or "Spurgeon's Lectures to his Students."⁹⁹

After 1873, the reading list remained relatively stable, with some tried-and-true books being removed one year and returning the next. Broadus's final academic year, 1894-1895, a year of ill health in which he co-taught with Dargan, included the next major changes to the required reading list. This is best explained by the influence of Dargan and will be treated in the next chapter.

Conclusion

John Broadus enjoyed a long and storied career in the School of Homiletics. He persevered through war, sickness, financial difficulty, the relocation of the seminary, and the loss of all his founding colleagues. What he taught in the classroom he modeled in the pulpit, and what he wrote on preaching has endured for generations. As he handed over the reins to the School of Homiletics to Edwin Dargan, Broadus hoped the sacrifices he and others made would pave the way for future faculty members to continue the work faithfully, but under better circumstances.

⁹⁸ This number reflects the approximate number of pages Broadus required students to read if each was read in full, something left unstated in the 1873 catalog. In some years, portions of textbooks were mentioned. The 1860 catalog, for instance, states that only portions of Whatley's *Rhetoric* and Vinet's *Homiletics* were read. Regardless, there was a dramatic increase in pages read over time.

⁹⁹ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Nineteenth Session 1877-1878* (Louisville: Bradley & Gilbert, 1878), 13. Broadus was a great admirer of Spurgeon and even heard him preach during a holiday to England in 1870.

CHAPTER 3

EDWIN DARGAN AND THE SCHOOL OF HOMILETICS

Edwin Charles Dargan was the second man to lead the School of Homiletics at SBTS. The Dargan era spanned from 1892, the year of Dargan's appointment, to 1906, the year of his resignation. Though Dargan was in many ways a loyal disciple of Broadus and a defender of Baptist orthodoxy, a few things set him apart from his predecessor. This chapter will explore the Dargan era, including his early life and shaping influences, his time as a student at SBTS, his relationship to Broadus, the revision of *Treatise*, components of his homiletics course, and his departure from SBTS.

Early Life and Shaping Influences

Edwin Charles Dargan was born on November 17, 1852, in Darlington County, South Carolina.¹ He was the son of John Orr Beasley Dargan, a Baptist preacher. The family lived on a two-hundred-acre estate with the family home, Harmony Hall, at its center.² The family also owned an eight-hundred-acre plantation called Bird's Nest approximately fifteen miles away, along with an estimated fifty slaves.³ The family's home in Darlington County was almost sacred to Dargan. Later in life, he wrote a book titled *Harmony Hall: Recollections of a Southern Home 1852-1892*, a work that is one part family history and one part lament for those years and a lost way of life.

¹ John Miller Finley, "Edwin Charles Dargan: Baptist Denominationalist in a Changing South" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984), 6.

² Price E. Burroughs, "Edwin Dargan," box 14, item 14.5, Edwin Charles Dargan Papers, The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive, Nashville. Hereafter, this collection will be referred to as the Dargan Papers.

³ Burroughs, "Edwin Dargan," 2.

Dargan was nine years old at the outbreak of the Civil War, old enough to have vivid memories of those days but young enough to have escaped service in the Confederate Army.⁴ Nevertheless, the war left scars on the young man and his family. One sympathetic biographer described, “He saw his brothers who had gone away [to fight] in such happy assurance return, broken and emaciated. He felt rather than saw the grief and bitterness which accompanied defeat. He witnessed the terrors and losses of the Reconstruction days, days which were more humiliating and terrible than the days of the war.”⁵

During the war, Dargan’s home was looted by Union soldiers, the family’s slaves were freed, and, like many Southerners after the war, the Dargan family found itself in a considerably less favorable financial situation.⁶ Dargan’s sentiments about the war and the Reconstruction era that followed mirrored that of many white Southerners in his day:

Every possible indecency was heaped upon the white people when unscrupulous adventurers from abroad, “carpetbaggers,” and renegades from at home, “scalawags,” led and influenced the horde of negro voters. . . . Taxation amounted to extortion. The poverty of the land owners increased as taxation increased. . . . Over Harmony Hall as over all other South Carolina homes, the sickening shadow of this era rested.⁷

This time proved challenging for the family, especially as they sought to educate their children. Dargan’s education was enabled by his family’s determined sacrifice, family connections, and an endowment at Furman College that allowed men who intended to go into the ministry to pay little to no tuition.⁸

⁴ Burroughs, “Edwin Dargan,” 5.

⁵ Burroughs, “Edwin Dargan,” 5.

⁶ An account of the sacking of Harmony Hall and Edwin’s encounter with the “Blue Coats” can be found in Edwin Charles Dargan, *Harmony Hall: Recollections of an Old Southern Home, 1852-1882* (Columbia, SC: The State Company, 1912), 37-38.

⁷ Dargan, *Harmony Hall*, 49-50.

⁸ Burroughs, “Edwin Dargan,” 6.

Dargan began his studies at Furman in 1869. He described his entrance and call to ministry: “My own mind and heart had become impressed with the duty of entering the ministry. . . . So in September, 1869, a little lad scarce seventeen, small of stature and apparently only twelve or fourteen, I left Harmony Hall to begin my student career in Greenville S.C.”⁹ While at Furman, in the summer of 1872, Dargan was licensed to preach at Black Creek Church, where his father had been pastor for many years. He would graduate from Furman in 1873 and from there move across town to SBTS.¹⁰

SBTS Student and Pastor

The Dargan family had a vested interest in the seminary before Edwin enrolled. The year prior to Edwin’s arrival, his brother John graduated with honors from SBTS.¹¹ More importantly, their father, John Orr Dargan, was a friend of John Broadus and had been among the early advocates of Southern Baptists opening a seminary.¹² In 1873, the elder Dargan wrote to Broadus concerning Edwin’s future as a student at the seminary. The letter reflects the financial state of the Dargan family after the Civil War, a father’s love for his son, and his respect for Broadus:

My son Edwin C. will go as you know to the Sem. He did not see you as he wished before he left for Greenville at the close of his University course. He will be dependent on you as I intimated when we conversed about the subject, for his boarding expenses and probably in part for other expenditures. I think the association will aid him in part and the church will contribute a small amount. He will receive nothing from this quarter until Nov. I will manage to defray his expenses to Greenville but can do no more. He will probably need some funds for books, stationery, etc. If you can advance the necessary amt for these I think the Board of Association at the meeting in Nov will adopt measures for any future expenses except board. He has preached a few times with great acceptance to the brethren who have heard him. Have not myself heard him. I commit him to the Sem

⁹ Dargan, *Harmony Hall*, 48.

¹⁰ John Albert Broadus, “Professor Dargan,” *Seminary Magazine* 4, no. 1 (October 1892): 1.

¹¹ Finley, “Edwin Charles Dargan,” 38.

¹² Finley, “Edwin Charles Dargan,” 37.

and the denomination trusting that the master will use him after our preparation for some important work. With increasing age and infirmities and dependent on a small and ill paid salary I can do but little for him in the future.¹³

Clearly, John Orr Dargan believed he could trust Broadus with yet another precious member of his family. Along with William Whitsitt, Crawford H. Toy, and William Williams, Broadus would become one of Edwin Dargan's chief instructors during his time as a student.¹⁴

By all accounts, "Ed," as he was called by his classmates, thrived during his time at SBTS from 1873 to 1877.¹⁵ Later in life, after his appointment to the faculty, Dargan wrote fondly of his time as a student:

About twenty years ago, that is in September, 1873, I entered the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as a student . . . it was a new world into which I came that day. Across the years I give it glad greeting, and the thrill of pleasure in calling it up is like that of meeting a cherished friend after a long separation. Four sessions of fairly hard work followed. I enjoyed my work then, I love to think of it now.¹⁶

This "fairly hard work" was made even more difficult by Dargan's driven personality and several extra endeavors he pursued while a student, including tutoring fellow seminary students and a stint filling in as a professor at Greenville's Female College.¹⁷

During his years as a student, Dargan also gained pulpit experience outside the classroom, as it was still Broadus's policy and that of the Homiletics department to forbid in-class preaching. During the summer break of 1875, Dargan filled in at First Baptist Church of Wilmington, North Carolina, an invitation that was extended thanks to Broadus

¹³ John Orr Beasley Dargan to John Albert Broadus, August 26, 1873, John Albert Broadus Papers, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Archive, Louisville. Hereafter, this collection will be noted as the Broadus Papers.

¹⁴ Burroughs, "Edwin Dargan," 7.

¹⁵ A. J. Holt, "Dr. E. C. Dargan: Tribute of a Schoolmate," *Western Recorder*, November 13, 1930, 10-11.

¹⁶ See "Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: History, Clippings," box 14, item 14.21, Dargan Papers.

¹⁷ Broadus, "Professor Dargan," 2.

and J. C. Hiden.¹⁸ Then, in 1876, a year before graduation, Dargan was ordained to the ministry at First Baptist Church of Greenville.¹⁹

Dargan would become one of the last students to graduate from SBTS before its move to Louisville, Kentucky. Because of his outstanding academic work, he was charged with giving the valedictorian address in 1877. Classmate A. J. Holt remarked that Dargan “was easily the foremost student among us then.”²⁰ Holt recalled the address given by Dargan:

As he stood there in that old historic First Baptist Church of Greeneville, before a packed auditorium with Broadus, Boyce, Manly, Williams, Toy and Whitsitt on the platform, he seemed the merest youth. His voice seemed almost childlike. But his utterances were earnestly delivered and were clothed in the choicest language, setting forth a profundity of thought and breadth of scholarship which were astounding in one so apparently youthful.²¹

Holt describes Dargan’s stature in those days as noticeably small, something Dargan himself admitted, yet the young man’s diminutive stature does not appear to have hindered his power of delivery.²²

Upon graduation, Dargan considered traveling to Germany for further education, as suggested by his mentor Broadus. Dargan, along with Broadus, thought the experience might be profitable if Dargan decided to pursue teaching as a career. However, his mother and father highly discouraged further studies in Germany. His mother wrote to him, “While if you expect to teach, it might be an advantage to you. I confess I have felt very averse to your going to Germany, but as I promised Dr. Broadus, I shall not oppose it if the way should open to you.”²³ His parents’ main objection had

¹⁸ Dargan, *Harmony Hall*, 52.

¹⁹ Broadus, “Professor Dargan,” 1.

²⁰ Holt, “Dr. E. C. Dargan: Tribute of a Schoolmate.”

²¹ Holt, “Dr. E. C. Dargan: Tribute of a Schoolmate.”

²² Dargan, *Harmony Hall*, 48.

²³ Dargan, *Harmony Hall*, 52.

nothing to do with distance or physical danger, but reflected concern over what he would be taught in the German institutions. Dargan's mother warned,

In some cases, there is danger of imbibing heterodox views at these German Universities and error is so insidious that one may unwittingly fall into its snare. This has always been my greatest objection. A young man should be armed with the panoply of truth to contend against the odds brought to bear upon his principles. I believe some have been ruined while others have derived benefit—doubtless all who go there have much to contend with.²⁴

Ultimately, Dargan would forgo studying abroad and begin pastoring instead. Though SBTS marked the end of Dargan's formal education, resulting in a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts from Furman and Full Graduate status from SBTS, later in life, Dargan would be awarded several honorary doctoral degrees. He received a Doctor of Divinity from Washington and Lee University, a Doctor of Law from Baylor, and a Doctor of Literature from his alma mater Furman.²⁵

Relationship with Broadus

As noted, Dargan's family had a preexisting relationship with Broadus when young Edwin entered SBTS as a student, but Edwin's relationship with Broadus would eclipse both that of his parents and his brother. As a student, Dargan's work ethic and natural gifts caught Broadus's attention and resulted in a special bond. Broadus's relationship to Dargan has been described as a "hybridized role of counselor, adviser, father figure and friend."²⁶ It might also be described as a master/disciple relationship in the best sense of those terms. Writing to Broadus in 1892, Dargan expressed his willingness "to [be] put . . . wholly in your hands, and just do what you say."²⁷ When he wrote his magnum opus, *A History of Preaching*, he dedicated it "to the cherished and

²⁴ Dargan, *Harmony Hall*, 52.

²⁵ Burroughs, "Edwin Dargan," 14-15.

²⁶ Finley, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 57-58.

²⁷ E. C. Dargan to John A. Broadus, June 15, 1892, Broadus Papers.

revered memory of John Albert Broadus: A pupil's grateful offering."²⁸

After Dargan's graduation from SBTS, the two men kept in close touch. According to John Finley's count, "The collected correspondence of Broadus includes no less than twenty-three letters from E. C. Dargan and the Dargan correspondence suggest that Broadus frequently wrote to Dargan on various matters, especially during the nearly two decades between Dargan's graduation and Broadus' death in 1895."²⁹ Even after Broadus's death, Dargan continued to write to members of the Broadus family. Charlotte Broadus thought highly of her late husband's young friend. Her affection for Dargan and praise for his help to the family are clearly seen in their letters.³⁰

Broadus is also credited with gaining Dargan his second pastorate at First Baptist Church in Petersburg, Virginia. In an account recorded by Prince E. Burroughs, Broadus is said to have walked into the office of his pastor, T. T. Eaton of Walnut Street Baptist Church, and laid out a letter from Dargan before him.³¹ The letter mentioned in Burroughs's account may be the March 1881 letter in which Dargan asks Broadus's help in obtaining a new pastorate due to financial and family needs.³² Broadus asked if Eaton might help in finding Dargan a pastorate.³³ Eaton, himself the former pastor of Petersburg and in an excellent position to recommend a successor, responded, "Could your young friend meet the demands at Petersburg?" Broadus replied, "This young man could fill any

²⁸ Edwin Charles Dargan, *A History of Preaching: From the Apostolic Fathers to the Great Reformers, A.D. 70-1572* (New York: A. C. Armstrong, 1905), n.p.

²⁹ Finley, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 39.

³⁰ See letters from Charlotte E. Broadus to Edwin C. Dargan in the Dargan Papers.

³¹ Burroughs, "Edwin Dargan," 9.

³² E. C. Dargan to John A. Broadus, March 14, 1881, Broadus Papers.

³³ Burroughs, "Edwin Dargan," 9.

pulpit in the land.”³⁴ Through the collaborative efforts of Broadus and Eaton, Dargan, at age twenty-eight, would be called to Petersburg.

The Dargan Era at SBTS

Between 1877 and 1892, Dargan pastored several churches in different states, including Virginia, California, and South Carolina, until his appointment as a professor at SBTS.³⁵ It has been theorized by others that Broadus may have brought up the idea of Dargan joining the faculty at SBTS as early as 1879, in the midst of the Toy controversy, which ultimately ended in the controversial professor’s resignation.³⁶ In a letter from Dargan to Broadus dated March 4, 1879, it is possible to detect hints of Broadus grooming Dargan in the event of a faculty opening:

Now as to the other matter mentioned in your letter. I value your confidence and will keep it sacred. I feel much touched and gratified at the intimation of your letter. But I need not dwell on these things. What I have said above shows you that I would—to put it mildly—be grieved at a temptation to leave the ministry for teaching. I don’t think I could do it. And it would be perhaps a far more difficult thing to leave such a position as you allude to, than the one of which I have been writing.

I will answer your two questions frankly. (1) I have been doing a little in the way of keeping up my acquaintance with the languages mentioned. I read in the Heb. & Grk. every morning that I spend in my study. . . . I also try to write a sketch of a sermon each day on the passage studied. . . . In German I don’t do much. . . . (2) I am not conscious that my belief in inspiration has become in any respect relaxed. . . . I believe reverentially and with all my heart that God speaks through the Scripture writers; but I can’t say that I have any theory of inspiration.³⁷

Regardless of Broadus’s intentions in 1879, it would be thirteen more years before Dargan would join the SBTS faculty.

³⁴ Burroughs, “Edwin Dargan,” 9.

³⁵ Broadus, “Professor Dargan,” 2.

³⁶ Finley, “Edwin Charles Dargan,” 59.

³⁷ E. C. Dargan to John A. Broadus, March 4, 1879, Broadus Papers, cited in Finley, “Edwin Charles Dargan,” 59.

Appointment to the Faculty

In May 1892, the Board of Trustees elected Dargan as an associate professor of homiletics and pastoral theology.³⁸ This was in part to aide Broadus, then the president of the seminary and in poor health, by lightening his teaching load.³⁹ Broadus was delighted by the appointment of men like Dargan to the faculty. A. T. Robertson commented, “It was a comfort to Doctor Broadus to see a band of younger men gathered around him, trained by him and guaranteeing the perpetuation of the cherished seminary.”⁴⁰ Unfortunately, when *The Seminary Magazine* profiled the new homiletics professor, they misspelled his name, calling him *Edward* instead of Edwin.⁴¹

When Dargan arrived in Louisville, he found a bustling metropolis and an enlarged seminary, very different from his experiences in Greenville. Louisville was home to over 160,000 people, “making it the twentieth most populous urban community in America.”⁴² The seminary’s facilities had recently undergone major upgrades. New York Hall (1888) and the Memorial Library (1890) were completed just prior to Dargan’s arrival. The equally impressive original Norton Hall (1893) would soon follow. Dargan approved of the seminary’s new location and look. Gone were the days of the small, converted Baptist meeting house that held the students in South Carolina. Writing for *The Baptist Courier* a year after his appointment to the faculty, Dargan described the physical changes to his alma mater:

³⁸ Dargan’s actual title that year appears to have varied; there are discrepancies among the sources. All agree he served as a professor of homiletics but list his other duties variously. Robertson says he was elected as a professor of “Homiletics and Pastoral Theology.” Broadus, in *The Seminary Magazine*, says that he was appointed “associate professor of Homiletics, Church Government, and Latin Theology.” Still, the seminary course catalog for 1892-1893 lists him as a “professor of Homiletics and Latin Theology” only. See Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1901), 402.

³⁹ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 402.

⁴⁰ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 420.

⁴¹ This is an unusual slip by a man who knew Dargan so well. Perhaps it was owing to the editor of the magazine, not Dargan’s mentor. Broadus, “Professor Dargan,” 1.

⁴² Finley, “Edwin Charles Dargan,” 99.

In regard to buildings and appointments the difference is great and gratifying. New York Hall on Fifth street, near Broadway, is a majestic building. It is the dormitory and will hereafter be used only for that purpose, as the library and lecture rooms have now their own buildings. The rooms hitherto used as lecture rooms can be cut up into dormitories as they may be needed, and so the capacity of the building can be greatly enlarged. The beautiful and admirably fitted Library building on the corner of Broadway and Fifth about half a square from New York Hall is a joy to those who use it.⁴³

Dargan was equally taken with his new colleagues: “What a delightful atmosphere I have found in this beloved company! How cordially they have encouraged and helped me in my new work!”⁴⁴ Students also appeared happy with their new professor of homiletics. One student profiled in *The Seminary Magazine* wrote, “The Homiletics class is more thoroughly organized this year for effective work than ever before. Everybody knows who and what Dr. Broadus is, while as to our one-year-old professor, Dr. Dargan, well, he’s a hustler (excuse the word) and no mistake.”⁴⁵ Broadus described the students’ perception of Dargan to his wife Charlotte: “The students tell that he is a much more severe critic than I am, which is a healthy situation.”⁴⁶ Thus, early on, Dargan became known for his organization and high standards in the School of Homiletics.

Though the trappings of the seminary had undeniably changed, Dargan wrote that its academic standards and modes of instruction were still fundamentally the same: “The course of study is much the same as twenty years ago. There has been change in teachers and text-books, but none in the general character of the departments, and not much in the methods of instruction. Lectures and examinations are still the reigning features of method. There has been no relaxing in standards and requirements.”⁴⁷

⁴³ Edwin Charles Dargan, “Then and Now: The Seminary in Greenville and in Louisville,” *The Baptist Courier*, 1893.

⁴⁴ Dargan, “Then and Now: The Seminary in Greenville and in Louisville.”

⁴⁵ Junius W. Millard, “Local Department,” *The Seminary Magazine* 6 (October 1893): 64.

⁴⁶ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 404.

⁴⁷ Dargan, “Then and Now: The Seminary in Greenville and in Louisville.”

However, the new homiletics professor did note a few differences. For one, SBTS had continued to steadily grow since his time as a student. Dargan lamented that the increase in students created upwards of “three or four times as much work as formerly looking over papers.”⁴⁸ Recitation also could no longer proceed in the manner of his predecessor Broadus. “It is apparent that a student cannot be called on as often as is desirable.”⁴⁹ Growing pains aside, Dargan believed the best of SBTS endured into his own era.

In the classroom, Dargan taught his homiletics lectures from notebooks filled with scraps of paper with scribbled notes and articles that had been clipped for referencing in class.⁵⁰ Despite the larger class sizes, Dargan managed to give copious feedback on student papers. One student lamented, “If I’d known Dr. Dargan wanted this thing written in red ink, I’d have fixed her that way first.”⁵¹ Another student referred to his returned assignments as “bleeding at every pore.”⁵² Despite Dargan’s reputation for critical feedback, it does not appear to have lessened the student body’s esteem for him as a professor or a preacher.

For two years after Dargan’s arrival, the Broadus and Dargan eras overlapped, and the former student was again tutored by his old homiletics professor, no longer in how to preach but in how to teach a class of budding preachers. From the beginning, however, there was an uneven division of labor. Broadus wrote in December of 1892, “Dargan is doing much more than half the work in homiletics, but I lecture sometimes and must correct a share of the sermons.”⁵³ Dargan described his time co-teaching with

⁴⁸ Dargan, “Then and Now: The Seminary in Greenville and in Louisville.”

⁴⁹ Dargan, “Then and Now: The Seminary in Greenville and in Louisville.”

⁵⁰ Several of Dargan’s lecture notebooks, including his Homiletics course notebook, are available at the Southern Baptist Historical Archive and Library in Nashville.

⁵¹ O. P. Harris, “Local Department,” *The Seminary Magazine* 8 (November 1895): 105.

⁵² Allyn K. Foster, “Locals,” *The Seminary Magazine* 6 (February 1893): 313.

⁵³ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 404.

Broadus, saying, “We divided the work of teaching under his direction, and as the state of his health permitted. It fell to my lot to do more and more of the work as his health declined.”⁵⁴ In the last year of his life, 1895, Broadus tried to continue teaching. For his part, Dargan relieved Broadus of all the homiletics responsibilities that he would allow, but “Broadus fought the idea of letting go at any point.”⁵⁵ Dargan would take full control of the School of Homiletics upon Broadus’s death in 1895.

Views on Preaching/Inaugural Address

Dargan held the firm conviction that preaching was the central calling of pastoral ministry and the leading cause of success or failure in the same: “The first essential to success in the ministry is to be a good preacher. If you do not know how to preach it is your business to learn, and if you can’t learn how to preach your business is to not preach.”⁵⁶ Dargan was not afraid to tell would-be pastors/preachers to give up their pursuit of pastoral ministry; in fact, he did so frequently and for a variety of reasons, ranging from an unwillingness to study to aberrant doctrinal views.

Upon his installation as associate professor of homiletics in 1892, Dargan was asked to give an address to the students and faculty of SBTS. Titled “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” the address is filled with insight into Dargan’s views on preaching. Dargan’s speech had four main points: (1) “the Baptist preacher for these times ought to have a sound, clear, and firm theological position;” (2) “his culture, both general and special, should secure the respect of those to whom he ministers;” (3) “his fitness for office should be unquestioned by those who are entitled to judge;” and (4)

⁵⁴ Edwin Charles Dargan, preface to *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, by John Albert Broadus, ed. Edwin Charles Dargan, 2nd ed. (New York: A. C. Armstrong, 1903), vi.

⁵⁵ Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, 416.

⁵⁶ Edwin Charles Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times” (Founders’ Day address at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, October 1, 1892), 12-13.

“above all things, his personal character must be essentially and notably high.”⁵⁷

Throughout the address, Dargan frequently used the term *preacher* synonymously with *pastor*, hinting again that he viewed preaching as the chief job of pastors.

Under his first point, “The Baptist preacher for these times ought to have a sound, clear and firm theological position,” Dargan’s concern is the orthodox doctrine and integrity of the preacher:

It is evidently of the highest importance that a preacher should have something to preach. His opinions and convictions regarding the authority and contents of the Christian system of doctrines ought to be real opinions and convictions, and they ought to be his own. “I believed, therefore, I have spoken,” can never cease to be the suitable watchword for a preacher. To preach without believing is false, to believe without preaching is cowardly, to believe one thing and preach another is both cowardly and false.⁵⁸

Dargan pleaded for integrity on the part of those who would stand in the pulpit. Dargan was also unapologetic in his demand that Baptist preachers hold to Baptist distinctives and orthodox doctrine: “If he is to be a Baptist preacher let him be just that, and if he cannot honestly be all the name involves, let him honestly be something else.”⁵⁹ Also, “I beg you brothers, be orthodox. A man said once that he would rather be honest than orthodox. Do you rather be honest *and* orthodox, and if you can’t be both together then be honest, and don’t undertake to be a Baptist preacher.”⁶⁰

Though Dargan passionately called on the students of SBTS to be orthodox in their beliefs, he did not—in this address at least—define orthodoxy. However, Dargan was very clear that he believed orthodoxy’s root was the Scriptures, which are inerrant and sufficient for life and faith:

The fundamental thing . . . is to have a sound view of the nature and character of the source of theology, which is the Word of God. I wish to declare with all emphasis

⁵⁷ Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 2.

⁵⁸ Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 2.

⁵⁹ Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 4.

⁶⁰ Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 5.

my conviction that no man should be admitted to the ministry under the sanction of the Baptist denomination, who holds loose views as to the origin and authority of the Bible. That it is the Word of God, though passed through the hands of men, that in its original form and properly understood it contains no errors, that it is the ultimate and sufficient authority in matters of human faith and duty in things pertaining to God.⁶¹

It was a strong and unambiguous stance made by the new homiletics professor in his first address in chapel, a firm stance made all the more necessary by the growth of higher criticism and the Toy controversy that threatened the school a decade earlier.

In his second point, Dargan argued for preachers to cultivate a personal culture of learning that would aid their preaching. A cultured preacher was knowledgeable about most things and an expert in at least one.⁶² Dargan advocated for preachers to read broadly from literature, fiction, and poetry. He called for Baptist preachers to have a basic understanding of world history and science. A Baptist preacher should spend time learning, according to Dargan, “so his discourse of things divine will, in the hidden sources of its culture power, make strong appeal to quick human sympathies and benefit those who hear.”⁶³ In other words, through wide study, preachers acquire a deep reservoir from which they can draw to the profit of their people and the glory of God.

The last half of his address concerned the preacher’s good reputation and character, both of which, Dargan argued, are essential: “Above all things, by divine command, and human expectation the preacher must be a good man.”⁶⁴ Here, Dargan called on the young seminarians to give even more attention to their lives than their studies, recalling the numerous character requirements for elders found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

⁶¹ Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 4.

⁶² Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 6.

⁶³ Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 9.

⁶⁴ Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 17.

Dargan's Preaching

Like Broadus, Dargan was a powerful preacher; undoubtedly, this was one of the reasons many saw him as a natural successor to Broadus in kind and not just in title. While serving on the seminary's faculty, Dargan frequently filled pulpits in many predominant Baptist churches in the surrounding area, including "Broadway, McFerran Memorial, Walnut Street, Highland, Twenty-second and Walnut, East, Parkland, Portland, Warren Memorial, and Clifton."⁶⁵ One student described Dargan's aptness in both the classroom and pulpit in *The Seminary Magazine*: "He can both teach you Homiletics and show you how to preach."⁶⁶ Gaines S. Dobbins, who would become a SBTS faculty member after Dargan's departure, described Dargan's preaching:

Dr. Dargan was preeminently the preacher. He was a master of biblical exposition. His method was primarily textual. He preached from the great texts of the Bible, always true to the passage in its setting. He was never the dull scholastic. He might for a few minutes start low and slow but soon he would take fire and rise higher. . . . His preaching and writing were Christ-centered, whether from the Old Testament or the New, whether dealing with the ancient Biblical writing or current events. He preached and wrote to his own generation, interpreting the Living Christ to living persons.⁶⁷

Dargan's preaching was popular enough to warrant the publication of eleven of his most well-loved sermons in 1918, in a book titled *The Changeless Christ*, named after the leading sermon in the book. The *Western Recorder* endorsed *The Changeless Christ*, stating it was "thoroughly homiletical, analytical, scriptural, and spiritual. The style is simple, clear, vigorous and virile." The *Watchman-Examiner* stated, "There are few greater preachers in America than Dr. Dargan. Eloquent, passionately in earnest, with an almost classical style, he satisfies both the thoughtful and less thoughtful of his auditors."⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Finley, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 128.

⁶⁶ J. A. Taylor, "Local Items," *The Seminary Magazine* 12 (October 1899): 55.

⁶⁷ Gaines S. Dobbins, "Edwin Charles Dargan," box 14, p. 8, Dargan Papers.

⁶⁸ Clipped advertisement, "Strong Endorsement of *The Changeless Christ*," box 14, folder 6, Dargan Papers.

Dargan and Sociology

The two successors to Broadus in the School of Homiletics, Dargan and Gardner, were keenly interested in two relatively new social sciences. Dargan was interested in the field of sociology, while Gardner was interested in sociology and psychology. Unlike Gardner, who infused his homiletics classes with strong doses of psychological theory, Dargan poured most of his sociology content into his ecclesiology courses. Nevertheless, Dargan's views on sociology and the training of gospel ministers are still worth mentioning because they parallel the trajectory of Gardner in homiletics and because the two men kept regular correspondence concerning teaching and social science issues after Dargan's departure from SBTS.

Dargan believed seminary students instructed in sociology would be better equipped to minister to the various societal challenges of the day. Thus, he thoroughly incorporated sociology into his ecclesiology course, as seen in this excerpt of the 1895-1896 course description: "In discussing the work of the Churches, their missionary, educational, and charitable enterprises are studied, and especial attention is given to Sociology. The relation of the churches to the Kingdom of God and to the great social problems and schemes of our time is carefully considered."⁶⁹ Although, sociology did not permeate the entire syllabus, Dargan's changes to the curriculum represented a first at SBTS. Anthony Roberts claims, "J. B. Weatherspoon preferred to say that Dargan had 'bootlegged' the new studies into the curriculum. In other words, Dargan began teaching Christian sociology without the usual faculty review and approval."⁷⁰ In the future, SBTS would come to be known for its Carver School of Church Social Work. Its first dean, C. Anne Davis, cites Dargan's tenure and introduction of sociology into the curriculum as

⁶⁹ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Thirty-Seventh Session 1895-1896*, 36.

⁷⁰ Anthony Dale Roberts, "The Christian Ethics Department of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: A Critical Evaluation" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1978), 19.

setting in motion events and attitudes that led to the school's creation: "It all began at Southern Seminary when Charles Edwin Dargan was elected Associate Professor of Homiletics and Latin Theology."⁷¹ This may be, but it would be wrong to equate Dargan's views of sociology and its place within the curriculum with those of either the Carver School or the man for whom the school was named, William O. Carver, professor of missions at SBTS from 1898 to 1903. It is impossible to say what Dargan would have thought about an entire school at SBTS devoted to the training and licensure of modern social workers. However, Baptist historian Gregory Wills considers Carver among the most liberal of SBTS faculty in his day and judges Dargan among the most conservative in his.⁷²

Complicating matters, sociology was a blanket term that could mean many things. Susan Henking notes that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "Social gospel, social reform, and social science . . . all went by the name sociology."⁷³ Dargan's definition of sociology seems nearest to social reform. He sought to impress upon his students the need to be faithful to the Great Commission and the Great Commandments. Sociology, Dargan thought, was a help to the latter commandment: "We may say broadly that the church has a work to do in this world for God and man, or under God for man. The worship and the ordinances of the church emphasize activity toward God, while its beneficent enterprises set forth activity toward man; hence, the sphere of the church's work is human society."⁷⁴ These endeavors "for man" Dargan broke into

⁷¹ C. Anne Davis, "A History of Christian Ethics, Church and Community, and Social Work at Southern Seminary," *Review and Expositor* 82, no. 1 (1985): 89.

⁷² Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 185, 255.

⁷³ Susan E. Henking, "Sociological Christianity and Christian Sociology: The Paradox of Early American Sociology," *Religion and American Culture* 3, no. 1 (1993): 49.

⁷⁴ Edwin Charles Dargan, *Ecclesiology: A Study of the Churches* (Louisville: C. T. Dearing, 1905), 535.

three categories: education, charity, and reform.⁷⁵

To his credit, Dargan warned against many excesses in the realm of sociology. Gaines Dobbins, Dargan's close friend and future professor of church efficiency at SBTS, wrote, "He [Dargan] did not uphold the 'social gospel' in the sense that society must be saved apart from saved individuals, but he eloquently pled for a social order of justice and righteousness."⁷⁶ Dargan also decried "overzealous reformers" who, in their desire to motivate the church, refused to acknowledge the good work of the church and its influence on human society in either the past or the present.⁷⁷ True, said Dargan, "No one can claim that the church is entirely fulfilling her mission in these regards. . . . But it is a gross exaggeration to speak as though Christian people and Christian churches were oblivious and inactive in the matter of human improvement."⁷⁸ Somewhat prophetically, Dargan also warned against social reform movements becoming the tail that wags the dog in the church:

It would be a mournful day for any church when it should submit itself to be regulated and controlled by those movements which have only social reform for their purpose and object. But the pastors and members of churches in their work as Christians and citizens may be intimately associated and concerned with any proper reform If the reform is good, and the church has opportunity to help it on, this help should be given in accordance with the church's own methods and ideals. Let it not cease to be a church, or to pursue church methods in its help toward reforms.⁷⁹

Ultimately, it was Dargan's understanding of the Great Commission as the central mission of the church that helped him avoid the extremes of the contemporary reform movements: "The best reform which any church can seek or hope to effect is to bring individual souls into living contact with Jesus Christ."⁸⁰ Dargan's definition of sociology

⁷⁵ Dargan, *Ecclesiology*, 585.

⁷⁶ Dobbins, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 8.

⁷⁷ Dargan, *Ecclesiology*, 535-36.

⁷⁸ Dargan, *Ecclesiology*, 536.

⁷⁹ Dargan, *Ecclesiology*, 612, 614.

⁸⁰ Dobbins, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 8.

had no place for utopianism, in contrast to Carver, who believed “Christianity is the religion of the individual, redeemed for social service, to the end of realizing a perfect social order.”⁸¹ John Dever, a former professor of church and society at SBTS, said, “Dargan’s conservative orientation kept him from entering the mainstream of the social gospel movement.”⁸²

Although Dargan did not affirm the social gospel, he was willing to recommend works by its leading advocates. Writing in 1921 to Charles Gardner, his successor in the School of Homiletics, Dargan asked for Gardner’s recommendations on books dealing with “social subjects” that could be shared in the magazine *Teacher*, a publication he oversaw for the Sunday School Board. Though he notes his audience of Sunday School teachers would not care for titles of a “radical tendency,” he nevertheless lists Walter Rauschenbusch among those he would recommend positively: “I shall mention yours [Gardner’s] and two of [A. T.] Robertson’s. I shall also name that of Rauschenbusch, but I could not commend Shailer Matthew’s.”⁸³ Matthew was a well-known liberal Christian theologian and proponent of the social gospel, but so was Rauschenbusch, and Dargan apparently saw no issues recommending that Southern Baptist Sunday School teachers read Rauschenbusch’s work.

Dargan was instrumental in introducing sociology into the SBTS curriculum. Though he did not embrace the more unorthodox or radical attitudes of some connected with that movement, he nevertheless sought to use it as a tool in his ecclesiology course. In so doing, he foreshadowed the way his successor, Gardner, would incorporate psychology, albeit in a decidedly more radical way, into the School of Homiletics.

⁸¹ William Owen Carver, *Missions and Modern Thought* (New York: Macmillan, 1910), 207-8.

⁸² John P. Dever, “Sociology and Theology: Enemies or Companions in Theological Education? A Faculty Address Delivered September 4, 1995,” *Review and Expositor* 93, no. 2 (1996): 281.

⁸³ Edwin C. Dargan to Charles S. Gardner, January 26, 1921, Dargan Papers.

Dargan's Revision of *Treatise*

The main text in the homiletics course under both Dargan and Broadus was *Treatise*. However, during the 1897-1898 academic year, Dargan began using his own revised version with students. Completed three years after Broadus's death, Dargan's edition was the first of three major revisions of *Treatise*, the other two being the Witherspoon edition (1944) and the Stanfield edition (1979).

Unlike the major revisions that followed, Dargan's was the only one completed with the express permission of the author. Dargan referred to his revision of *Treatise* as a "sacred duty and privilege."⁸⁴ He and Broadus had begun collaborating on a revision of the book before the elder homiletics professor's passing in 1895. Unfortunately, Broadus was unable to review Dargan's final changes: "In the latter part of February, 1895, I took him the book and talked to him about the revision; but alas! In less than three weeks he was in his grave."⁸⁵ Nevertheless, thanks to their frequent conversations, folders of notes given to him by Broadus, an old copy of the book with Broadus's handwritten edits, and the help of Charlotte Broadus, Dargan was able to complete his revision.⁸⁶

Dargan described the changes made to his edition of *Treatise* as consisting of three types:

(1) Those which were clearly indicated in the author's [Broadus's] notes already mentioned. . . . (2) Some changes not particularly noted by him, but concerning which I have distinct recollections of conversation, or concerning which on other accounts I feel reasonably sure that he would have made the alterations adopted. (3) There are also some changes wherein I have had to rely upon my own judgment, believing that they would be for the better.⁸⁷

In his dissertation, "A Study of the Revisions of John A. Broadus's Classic Work, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*," Robert Compere composed a

⁸⁴ John Albert Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Smith, English, 1871), vii.

⁸⁵ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, vii.

⁸⁶ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, vii.

⁸⁷ Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, vii.

helpful comparison of the major editions of *Treatise*. Compere's analysis of Broadus's original and Dargan's revision "resulted in finding 205 differences: 21 deletions, 144 additions, 11 arrangement changes, and 29 paraphrases."⁸⁸ The two most significant differences noted by Compere were (1) Dargan's "more lenient view on the borrowing of sermon material than Broadus" and (2) Dargan's preference for writing out a sermon manuscript as opposed to Broadus's preference to forgo utilizing a manuscript in preparation for preaching.⁸⁹ Compere's conclusion of Dargan's revision was that, aside from a couple of minor changes, "Dargan preserved the broad, overall emphasis of Broadus's original. The overall trajectory of Dargan's edition is much in line with Broadus's original."⁹⁰ Compere's analysis of the Weatherspoon and Stanfield editions showed much greater deviation from Broadus's original than Dargan's.⁹¹ Dargan's consultation with and undying loyalty to Broadus likely accounts for the strengths of his revision when compared with the two that followed.

Coursework and Content

During Dargan's first year teaching without Broadus, 1895-1896, the course catalog lists no changes to the subject matter of the homiletics course: "The subjects studied in this school are: Theory of Preaching, Conduct of Public Worship, History of Preaching, Hymnology, and Elocution."⁹² Likewise, the elocution portion of Dargan's class followed the same plan of instruction at the end of the Broadus era, including the

⁸⁸ Robert L. Compere, "A Study of the Revisions of John A. Broadus's Classic Work, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*" (PhD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013), 291.

⁸⁹ Compere, "A Study of the Revisions of John A. Broadus's Classic Work," 291.

⁹⁰ Compere, "A Study of the Revisions of John A. Broadus's Classic Work," 292.

⁹¹ See chap. 6 of Compere's dissertation for a summary of his findings. Concerning both Weatherspoon and Stanfield's editions, Compere says they "failed to preserve the content and characteristic emphasis of Broadus's original." Compere, "A Study of the Revisions of John A. Broadus's Classic Work," 294.

⁹² *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Thirty-Seventh Session 1895-1896*, 35.

five lecture a week schedule: “Three for homiletics, Two for Elocution.”⁹³ During Dargan’s tenure, the biggest change in course content noted by the seminary catalogs was the elimination of the conduct of public worship and hymnology elements from the homiletics course in 1906.⁹⁴

Required Reading

At the close of the Broadus era, during the 1894-1895 academic year while Broadus and Dargan were co-teaching, there was a noticeable shift in the required reading. The required texts were “*Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, Broadus’s *On the History of Preaching*, Syllabus of Hymnology; The Homiletical Exercise Book; Russell’s *Vocal Culture*.”⁹⁵ This list would remain stable through the academic year of 1899-1900, with one significant exception. During the 1897-1898 academic year, Dargan began requiring his revised edition of *Treatise*.⁹⁶ Dargan’s revision would remain the required version of Broadus’s work throughout his tenure and his successor’s.

During the 1900-1901 academic year, Dargan added a hymn book to the required reading, listed as Campbell’s *Hymns and Hymn Makers*, to be followed the next year with an additional hymnbook, *Sursum Corda*.⁹⁷ The next year, 1903-1904, both hymnbooks were removed from the required reading, and conduct of public worship was removed from the homiletics course. A note in the course catalog stated the conduct of public worship component might move to Dargan’s other course, Ecclesiology, the

⁹³ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Thirty-Seventh Session 1895-1896*, 35.

⁹⁴ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Seventh [Eighth] Session 1906-1907*, 30. This catalog’s title was misprinted to read the same as the previous year’s title. It should have been titled *Forty-Eighth Session*, not *Forty-Seventh Session*.

⁹⁵ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Thirty-Seventh Session 1895-1896*, 37 (italics added).

⁹⁶ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Thirty-Eighth Session 1896-1897* (Louisville: Chas T. Dearing, 1897), 37.

⁹⁷ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Second Session 1900-1901* (Louisville: Chas T. Dearing, 1901), 33-34.

following year.⁹⁸ The conduct of public worship would not return to the School of Homiletics under Dargan or his successor Gardner.

During the 1904-1905 academic year, Dargan's newly published *History of Preaching* replaced Broadus's *History of Preaching* as a required text. Also added that year was a syllabus on *History of Preaching*.⁹⁹ These would remain the required texts in homiletics until Dargan's successor took over in the 1907-1908 academic year.

Departure and Legacy

Dargan's tenure at the seminary ended in 1906 after fifteen years of service. Dargan's wife, Lucy, was likely a major factor precipitating her husband's departure. In 1900, the Dargans' daughter Ethel fell ill, and in October of 1901, she passed away.¹⁰⁰ Ethel's death devastated the Dargans and proved to be particularly traumatizing to Lucy, who experienced a severe depression that forced her husband to take an emergency sabbatical during the 1902-1903 academic year.¹⁰¹ During this sabbatical, Dargan's homiletics classes were covered by Professor William Joseph McGlothlin, whose normal duties included Church History and Old Testament Interpretation.¹⁰² The Dargans spent the year in England, and when Dargan returned to SBTS for the 1903-1904 academic year, Lucy stayed abroad for several more months.¹⁰³ Lucy associated the city with her daughter's death and told Dargan she would never be content to live in Louisville again. William O. Carver described Dargan's situation:

⁹⁸ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Fifth Session 1903-1904* (Louisville: Seminary Press, 1904), 32-33.

⁹⁹ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Sixth Session 1904-1905* (Louisville: Seminary Press, 1905), 30-31.

¹⁰⁰ Finley, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 150.

¹⁰¹ Finley, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 150.

¹⁰² *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Fourth Session 1902-1903* (Louisville: Chas T. Dearing, 1908).

¹⁰³ Finley, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 151.

Mrs. Dargan warned her husband that he could do what he wished, that she was going to Charlottesville to make a home for Henry. Just at this crisis there came a call from the First Baptist Church of Macon, Georgia, one of the most attractive pastorates in the entire Convention. If Dr. Dargan would accept this call Mrs. Dargan would go with him. . . . He was not at the point where he had to choose between accepting his pastorate or continuing his work in the Seminary with no home and with no hope of not being misunderstood. There was but one course for him.¹⁰⁴

It was a heart-wrenching decision, but Dargan was unwilling to allow such a rift within his marriage to endure.

An additional factor that may have contributed to Dargan's departure from the school was the controversy surrounding William Whitsitt. Whitsitt had been forced to resign as the president of SBTS because of his controversial views on Baptist origins.¹⁰⁵ In the aftermath of his departure, the faculty divided over the question of succession. Dargan had charted a mediating course throughout the Whitsitt controversy, irritating some of his more passionate colleagues, but his support of fellow faculty member F. H. Kerfoot for president may have resulted in an insurmountable division. Kerfoot would not become the next president of SBTS and would resign after the appointment of E. Y. Mullins. Gregory Wills has raised the possibility that after Kerfoot's resignation, Dargan "was not again accepted into the full fellowship of the faculty."¹⁰⁶

Whether it was his marriage, a rift with his colleagues, or some combination of both, Dargan resigned from his position in 1906 and was replaced by Charles Gardner. Dargan would remain a major figure in Southern Baptist life until his death on October 26, 1930, at the age of seventy-eight. After his resignation from SBTS, he would become the president of the Southern Baptist Convention (1911-1913) and then serve as an editor

¹⁰⁴ William Owen Carver, *Recollections and Information from Other Sources Concerning the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, unpublished manuscript, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Library, Louisville, 1954, quoted in Finley, "Edwin Charles Dargan," 38.

¹⁰⁵ Whitsitt's views and his provocative expressions of his views both contributed to his eventual resignation from the presidency of SBTS.

¹⁰⁶ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 236.

at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville (1917-1927).¹⁰⁷

Conclusion

Edwin Dargan was another pioneering figure in the School of Homiletics at SBTS. He was as committed to orthodoxy as Broadus and believed in the importance of expository preaching. The two men differed most substantially outside the homiletics classroom in their other pursuits and personal lives. Though Dargan is less well known today than his predecessor, he was nevertheless a major figure at SBTS whose impact reverberated long after his death, most notably in the growth of sociology as a discipline studied at SBTS. If Dargan were judged by the standard he laid out for the students of SBTS in his inaugural address, “He [the preacher] may never be great, or learned, or famous, but if he can be the means of putting a large amount of God’s pure truth into the minds and hearts of his hearers, he shall be a good minister of Jesus Christ,” then Dargan most certainly was a “Baptist Preacher for the Times.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Finley, “Edwin Charles Dargan,” 181.

¹⁰⁸ Dargan, “The Baptist Preacher for the Times,” 13.

CHAPTER 4

CHARLES GARDNER AND THE SCHOOL OF HOMILETICS

Charles Spurgeon Gardner, often referred to as C. S. Gardner in print, was the third man to lead the School of Homiletics at SBTS. Compared with Broadus and Dargan, relatively little of Gardner's early life is readily accessible. There are no book-length treatments of his life like Broadus, nor is there a memoir of his early years like Dargan. What is known about Gardner's life before the seminary comes from the written recollection of peers and posthumous tributes. However, like the two men who preceded him in the School of Homiletics, Gardner did leave a substantial body of work that can be examined.

Early Life and Education

C. S. Gardner was born in Gibson County, Tennessee, in 1859, the year of SBTS's founding and Darwin's publication of the *Origin of the Species*.¹ He was the youngest of six children born to Stephen A. Gardner and Evelyn Wood Gardner.² Gardner's parents were second-generation Americans, his great-grandfather and great-grandmother hailing from England and Ireland, respectively. Stephen Gardner was educated at Brown University before moving to western Tennessee and setting up a farm. He was also known to preach on occasion, and he admired the English preacher Charles

¹ Gardner said, "It has long been a matter of sentimental interest to me that the seminary and I were born the same year. That means nothing to the Seminary, of course, but a great deal to me." Charles S. Gardner, "The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God" (Founders' Day address at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, January 11, 1945), 2.

² Unless otherwise indicated, the following account of Gardner's early life follows the account in J. B. Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," *Review and Expositor* 52, no. 2 (April 1955): 184.

Spurgeon, as evidenced by the name chosen for his son. Only two months after Charles's birth, his father passed away, leaving his eldest brother, William, to head the household. Stephen's death was attributed to pneumonia that set in after a return home from church during a particularly treacherous snowstorm.³

Sometime after his father's death, C. S. purportedly met John Broadus as Broadus was passing through a nearby train station. Accompanying his brother William to the station, young Charles met Broadus and claimed the elder Baptist statesman said he hoped to see him train at the seminary one day. Gardner's next encounter with Broadus would be as a student at the seminary.

SBTS Student and Pastor

Before matriculating at SBTS, Gardner attended two other institutions. The first was Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, thirty miles from his home in Gibson County. After four years (1877-1881) and no degree, Gardner transferred to Richmond College in Virginia.⁴ Having failed to complete a degree at Richmond College, Gardner became a student at SBTS in 1882, when he was twenty-three years old. Arriving in Louisville only five years after the seminary's relocation from Greenville, he was a beneficiary of SBTS's ongoing policy to allow men without college degrees to enroll. His time at the seminary was short (one year), but it was not unusual in those days for men to enter for a semester or two, take the classes they deemed needful, and then depart. Once again, Gardner earned no degree for his studies. Why Gardner ended each of his studies

³ Earl Whaley's thesis, which yields valuable insight into Charles Gardner's life, relies heavily on interviews with relatives and seminary colleagues. In this instance, as with most of his account of Gardner's early life, Whaley says he relied on the recollections of W. A. Gardiner, Charles's nephew Charles. Note that the spelling of some of Gardner's relatives' last names is different, with some having an "i." and others without it. Earl R. Whaley, "The Ethical Contribution of Charles S. Gardner" (ThM thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1953), 9.

⁴ Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 184.

short of graduation is unknown.⁵ Gardner never earned a degree, but his lack of credentials does not appear to have hindered him professionally.

During the year Gardner attended SBTS, he took both classes taught by Broadus, “Greek New Testament Interpretation, and Homiletics.”⁶ Intriguingly, there is a record of one of Broadus’s assessments of Gardner as a student. On one of Gardner’s sermon outlines, Broadus commented, “You have used your material well and have made a pleasing and effective sermon. Your analysis of his character might have been more exhaustive.”⁷ The sermon in question was on the life of Aaron, and Gardner had chosen to deal almost exhaustively with the humility of Moses’s brother to the exclusion of all other facets of his life and character.

After a year as a student, Gardner moved on to pastoring. Having been ordained in New Castle, Kentucky, in “the spring of 1883,” Gardner returned to Tennessee, where he pastored two churches close to where he was raised, Trenton and Brownsville respectively.⁸ During his time at Brownsville, he married Ariadne Turner.⁹ Gardner’s third pastorate was at Edgefield Baptist Church in Nashville (1886-1894). During his time at Edgefield, Gardner also taught at the local Baptist women’s college, Boscobel, which may have been his first classroom teaching experience.¹⁰ His fourth pastorate was also his first outside of Tennessee, at First Baptist Church of Greenville

⁵ The only clue to Gardner’s failure to complete a degree comes from Weatherspoon, who describes it as “reasons outside his own desire and intellectual ability.” See Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 184.

⁶ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 185.

⁷ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 189.

⁸ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 185; Whaley, “The Ethical Contribution of Charles S. Gardner,” 15.

⁹ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 185.

¹⁰ William Owen Carver, “A Tribute to Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” April 3, 1948, series 3, box 1, folder 18, p. 2, Charles Spurgeon Gardner Papers, Archives and Special Collections, James P. Boyce Centennial Library, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville. Hereafter, this collection will be referred to as the Gardner Papers.

South Carolina.¹¹ Gardner continued at First Baptist Greenville for seven years until 1901, when he was called to Grace Street Church in Richmond, Virginia. During his Richmond pastorate, Union University granted Gardner an honorary Doctor of Divinity.¹² He must have grown particularly attached to Richmond during his years pastoring there, for after retirement, Richmond would become his final home. Grace Street was also Gardner's final pastorate prior to his call to become a professor at SBTS.¹³

The Gardner Era in Homiletics

Gardner's appointment to the faculty came at a crucial juncture in the seminary's history. The Whitsitt controversy resulted in the election of E. Y. Mullins as the seminary's new president. In addition to pastoring Grace Street Church, Gardner had been a trustee of the seminary during the Whitsitt controversy.¹⁴ Upon election, Mullins set a new trajectory for the school and for Southern Baptists more generally. Wills describes the effect of the Mullins presidency: "He led Southern Baptists away from traditional orthodoxy in significant ways and reshaped Southern Baptist theology. He did so while maintaining a reputation for conserving the orthodoxy of Boyce, Broadus, Manly, and Williams."¹⁵ Mullins described his own theological sensibilities as

¹¹ Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 185.

¹² Weatherspoon also speaks of, but does not list, other "honorary degrees" bestowed on Gardner during his life. Seminary catalogs list Gardner as having both DD (Doctor of Divinity) and LLD (Doctor of Laws) degrees. Whaley cites W. O. Carver as saying Gardner also possessed an honorary DD from the University of Richmond and that his honorary LLD was from Furman University. See Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 187; Whaley, "The Ethical Contribution of Charles S. Gardner," 16.

¹³ Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 186.

¹⁴ William A. Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959), 173-74.

¹⁵ Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 230.

“progressive as well as conservative,” a description Gardner would later adopt.¹⁶

The appointment of Mullins as president was a move that trustees hoped would quell the controversies plaguing the institution during the last years of the Whitsitt administration. Though the old controversies faded, Mullins’s administration created new flash points. Mullins’s progressive conservatism, with its considerable deviations from previous generations of Baptist thought, found a home within the seminary and the wider denomination because of a subtle ongoing shift amongst Baptist preachers away from the “doctrinal” to the “sentimental.”¹⁷ Wills describes this as less emphasis on “God’s sovereignty and holiness” and greater emphasis on God’s “love and fatherliness.” In turn, Southern Baptists were becoming less Calvinistic. Revivalism and its preaching style, rich with emotional pleas while typically light on doctrine, promised quicker, more visible results than sermons heavy on doctrine. An ethos developed amongst many Southern Baptist pastors who were less concerned about what they considered *peripheral* theological matters—matters that previous generations had considered relevant for the ministry. Wills notes, “Southern Baptist preachers were becoming pragmatists and adopted this revival theology. They were in the business of saving souls and had little use for any theology that did not seem to result in conversions.”¹⁸ Gardner exemplified many of these trends, though decidedly not the revivalist pulpit demeanor.¹⁹ As theological mindedness waned, a Mullins-styled progressive conservatism took root.

¹⁶ Edgar Y. Mullins to Charles S. Gardner, May 4, 1907, Letterbook 31, 1906-1908, p. 340, Archives and Special Collections, James P. Boyce Centennial Library, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

¹⁷ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 241.

¹⁸ Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1895-2009*, 242.

¹⁹ Although Calvinism marked the theology of Broadus and Dargan, many of Gardner’s statements throughout his career run contrary to or have no parallel in historic Reformed or Calvinistic thought. For example, he describes man’s free will and God’s purposes in salvation: “For Jesus the supreme and intrinsic good is personality moving toward the goal of perfection, attaining ever to a higher capacity for self-direction and to an increasingly free and harmonious adjustment to the central reality of the universe.” Charles Spurgeon Gardner, *The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress* (New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914), 136.

The Offer from Mullins

In May of 1907, Mullins wrote to Gardner and offered him the position of professor of homiletics. Concerning the offer, Carver later said, “One reason for turning to him [Gardner] was that he had become known as a competent student and a progressive thinker in the field of the social application of the gospel.”²⁰ Mullins disclosed to Gardner that trustees had urged the hiring of a “Northern man” and someone who was not a SBTS graduate. In a series of candid admissions, Mullins said they had failed to find an individual who met that description; he also named the last man who had turned down the seminary’s offer. Mullins conceded, “On some accounts it might be considered that the Chair of Homiletics more than any other chair in the institution should have a man trained in the Seminary itself as professor, in order that as far as possible the homiletical ideals of Dr. Broadus might be perpetuated.”²¹ Mullins’s desire—expressed throughout his letter—to maintain the spirit of Broadus’s original class is surprising, given how different the two men were, but it is in keeping with Wills’s assessment of Mullins. Mullins did not see himself, or would not admit to others, that he was out of step with the founders.

Mullins’s letter to Gardner also offers valuable information about expectations for the new professor of homiletics and the coursework as it existed at that time:

Now as to the work itself. Of course you know what it is, having the course in the Seminary under Dr. Broadus. It means teaching the class in Homiletics and the History of Preaching, and it also means much detail work in the matter of correcting exercises and criticizing written sermons. It is this part of the work which constitutes the drudgery of the class, but we consider it perhaps as valuable as any work done by the professor. The criticism of written sermons, though it entails much labor, is a work which we would be unwilling to have discontinued, and which we believe will always prove a most helpful means of training for the preacher. The rest of it is of course delightful work in every way.²²

Nothing in the description Mullins gives of the course or the attitudes of the faculty

²⁰ Carver, “A Tribute to Charles Spurgeon Gardner.”

²¹ Mullins to Gardner, May 4, 1907, 340-43.

²² Mullins to Gardner, May 4, 1907, 340-43.

toward homiletics conflicts with Broadus's original vision. Broadus was certainly a believer in having students construct written sermons and providing them with individualized feedback, a practice made more necessary by his negative opinion of in-class preaching. This position remained intact throughout Gardner's tenure as it had in Dargan's.

The salary promised to Gardner in his first year was \$2,750, with hopes that it could be raised shortly.²³ Along with the letter, Mullins included a copy of the Abstract of Principles for Gardner's review in anticipation of his subscription. Concerning the seminary's present culture in relation to the Abstract, Mullins wrote,

I do not anticipate that the Seminary is going to encounter any serious difficulty in doctrinal matters. I think there is a greater freedom than there used to be in this regard, and less attention is paid to the would-be mischief makers. I think [the Abstract] is sufficiently broad and elastic to admit of freedom to any mature man who can accept them at the outset.²⁴

This statement probably came as welcome news to Gardner who, as a seminary trustee, had seen firsthand the scrutiny a professor espousing new ideas could endure, and who himself had plenty of new ideas he desired to express.²⁵

Nowhere in Mullins's letter does he promise Gardner a chance to teach psychology or sociology. Only briefly does Mullins mention that Dargan's other assignment had been teaching ecclesiology, which was the main outlet for sociology for the former professor of homiletics. The position offered to Gardner had homiletics as its central focus. Despite the official offer made to Gardner, J. B. Weatherspoon believed there had been a tacit agreement to continue Dargan's practice of teaching sociology in his courses, as well as introducing psychology:

²³ Mullins to Gardner, May 4, 1907, 340-43.

²⁴ Mullins to Gardner, May 4, 1907, 340-43.

²⁵ It is worth noting that Gardner, as a trustee, and Dargan, as a professor, both came to opposite conclusions regarding the Whitsitt controversy, with Dargan identified with the conservative party and Gardner the more liberal or progressive.

Although on the point I have no documentation, I am quite sure there was an understanding that he [Gardner] would introduce into the course of study the subjects to which he had given himself for a number of years and which he felt were essential to a minister's preparation in our time: sociology, psychology, and ethics in their joint relationship to preaching.²⁶

Though Weatherspoon intended no animus in his description of Gardner's changes to the curriculum, he nevertheless also described it as an "infiltration" resulting in "interesting [course] reading."²⁷

Gardner accepted the offer and, like his predecessors, forsook a higher profile role amongst Southern Baptists for a less prominent but no less important position of service. He accepted it partly because he recognized the importance of the homiletics professorship in preparing students for ministry. In a Founders' Day address preached long after his retirement from the faculty, Gardner said,

From the first the emphasis here [at SBTS] has been upon training men for practical efficiency in the work of the ministry—the preaching of the gospel and pastoral services. . . . Preaching, *preaching*, PREACHING, supplemented by the pastoral care of souls—that was and is his chosen method of preparation for the coming of the Kingdom of God. . . . The course in Homiletics has emphasized the presentation of Biblical truth in the manner best calculated to win the sincere acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.²⁸

Traces of Wills's assertion about Southern Baptist preachers in the Victorian era becoming revivalistic pragmatists can be seen in Gardner's Founders' Day address. "Efficiency" and "best calculated to win the sincere acceptance of Jesus Christ" were hallmarks not only of Gardner's preaching but also what he taught his students. Doctrinal preaching, preaching that draws out and seeks to apply the doctrine of particular texts, regardless of a preacher's natural predilection for each doctrine, was generally avoided. Writing to a friend during his Nashville pastorate, Gardner said, "I preached a good 'doctrinal' sermon the other day, the first one I ever preached in my life and I believe it

²⁶ Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 189.

²⁷ Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 189.

²⁸ Gardner, "The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God," 9-10 (emphasis original).

did good.”²⁹ Despite the “good” that sermon may have done, Gardner’s regular practice appears to have remained preaching decidedly non-doctrinal sermons, choosing instead to focus on calls to action related to Christian character and responsibility.

Also present in Gardner’s Founders’ Day address is the link between his view of preaching and the social sciences, the “kingdom of God.” If Gardner’s body of work had an overall theme, it would be the kingdom of God. Gaines Dobbins said of his former professor,

He realized that Jesus and his gospel needed to be reinterpreted in terms of *his* concept of “kingdom of God . . . on earth,” according to which Jesus proposed the regeneration of the whole social order. He did not expect such a transformation to come suddenly . . . but by gradual processes, with occasional upheavals and catastrophic changes.³⁰

For Gardner, the kingdom of God was not simply a future eschatological reality but a responsibility Christ gave to men to establish through the work of continual social progress. The key disciplines illuminating the path to social progress were the budding social sciences of sociology and psychology. In *The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress*, Gardner wrote,

For some years it has been my pleasant task to instruct a group of young ministers in the Ethics of Jesus. At the same time I have been pursuing special studies in the science of Sociology. . . . It is the most important field of scientific study which now engages the attention of men. . . . My conviction is that the more definitely the goal of social evolution is worked out by the students of social science, and the more adequately the concept of the Kingdom of God is grasped by the students of the gospel, the more nearly they will be found to correspond.³¹

Gardner, a man so passionate about preaching, was also passionate about social science because he believed psychology would make his students more effective communicators and sociology would give them better messages to communicate—messages focused on

²⁹ Charles S. Gardner, “What Constitutes Valid Baptism?,” in *Eleventh Annual Session of the Baptist Congress* (1893), 104, quoted in Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009*, 241.

³⁰ Gaines S. Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1965), 65 (emphasis added).

³¹ Gardner, *The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress*, 7.

God's kingdom on earth through societal reform.

Noticeably absent from Gardner's Founders' Day address is a reference to the relationship of the seminary and preaching to the local church. Rather, Gardner connects the seminary and preaching directly to the kingdom of God. That is not coincidental. Gardner's view of the church was one of temporary necessity. At some future date, the church would cease to exist. He posited,

The church is only an instrument for the realization of the Kingdom. . . . The church is related to the Kingdom solely as a means to an end. . . . While the old non-Christian and largely anti-Christian social order is undergoing disintegration and a new order is being fashioned . . . the ethical and spiritual forces which are engaged in the vast enterprise of destruction and reconstruction need the church as a basis of operation, a power-plant, a point of concentration and centre of radiation. The church, then, is far from being the final objective in the movement of Jesus.³²

If Christians in Gardner's day noticed the church losing ground or preeminence in the culture, Gardner encouraged them not to fear, as this was likely to happen as the culture grew to be more in line with kingdom ideals:

If the church is simply an instrumentality whose purpose is and always should be the enthronement of the spirit and ideals of Jesus in the whole social order, we ought to be neither alarmed nor suppose that in proportion as this purpose is accomplished the sense of the need of the church should relatively decline. . . . It certainly seems to many observers that the fulfillment of the Kingdom is approaching with extraordinary rapidity; and if there should occur a relative decline in the sense of the values and importance of the ecclesiastical instrument, would it not be an unfortunate misplacing of emphasis to interpret such a relative decline as a collapse of the program of Jesus.³³

A significant change can be detected here between the seminary's founders and Gardner. SBTS's first catalog stated that the "chief object" of the seminary was to produce "preachers of the gospel and pastors of the churches."³⁴ Gardner's chief aim in his classes was creating preachers for the kingdom of God, which may or may not include the church as society evolved ever closer to kingdom ideals.

³² Gardner, *The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress*, 78.

³³ Gardner, *The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress*, 80.

³⁴ *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860*.

Though Gardner was known for his general optimism concerning the Christian and the social task, time and tragedy mellowed some of his triumphalism. While at SBTS, Gardner's personal life was beset with heartbreak. Ariadne, Gardner's wife, passed away six years into Gardner's tenure (1914). He would go on to marry Mary Carter Anderson (1920) of Virginia before his retirement.³⁵ Of the three children he had with his first wife, two would die while he was still serving on the faculty. His oldest daughter died in childbirth, and his "only son, Charles, fell in the front lines leading his troops [during WWI] in one of the first battles in France."³⁶ Writing on the impact of these events on Gardner, Weatherspoon says,

It colored for a while his outlook upon the world whose darkness had come too close. Where there had been cautious optimism about the peace of the world there was reluctant pessimism. His personal losses opened his eyes and his heart to a clearer vision of the depth of evil in the world. Consequently, his later years were not as hopeful of an early triumph of righteousness as before. He had no less hope of the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God, but was more conscious of the hard road ahead that faith and hope and love would have to travel.³⁷

A chastened but hopeful Gardner continued to advocate for his vision of the kingdom of God until his death.

Introduction of Psychology and Continuation of Sociology

As noted, Gardner's predecessor Dargan introduced SBTS students to sociology, though he largely kept it out of his homiletics classroom. Gardner, however, expanded the role of sociology and incorporated large swaths of other social sciences, particularly psychology, into his homiletics lectures. Beginning the year of his appointment (1907) and continuing until his departure (1927), Gardner dedicated an entire quarter of homiletics to psychology. In his first year, the seminary catalog reflects

³⁵ Carver, "A Tribute to Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 3; Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 197.

³⁶ Carver, "A Tribute to Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 3.

³⁷ Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 197.

the change: “During the third quarter the class will study the principles of Psychology in their relation to preaching—first, the psychology of the individual; second the psychology of the congregation; third the particular mental habits and moral ideals of our country and age studied in their relation to preaching.”³⁸ J. B. Weatherspoon, who followed Gardner in the School of Homiletics, claimed the psychology portion of the class was even more pronounced, constituting a full third of class time rather than a quarter.³⁹

Psychology as a discipline has never been a unified field. Throughout its history, rival schools and theories have competed for dominance. In Dargan’s day, the two main schools were Structuralism and Functionalism. Gardner adopted the functionalist view of psychology, a school associated with names like William James, its philosophic progenitor, Charles Darwin, whose evolutionary theory provided its foundation, and John Dewey, a popularizer of its theories, especially in the realm of education.⁴⁰ According to the American Psychological Association, the functionalist school of psychology

emphasizes the causes and consequences of human behavior; the union of the physiological with the psychological; the need for objective testing of theories; and the applications of psychological knowledge to the solution of practical problems, the evolutionary continuity between animals and humans, and the improvement of human life.⁴¹

Gardner embraced Darwinian evolution, a tenet of functionalist psychology that was not

³⁸ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Eighth Session 1906-1907*, 35.

³⁹ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner.” Mirroring the deviation from traditional seminary course material in homiletics, Gardner’s Ecclesiology class spent substantial time, its first eight lectures (at least), on basic sociology. Notes from the first quarter of the class contain shockingly few references to God, Scripture, or even the *ecclesia* (church). Instead, students were instructed in subjects like “man a psycho-social organism” and “the development of personality.” Charles Spurgeon Gardner, “Ecclesiology Lecture Notes,” 1910, box 1, folder 6, Gardner Papers.

⁴⁰ Charles Spurgeon Gardner, preface to *Psychology and Preaching* (New York: Macmillan, 1918), n.p.

⁴¹ American Psychological Association, “APA Dictionary of Psychology,” accessed September 28, 2023, <https://dictionary.apa.org/>.

held by Broadus and Dargan.⁴² Though Gardner's view of evolution had theistic elements because he believed in God as Creator, it was still recognizably Darwinian. In an article titled "The Negro and the White Man," Gardner's laid bare his evolutionary views are, revealing a very low view of people of African descent. "Our business," said Gardner, "is not to quarrel with nature; rather to learn from her. These physiological facts are the results of ages of evolution."⁴³

Gardner believed psychology was essential to the training of preachers so they might better understand their hearers and construct effective messages. In a sympathetic reading of his predecessor's homiletics class, Weatherspoon wrote,

[Gardner] placed highest value upon the work of Dr. Broadus in the field of sermon structure, materials of preaching, style and so forth, and never considered setting it aside. He was aware, however, that the knowledge of mental processes, personality, and conduct had been greatly advanced and new insights were at hand for the preacher in his task of communication and persuasion.⁴⁴

Thus, as far as Weatherspoon was concerned, there was no conflict between Broadus's vision for the homiletics course and Gardner's only profitable additions. Gardner saw no tension between the fledgling discipline of sociology and the needs of his students.

Speaking of this "new science," Gardner said, "Whatever may be the attitude of individual investigators, the practical conclusions to which their investigations are

⁴² Broadus's views on evolution were cautionary: "I believe in something about evolution. I do not know how much to believe about it. I am waiting for evolution to evolve itself. Let us not be over hasty to reconcile the Bible with the present theories of evolution." John Albert Broadus, *Paramount and Permanent Authority of The Bible* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1887), 9.

⁴³ Gardner's views concerning evolution and race would be considered shocking and white supremacist today, though large swaths of his contemporaries held them and believed the science of their day supported them. However, even in the article referenced, which drips with racial prejudice, Gardner gives no hints of personal animus toward people of African descent. Rather, he believed himself to be an objective social scientist. Moreover, because he believed science proved Caucasian superiority and the gospel compelled Christians to look out for those in need, he maintained it was incumbent upon Caucasians to seek the betterment of their fellow (but lesser) men, i.e., those of African descent. Thus, Gardner's view, as abhorrent as it is, might be regarded as a benevolent form of white supremacy. Contemporaries also give positive accounts of Gardner rebuking bigoted students in class, his kindness to the school's African American janitor, and positive shifts in his views over time. Charles S. Gardner, "The Negro and the White Man," box 2, folder 8, p. 6, Gardner Papers. See also Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 194; Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference*, 62; Henry Y. Warnock, "Prophets of Change: Some Southern Baptist Leaders and the Problem of Race, 1900-1921," *Baptist History and Heritage* 7, no. 3 (July 1972): 181-82.

⁴⁴ Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 190.

pointing are in harmony with the demands of Christianity interpreted as a social religion.”⁴⁵ Christianity and sociology had a common cause, “guiding society toward the goal of universal righteousness.”⁴⁶

Psychology and Preaching

The greatest insight into Gardner’s use of psychology in the homiletics classroom comes from his groundbreaking work, *Psychology and Preaching* (1917), a distillation of Gardner’s well-honed lectures in the psychology section of his homiletics class. *Psychology and Preaching* grew out of Gardner’s concern that many of his students had not been exposed to the basic principles of psychology because of their lack of college education—an education that in his day would almost certainly have included basic psychological theory.⁴⁷ Explaining the rationale for his book, Gardner also points to the inadequacies of previous homiletic works:

There have been homiletical works almost without number, applying the formal rules of logic and rhetoric to sermon-making, and books on elocution are even more numerous. But the works discussing the preparation and delivery of sermons rarely, if ever, approach the subject from the standpoint of modern functional psychology. The psychological conceptions underlying most of these treatises belong to a stage of psychological thought long since past.⁴⁸

Of course, Gardner cannot make this remark without tacitly admitting to the inadequacies of Broadus’s *Treatise* and Dargan’s revision.

Psychology and Preaching is divided into fourteen chapters and reflects the general contours of the Functionalism school of psychology: (1) “General Controls of Conduct,” (2) “Mental Images,” (3) “Mental Systems,” (4) “Feelings,” (5) “Sentiments and Ideals,” (6) “The Excitation of Feeling,” (7) “Belief,” (8) “Attention,” (9) “Voluntary

⁴⁵ Gardner, *The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress*, 18.

⁴⁶ Gardner, *The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress*, 19.

⁴⁷ Gardner, preface to *Psychology and Preaching*.

⁴⁸ Gardner, preface to *Psychology and Preaching*.

Action,” (10) “Suggestion,” (11) “Assemblies,” (12) “Mental Epidemics,” (13) “Occupational Types,” and (14) “The Modern Mind.”

Psychology and Preaching received a wide reading even outside of Baptist circles. Many reviewers recognized Gardner was offering nothing less than a psychological guide to the hearts of men. One review by a Dr. Abbot said, “His work is an attempt to make a thoroughgoing application of psychological principles to preaching and give the preacher a key to men’s souls.”⁴⁹ Likewise, a review in the *Methodist Quarterly* remarked,

The challenge of the Galilean gospel was expressed in the statement of the evangelist that Jesus “knew what was in man.” The deplorable barrenness of much modern preaching grows primarily out of the ignorance of the preacher concerning the capacity and needs of his hearers. His task is further embarrassed and aborted by the fact that he has not “psychologized” his own experience concerning the power and effectiveness of that gospel.

So thoroughly did Gardner win one reader that he claimed the expression, “gospel most effective in edifying the saved and unsaved,” was in line with “the principles of functional psychology.”

Though reviews from religious publications were mostly favorable, Gardner’s work was not without criticism, including one assessment that it had “too much psychological analysis and too little illustration and application to preaching.”⁵⁰ However, it was Gardner’s “kingdom of God” theology outside of the homiletics classroom that gained the most negative attention from critics.

The Social Gospel Controversy

Gardner’s emphasis on the kingdom of God pursued on earth generated considerable controversy. Many recognized it for what it was—another form of what had become known as the “social gospel,” a message that downplayed the traditional

⁴⁹ This and the following three quotes are all from a collection of retyped reviews of psychology and preaching found in the Gardner Papers, box 1, folder 16.

⁵⁰ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 193.

Protestant emphasis on each man’s need for personal reconciliation to God and instead elevated man’s responsibility to his neighbor/neighborhood. His friends maintained he “deplored the use of the term ‘social gospel,’” but the similarities between his views and the views of leading social gospel proponents could not be overlooked. In some of his courses, admittedly not homiletics, he required students to read texts by leading social gospel advocates. Dobbins noted,

Dr. Gardner at once introduced the class to Walter Rauschenbusch, who was then at the height of his career as leader of the Christian social movement in America. . . . To him [Rauschenbusch] the bringing in of the kingdom of God on earth demanded the regeneration of society as well as individuals. His Christianity and the Social Crisis, interpreted and reinforced by the professor [Gardner], gave to us [students] a new perspective for our preaching and pastoral ministry . . . in the growing complexity of life, salvation could no longer be thought of as purely personal.⁵¹

Whether or not Gardner liked being categorized with social gospel advocates like Rauschenbusch, his students made the connection. The influence of social gospel advocates on students—and their SBC congregations—was significant. W. O. Carver, later known for his progressive impact on the seminary, claimed the first book he ever read regarding *social concerns* was borrowed from Gardner.⁵² Gaines Dobbins reflected, “In his 22 years of service Dr. Gardner did much to influence the preaching and teaching ministry of the men who largely shaped the present course of Southern Baptist life and thought.”⁵³

As the social gospel grew in popularity and its contents became better known, many conservative Christians, including conservative Southern Baptists, grew concerned. Labeled “fundamentalist(s)” by those sympathetic with Gardner, conservatives took their

⁵¹ Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference*, 60-61.

⁵² This anecdote appears to have been gained by Whaley from interviews with Carver’s former colleagues at SBTS. Though he does not specifically cite a source for this one, previous anecdotes in his thesis come from faculty. Whaley, “The Ethical Contribution of Charles S. Gardner,” 15.

⁵³ Gaines S. Dobbins, “Ten Pictures of Southern Seminary Personalities,” n.d., box 10, folder 15, Gaines Stanley Dobbins Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, quoted in T. Dale Johnson Jr., *The Professionalization of Pastoral Care: The SBC’s Journey from Pastoral Theology to Counseling Psychology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2020), 38.

objections to the platform of the SBC convention.⁵⁴ At the 1911 convention, when Gardner gave a sermon titled “The Coming of the Kingdom,” he was already associated with the larger social gospel controversy.⁵⁵ Dobbins recalls some of Gardner’s students, prompted by the controversy surrounding their professor, gathering in a prayer room in New York Hall to pray for his convention appearance.⁵⁶

Even before Gardner felt the heat of the social gospel controversy, he was a staunch advocate for academic freedom within denominational seminaries. During the Whitsitt controversy, while a seminary trustee, he warned of professors feeling pressured to continue in old ways of thinking:

There is a danger arising, not within the schools, but within the controlling denomination. . . . Good people often fall into the mistake of supposing that the Christian faith must stand or fall with certain scientific conceptions which have prevailed and which have been correlated with the faith in their own minds. This blunder is easy to make, but rather fraught with grave consequences . . . so it happens that the process of correlating scientific conceptions with the Christian faith is never finished but is in the very nature of the case, continuous. Now it is apparent that to bind an institution down to a given set of scientific doctrines which it must teach and continue to teach would be folly. It would be a process of intellectual asphyxiation under which any institution in the world would speedily die. Such a school would soon be discredited by progressive, educated men, and the area of contempt for it would widen until it would be left without any standing ground at all in the public respect. For a denomination to assume such a position would be to commit suicide so far as educational work is concerned.⁵⁷

While Gardner was concerned with dangers outside of the schools, conservatives worried about dangers inside. Although Gardner’s advocates said, “He was in no way bringing strange fire into the temple of theology, or forgetting the purpose of the Seminary,” they had to concede that Gardner’s views were not traditional Baptist views.⁵⁸ Weatherspoon observed, “His moral and social interpretation of Christian experience differed widely

⁵⁴ Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference*, 62.

⁵⁵ Carver, “A Tribute to Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 3.

⁵⁶ Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference*, 64.

⁵⁷ Charles Spurgeon Gardner, “The Relation of the Denomination to Its Schools,” *The Religious Herald*, April 28, 1904, Gardner Papers.

⁵⁸ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 193.

from conventional orthodoxy; his conception of the kingdom of God and of the function of the Church in the economic and political orders would find many dissenters even today.”⁵⁹

Writing on the history of the professionalization of pastoral care, author T. Dale Johnson summarized the conservatives’ concerns regarding Gardner’s teaching:

The controversy surrounding Gardner and the criticism from the so-called fundamentalists seemed to be justified. Gardner’s progressive ideas enmeshed with the social sciences led to an epistemic compromise. His writings and lectures reflect a deep dependency upon more ulterior sources of authority. . . . He appended to pastoral training the modern teachings of psychology and sociology that were entangled with atheistic tenets and assumptions promoting a biologically determined and environmentally driven understanding of anthropology.⁶⁰

Johnson’s description of Gardner’s classes is supported by the relevant SBTS course catalogs and Gardner’s own writings. Johnson correctly concluded, “Social sciences were the core around which Gardner would construct his courses, no matter the topic.”⁶¹ This is not to say that Gardner believed he was peddling unbiblical or unhelpful ideas. Rather, Gardner believed he was simply making the best use of the tools of his day, functional psychology and sociology, to train men to preach and minister the gospel.

In the Classroom and the Pulpit

In the classroom, Gardner, like Dargan and Broadus before, was a well-liked professor. Dobbins said some “seminary professors the students admired, sometimes even feared. But Dr. Gardner they loved.”⁶² He was also considered reasonable in his course requirements, though his reasonableness was sometimes attributed to permissiveness and laxity. Weatherspoon recalled,

In the classroom Dr. Gardner was calm in spirit and deliberate in speech. He

⁵⁹ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 192.

⁶⁰ Johnson, *The Professionalization of Pastoral Care*, 34.

⁶¹ Johnson, *The Professionalization of Pastoral Care*, 37.

⁶² Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference*, 62.

conceived of the teaching situation as one calling for the exchange and communication of ideas in an atmosphere of sober contemplation rather than hurried enthusiasm. His attitude was not that of a propagandist but of a careful thinker. There was no free-wheeling. His speech never outran his thought. For the most part he was gentle and patient. As long as questions had sincerity and relevance he made no quarrel with the ignorance they displayed. But if the student reflected an unwillingness to face facts or displayed a prejudice foreign to Christian love he might quickly be made to wish he had been absent that day.⁶³

Dobbins said of his former professor, “He could be severe in his criticism of the poor sermons handed in by the students, but he was never caustic.”⁶⁴

Gardner’s audiences considered him an excellent preacher, and his preaching was in demand, perhaps not as much as Broadus but at least equal to Dargan. His sermons were described as “dynamic rather than pyrotechnic.”⁶⁵ In this regard, Gardner was not like some popular Southern Baptist preachers of the time. He was not a fire and brimstone preacher, nor did he attempt to strongarm anyone into conversion. Something of his philosophy of delivery can be observed in a classroom anecdote shared by Dobbins. Dobbins recalled a class session in which Gardner decried *emotionalism* while not condemning the expression of deep emotion from the pulpit. Gardner then said there was a place from time to time for the preacher to “lift his voice and pound the pulpit.”⁶⁶ However, before the end of class, Gardner changed his mind and said, “I want to retract what I said about emotion expressing itself in loud language and noisy gesture. I was mistaken. When emotion is deep and genuine, it tends toward the lowering of the voice, the tensing of the muscles, and the restraining of gesture.”⁶⁷

Weatherspoon, Gardner’s successor in the School of Homiletics, described Gardner’s preaching:

In the pulpit Dr. Gardner presented a picture of calm self-possession. His face

⁶³ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 194.

⁶⁴ Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference*, 62.

⁶⁵ Weatherspoon, “Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 187.

⁶⁶ Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference*, 63.

⁶⁷ Dobbins, *Great Teachers Make a Difference*, 63.

expressed friendliness. . . . His manner was deliberate, nothing nervous or fussy. All who knew him remember that he was never in a hurry, but nevertheless began and ended promptly. His speech was as personal as conversation but maintained the dignity of the occasion. His voice was not mellow or honeyed, and yet not harsh. In the midst of a sermon it easily registered triumph or concern, or the ring of insistence or warning, as well as the positive confidence of proclamation. His gestures were not many and served the purpose of emphasis more than dramatic interpretation. All in all it is fair to say that he was a preacher of great ability, who spoke with strength out of an ample reserve, and with full awareness of the needs of men.⁶⁸

Carver likewise paints Gardner's pulpit presence as subdued, thoughtful, and clear: "His sermons were prepared with diligent, scholarly care and delivered with a quiet, deliberate and thoughtful eloquence which stimulated the attention of his hearers and challenged their response, while leaving them time to integrate their own emotions and thinking as they followed him in his delivery."⁶⁹ Thus, both in the pulpit and in the classroom, men responded favorably to Gardner's messages, and a generation of SBTS students sought to imitate him.

Course Required Reading

Dargan ended his tenure at SBTS requiring students to read his revised edition of Broadus's *Treatise*, his own original works, *History of Preaching* and *Syllabus on Modern European Preaching*, and Russell's *Vocal Culture*.⁷⁰ In contrast, Gardner required only two books as required reading his first year in Homiletics (1907-1908): Dargan's revised edition of *Treatise* and Dargan's *History of Preaching*.⁷¹ Both men kept *Treatise*, at least in its revised form, as required reading throughout the entirety of their teaching careers.

⁶⁸ Weatherspoon, "Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 188.

⁶⁹ Carver, "A Tribute to Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 1.

⁷⁰ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Eighth Session 1906-1907*. Dargan's syllabus was not widely published but is available in the Dargan Papers. See Edwin Charles Dargan, *A Syllabus of Lectures on the History of Preaching in Modern Europe, 1572-1900*, box 14, item 14.23, Dargan Papers.

⁷¹ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Forty-Ninth Session 1907-1908* (Louisville: Seminary Press, 1908).

Gardner reinstated Russell's *Vocal Culture* to the list the next year (1908-1909) and kept it until the 1920-1921 school year, when it was replaced with another elocution text, Charles Wesley Emerson's *Evolution of Expression*.⁷² During the 1911-1912 academic year, Gardner added his own *Syllabus of Lectures on Homiletics* to the required reading list and discontinued Dargan's *History of European Preaching*.⁷³ After this addition, Gardner's list remained stable for six years, until the 1917-1918 academic year and the addition *Psychology of Preaching*. Like the two men before him, Gardner turned years of lectures given in the homiletics classroom into classroom texts.

During the 1921-1922 academic year, two works were added to the required reading: Arthur Hoyt's *Vital Elements of Preaching* and Charles Horne's *The Romance of Preaching*. The list remained the same for three years. These years constitute the highest amount of required reading under Gardner. The five titles combined—*Treatise, Psychology of Preaching, Romance of Preaching, Vital Elements of Preaching, and Evolution of Expression*—comprised roughly 1,800 pages of reading, shy of the homiletics record held by Broadus, at 2,500 pages plus other supplemental reading.⁷⁴

Departure and Legacy

In 1929, Gardner, seventy years old and in frail health, retired from the seminary.⁷⁵ His former student, J. B. Weatherspoon, succeeded him as the next professor of homiletics, continuing the unbroken chain of former SBTS students heading the

⁷² This is likely a change initiated by the new elocution assistant that year, R. I. Johnson, and not Gardner's own preference. Johnson would continue to teach elocution as a subset of the homiletics course until it was moved into the School of Public Speaking during the 1924-1925 school year. Elocution would not return under the umbrella of the School of Homiletics again.

⁷³ *Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: Fifty-Second [Third] Session 1911-1912* (Louisville: Seminary Press, 1912).

⁷⁴ These numbers reflect an approximate total page count if all works were read in their entirety. However, as with Dargan and Broadus, whether Gardner required all works to be read in full or in part is not noted by the catalogs.

⁷⁵ Carver, "A Tribute to Charles Spurgeon Gardner," 3.

school. Gardner moved with his second wife to Richmond, Virginia, where they became members of the First Baptist Church.⁷⁶ Despite health concerns, Gardner received and accepted several invitations to return to the seminary. He was invited to give the Norton Lectures during the 1931-1932 academic year, “The Problem of Democracy from the Point of View of Sociology,” and the Founders’ Day Address of 1945, “The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God.”⁷⁷ Gardner resided in Richmond until his death in 1948 at eighty-nine years old.⁷⁸ His body was moved to Louisville for burial in the seminary plot at Cave Hill cemetery. Ellis A. Fuller, president of SBTS at the time, conducted a graveside service, and W. O. Carver helped secure the headstone.⁷⁹

Charles Gardner’s impact on SBTS and within the Southern Baptist Convention is not nearly as widely recognized today as in his, but he was a major figure who shaped a generation of SBC preachers. His Founders’ Day address to the students and faculty captures the potential influence of every professor and the reality of Gardner’s influential tenure at SBTS:

It is my judgment no heavier responsibility rests upon any group of men anywhere in the world than rests upon you who are gathered here today. . . . Those who would administer and teach in this Seminary occupy, when all the facts are considered, the most strategic post in the whole battlefield of Christianity. From this post it is possible, it seems to me, to project one’s influence further, in more different directions and more potently than from any other of which I have any knowledge.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Erwin L. McDonald, “Dr. Charles Spurgeon Gardner” April 3, 1948, box 1, folder 18, p. 30, Gardner Papers.

⁷⁷ Charles Spurgeon Gardner, “The Problem of Democracy from the Point of View of Sociology,” *Review and Expositor* 29, no. 2 (April 1932): 205-22; Gardner, “The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God”; Carver, “A Tribute to Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 3.

⁷⁸ McDonald, “Dr. Charles Spurgeon Gardner,” 30.

⁷⁹ McDonald, “Dr. Charles Spurgeon Garner.” See also the letter from W. O. Carver to Mrs. Charles S. Gardner, April 5, 1948, box 1, folder 18, Gardner Papers.

⁸⁰ Gardner, “The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God.”

Charles Spurgeon Gardner converted many people, especially students who would become preachers in SBC pulpits, to his kingdom of God theology and progressive conservatism.

CHAPTER 5

PRECURSORS OF CHANGE IN THE SCHOOL OF HOMILETICS

The opening chapter of this thesis noted that the “chief object” of SBTS from its founding has been to produce “preachers of the gospel and pastors of the churches.”¹ The chapters following sought to answer how SBTS taught its students to preach, particularly during the first decades of the school’s existence. This thesis has examined the tenure of the first three professors of SBTS’s School of Homiletics: John Broadus, Edwin Dargan, and Charles Gardner, each of whom made unique contributions to the School of Homiletics.

Chapter 2 examined the Broadus era in the School of Homiletics. Broadus’s tenure was full of historic firsts. Broadus created the class from scratch, participated in the relocation of the seminary from Greenville to Louisville, and endured the uncertainty of the pre- and post-war years. He turned his first years of lectures into a textbook, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, that would be used for decades in the School of Homiletics. Broadus’s theology was decidedly Calvinistic, and his homiletic instruction was heavily influenced by classical rhetoric and a desire to see men won to Christ. The Broadus era ended with his death and the ascendancy of Edwin Dargan.

Chapter 3 examined Broadus’s successor, Edwin Dargan. Dargan was a loyal disciple of Broadus who kept the School of Homiletics functioning much the same as it had under Broadus. Dargan produced the only revision of *Treatise* personally authorized

¹ *First Annual Catalogue of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary: 1859-1860* (Charleston, SC: Steam-Power Presses of Evans & Cogswell, 1861), 27.

by Broadus and the revision most in keeping with the original when compared with later revisions. Notably, Dargan replaced Broadus's *History of Preaching* with his own work and introduced SBTS to the field of sociology but kept sociology out of the homiletics curriculum. Like Broadus, Dargan's theology was markedly Calvinistic.² Though he emphasized the social implications of the gospel, his emphasis in this area was checked by a general conservatism, a high view of Scripture, and a restrained view of the local church and its mission. Dargan's departure from SBTS was precipitated by family and possibly faculty tensions.

Chapter 4 examined Charles Gardner and his contribution to the School of Homiletics. Gardner succeeded Dargan and brought about substantial changes. Gardner spent upwards of a third of his homiletics class teaching the principles of functional psychology, principles later reflected in his book *Psychology and Preaching*. Gardner described his theological outlook as *progressive conservatism*, and his preaching shied away from doctrine, focusing more on calls to social action and self-improvement. The Gardner era ended with his retirement due to declining health.

The remainder of this thesis will draw together elements associated with change from across the tenures of the first three professors of homiletics. Specific attention will be given to factors related to the stability or instability of Broadus's original vision for the course. Factors include those intentionally put in place as guards against change but ultimately failing in that endeavor, as well as some that may have played a role in preserving Broadus's vision for a time.

² Dargan's Calvinism is clearly seen in something of a mini systematic theology he wrote for the Baptist Sunday School Board. See especially his chapters on "God's Sovereignty" and "God's Work in Saving Man" in Edwin Charles Dargan, *The Doctrines of Our Faith: A Convenient Handbook for Use in Normal Classes, Sacred Literature Courses, and Individual Study* (Nashville: Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board, 1905).

Factors Insufficient for Maintaining Broadus's Vision

The first set of factors have been selected for examination because they were intended to preserve institutional vision or, if not used explicitly for this purpose, might reasonably be thought to aid in it. While these factors—the presence of a statement of faith, hiring SBTS alumni, and the preaching gifts of the professors of homiletics—proved insufficient, it does not mean they are unimportant, only that in and of themselves they did not guarantee the continuity of Broadus's vision.

The Presence of a Statement of Faith

The SBTS Abstract of Principles is a robust statement of orthodox Christian faith that professors have been made to sign since the beginning of the seminary in 1859.³ Intended as one part compass and one part theological anchor, the Abstract has played a unique role throughout SBTS's 165-year history. Yet, the existence of the Abstract and faculty subscription alone did not prove sufficient to preserve Broadus's original vision for the School of Homiletics. If SBTS history has proved anything, it is that the Abstract can be signed by virtually anyone with a pen and conscience that will allow it.⁴

The Abstract, like all statements of faith, is inherently limited. First, no statement of faith can speak to every issue that will impact a church or religious

³ The Abstract was largely the product of Basil Manly Jr., who utilized the “1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith, the Westminster Confession, the Philadelphia Confession, and the 1833 New Hampshire Confession.” See “SBTS—The Development and Role of the Abstract of Principles,” accessed October 17, 2023, <https://archives.sbts.edu/the-history-of-the-sbts/our-beliefs/the-development-and-role-of-the-abstract-of-principles/>.

⁴ Interestingly, William Mueller, in his history of the seminary, argues that “progressive-conservatism” like that espoused by Gardner harkens all the way back to the original vision of the founding four and was not at odds with the Abstract, while in his history, Gregory Wills places the embrace of progressive-conservatism much later, at the beginning of the Mullins era. Mueller even says of Broadus, “He affirmed himself to be an advocate of progressive orthodoxy.” Mueller's assertion that Broadus affirmed a “progressive orthodoxy” is a misreading of Broadus. The citations Mueller uses to make his argument are from an address where Broadus clearly sets himself in the historical mainstream of biblical interpretation and views of biblical authority, hardly what “progressive-conservatism” and “progressive orthodoxy” meant in Broadus's day or Mueller's. See William A. Mueller, *A History of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959), 52-53, 81; Gregory A. Wills, *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1859-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 230; John Albert Broadus, *Paramount and Permanent Authority of The Bible* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1887).

institution over time. Further, a statement of faith remains a mere piece of paper without leadership that will utilize it as a compass and anchor for those subscribing to it in good faith. Today, Broadus, Dargan, and Gardner's names are inked inside the Abstract's pages, proof that a statement of faith, even one as venerable as the Abstract, is not itself sufficient to prevent the School of Homiletics from being piloted to new and exotic waters.

The Hiring of SBTS Alumni

Hiring alumni to fill important posts within institutions of higher learning is one reasonable measure to aid in the preservation of institutional vision. Throughout its history, SBTS, while not wholly adverse to hiring outsiders, has often hired its own graduates.⁵ Many of the second and third generations of professors were SBTS alumni. Mullins's selected Gardner, for example, in part because of his prior connections to the school.⁶ Although there is value in this practice, this thesis has shown that hiring alumni is no guarantee of vision preservation.

In the early years, the two most guarded faculty positions at SBTS were in systematic theology and homiletics. Not only did Dargan and Gardner study at SBTS, but they did so under the father of the School of Homiletics, Broadus. In Dargan's case, this resulted in the School of Homiletics largely continuing along the same trajectory set by Broadus. However, Gardner's status as a former SBTS student and pupil of Broadus proved no bar to his enacting substantial change in the content taught in the school. Furthermore, the Mullins presidency and Gardner's time in the School of Homiletics

⁵ Technically, Gardner did not finish a course of study at SBTS and was not a graduate of the school. However, he was a student within the school and studied under Broadus. The correspondence between Gardner and Mullins indicates that in the minds of the faculty and its president, he was considered an insider, much in the way schools consider their alumni today. See Edgar Y. Mullins to Charles S. Gardner, May 4, 1907, Letterbook 31, 1906-1908, p. 340, Archives and Special Collections, James P. Boyce Centennial Library, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

⁶ Mullins to Gardner, May 4, 1907.

demonstrate that hiring passionate alumni cannot guarantee the conservation of a particular vision. Mullins and Gardner professed admiration for those who came before them and the institution they served. Gardner was unquestionably a proud Southern man while on faculty and in retirement.⁷ This thesis has shown that alumni can have very different understandings of an institution's historic core values and beliefs—and which are worth preserving.

The Preaching Gifts of the Professors of Homiletics

Filling the post of homiletics professor with a highly gifted preacher is an obvious decision. Broadus was a renowned preacher; therefore, continuity within the school would be aided by successors who were similarly gifted. Second, and more importantly, preaching is the name of the game in the School of Homiletics. In other departments, it may not be essential for professors to be gifted preachers, but in the School of Homiletics, it is a requirement; otherwise, the capability of the instructor and the quality of his instruction would come into question.

The expression *preaching gifts* is used to describe the overall positive or negative response of audiences to each man's preaching, and not necessarily to the sermon content or a supernatural gifting. In this regard, Broadus, Dargan, and Gardner were all gifted preachers and widely praised by their audiences. SBTS hired each of them in part because of his preaching gifts. Yet, preaching prowess alone did not indicate where they led the school. The preaching gifts of Broadus's successors were insufficient to ensure the continuity of Broadus's original vision for the School of Homiletics. A better indicator, described in the next section of this chapter, was the content of each man's preaching.

⁷ See especially Gardner's Founders' Day address to the students and faculty: Charles S. Gardner, "The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God" (Founders' Day address at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, January 11, 1945).

Indicators of Change

Now that attention has been given to some of the factors proving insufficient for sustaining the original vision of the School of Homiletics, attention will be given to factors that might have affected the likelihood of change within the school prior to the hiring of Dargan and Gardner. Granted, with only two eras after Broadus's profiled in this thesis, it is difficult to establish a direct correlation between these factors and the changes in the school. However, these are offered as observations to aid in understanding this crucial juncture in the seminary's history and to encourage or benefit future study.

SBTS Leadership and Culture

Two factors pointing to possible change in the School of Homiletics during the periods studied were (1) SBTS leadership transitions (outside the homiletics classroom) and (2) the seminary's overall culture at the time of each man's hiring. Dargan, who was hired by Broadus and co-taught with him for two years, largely continued Broadus's vision for the School of Homiletics. This vision remained relatively unchanged under the new leadership of Whitsitt and the beginning of the Mullins presidency. Under Dargan, the School of Homiletics existed in something of a Broadus-era time warp, which protected it from trending toward more progressive ideologies and methodologies. The later disjunction between the culture of SBTS under Mullins and Dargan's stewardship of the School of Homiletics may have been a factor in Dargan's departure from the seminary, but it did not lead him to abandon Broadus's vision during his tenure. Thus, the school's leadership and culture at the time of his hire were in continuity with Dargan's conservative shepherding of the School of Homiletics.

Gardner was elected to the faculty under the progressive conservative leadership of E. Y. Mullins and a seminary faculty that was well on its way to fully embracing its president's views. Unsurprisingly, hires made under such conditions, whether in the School of Homiletics or other departments, would tend to have similar

sympathies and lead their departments along those same lines, even if that meant drastic change.

Preaching Content and Style

Throughout its history, SBTS has considered it important to hire homiletics professors who are skilled practitioners, that is, gifted preachers. Broadus, a keen evangelist and rhetorician, preached well-honed, text-driven sermons with clear calls to personal conversion and taught his students to do the same. Dargan followed suit in the pulpit and in the classroom. While not wholly neglecting personal conversion, Gardner focused his preaching most often on social responsibility and character issues. Further, Gardner's scant emphasis on doctrine in his sermons also mirrored the homiletic instruction students would receive in his classroom. Although the preaching gifts of Dargan and Gardner may not have presaged the trajectory of the School of Homiletics, at the very least, a close look at each man's content and style prior to his appointment to the faculty would have signaled a change in emphasis, if not a broader philosophy of preaching.

The Doctrine of Scripture

Among the factors affecting how each man led the School of Homiletics, perhaps none is greater than each man's doctrine of Scripture. A well-rounded doctrine of Scripture, among other things, involves convictions regarding inspiration, authority, sufficiency, and clarity. To a large degree, a person's doctrine of Scripture sets the course for the rest of their theology and practice. For reference, Article 1 of the Abstract, "On the Scriptures," reads, "The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving

knowledge, faith and obedience.”⁸ This was the minimum standard to which professors at SBTS were called to believe and instruct students.

Broadus considered Scripture the supreme authority and the foundation on which he constructed his view of the world, ministry, and the task of preaching. “Other authorities,” he said, “may be recognized and duly regarded; but not on any equality with the Bible.”⁹ Broadus also spoke clearly and precisely regarding the divine inspiration of all Scripture: “The Bible is the word of God; not merely that it contains the word of God, which wise persons may disentangle from other things in the book, but that it is the word of God.”¹⁰ Prior generations of biblical scholars may have thought this statement unnecessary. However, the rise of German higher criticism, including its arrival at SBTS in the person of Crawford H. Toy, made such statements extremely necessary. Broadus also held to the inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture:

It does not follow that our interpretations are infallible. It is entirely possible that we may have no creed nor system of theology, no professors, nor even preachers, nor even newspaper writers, nor writers of tracts, that can always interpret the Bible with infallible success. But our persuasion is that the real meaning of the Bible is true. This being the case, something else immediately follows, viz., the Bible is to us the highest authority for religious truth. Wherever it undertakes to teach, its teachings are true. It does not attempt to teach on all subjects. It uses popular language, which must be interpreted accordingly. But, whatever it intends to teach, that is paramount in authority. If this were not so, we should really have no Bible.¹¹

Again, Broadus unabashedly declared a conservative orthodox view of Scripture and its authority.

Dargan held a similarly high view of Scripture, writing, “We may say with all confidence that, passing by a few minor difficulties which may yet be explained, the

⁸ Article I of the Abstract of Principles reads, “The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience.” See “Abstract of Principles,” The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.sbts.edu/abstract-of-principles/>.

⁹ Broadus, *Paramount and Permanent Authority of The Bible*, 4.

¹⁰ Broadus, *Paramount and Permanent Authority of The Bible*, 3.

¹¹ Broadus, *Paramount and Permanent Authority of The Bible*, 3.

Bible is free from error, as the absolute authority and guide in matters of religion.”¹²

Dargan also said, “Its clear teachings are information of inestimable value in themselves, and all that we may learn and infer from other sources about religious truth is to be tried by this divine test.”¹³

While Broadus and Dargan held closely aligned views regarding the doctrine of Scripture, Gardner’s view is harder to discern because his statements about Scripture are less precise. A typical Gardner description of the Bible is found in his 1945 address to the seminary, “The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God”:

This seminary has been marked by a high appreciation of the Bible. It is not bibliolatry. We do not worship a book, but gratefully recognize the Bible as the greatest spiritual treasure of the human race. Suppose the Bible were eliminated from the life of the world. O! What a blackout that would be! Like blotting the sun from the sky! Along with this high appreciation of the Bible, has stood absolute loyalty to Jesus whose life and death story is the rich, ripe fruitage of this supreme revelation of God through the ages.¹⁴

Indeed, SBTS had been marked by a “high appreciation of the Bible” from its inception, but that appreciation was not without a well-articulated view of an orthodox doctrine of Scripture. While it would be difficult for a conservative or progressive to find fault with Gardner’s statement concerning the seminary’s “appreciation of Scripture,” it is much easier to see direct parallels to the Abstract in Broadus and Dargan’s writings than in Gardner’s statements. Though it might be anachronistic to claim that Gardner is guilty of the same kind of eloquent obfuscation that characterized later SBTS faculty members, students of the seminary’s history are nevertheless likely to hear inklings of that future in Gardner’s statements on Scripture.

While Gardner’s view on the inerrancy and authority of Scripture may have

¹² Edwin Charles Dargan, *The Doctrines of Our Faith: A Convenient Handbook for Use in Normal Classes, Sacred Literature Courses, and Individual Study* (Nashville: Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board, 1905), 22.

¹³ Dargan, *The Doctrines of Our Faith*, 24.

¹⁴ Gardner, “The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God,” 9-10.

played a role in how the School of Homiletics evolved under his care, a more obvious element contributing to the school's evolution under his leadership was his view of the sufficiency of Scripture. The sufficiency of Scripture is a subset of the overall doctrine of Scripture, dealing with what Scripture is able and intended by God to accomplish. Though he never stated it explicitly, Gardner's heavy reliance on the social sciences in his classes indicates that he viewed Scripture as insufficient for theological education, specifically preaching in the School of Homiletics. Whereas Paul says, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:16-17), Gardner had a competing authority, functional psychology, that promised to assist where Scripture came up short in the training of his students.

The main benefits Gardner hoped to gain from functional psychology are the very things Scripture says it is capable of doing: "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Heb 4:12). Rather than trust the content of the Scriptures rightly preached to operate on men's souls, Gardner reached for the scalpel of functional psychology and convinced a generation of his students to do so as well.

Conclusion

The importance of preaching to the health of the local church cannot be overstated. The founders of SBTS understood this when they declared the training of preachers and pastors to be the chief goal of their seminary. As Steve Lawson is fond of saying, "So goes the pulpit, so goes the church."¹⁵ However, upstream of most pulpits is the homiletics classroom, where preaching is taught. Gardner, whose vision for the

¹⁵ Steven Lawson, "One Task: Preach the Word," Ligonier Ministries, January 1, 2010, <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/preach-word>.

homiletics classroom at SBTS has been heavily critiqued in this thesis, said it well: “In the long run and in the average the character and influence of teachers is projected through the whole career of those educated under them. On the average religious tone of our schools is going to reappear in the religious tone of our churches. . . . Teachers have a greater power to shape the type of Christianity that is to prevail.”¹⁶

John Broadus, Edwin Dargan, and Charles Gardner were entrusted with tremendous power. Each left indelible marks on pulpits throughout the Southern Baptist Convention. Those who care about the health of current and future pulpits in the Southern Baptist Convention should learn from the homiletics classrooms of the past.

¹⁶ Charles Spurgeon Gardner, “Is Christian Education a Vital Part of Evangelization?,” *The Religious Herald*, March 31, 1904, box 1, folder 13, Gardner Papers.

APPENDIX 1

BROADUS, DARGAN, GARDNER, AND RACE

A Terrible Contradiction

SBTS's history regarding race and slavery is well-documented, and each of the men profiled in this thesis held views out of step with biblical truth. A report commissioned by the seminary in 2018 titled *Report on Slavery and Racism in the History of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* mentions Broadus, Dargan, and Gardner. Thus, an examination of their lives must reckon with this piece of their legacy.

The seminary report has the most to say about Broadus, the eldest of the three men. Broadus was the only member of the three to own a slave, though the outcome of the Civil War and the emancipation of enslaved men and women in the United States almost certainly would have made owning slaves impossible for Dargan and Gardner. Though he desired that the South avoid war, Broadus was nonetheless a full-fledged supporter of the Confederacy once war was declared. He was also in favor of segregation within the seminary, at least regarding black students, yet he also supported the training of black preachers outside the seminary, praising “the work of the Richmond Theological Seminary” and later becoming one of their trustees.¹ Broadus also “chastised white Christians for assuming their worship was more acceptable to God than that offered by black Christians” and condemned American slavery a full thirteen years before his death.² However, Broadus would never support the training of African American preachers

¹ The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, *Report on Slavery and Racism in the History of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Louisville: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018), 48. Hereafter, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will be abbreviated SBTS.

² SBTS, *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 7.

within the walls of SBTS.

The seminary's report has the least to say about Dargan. Dargan appears to have lamented "indecencies" inflicted on the South as a result of the Civil War.³ Contained in the seminary's report, however, is a lengthy quote from a letter Dargan wrote to Broadus. The passage appears to show that Dargan was mostly pleased with the continued "ascendancy" of "native white" inhabitants of the South over blacks, though he expressed disapproval of the violent and underhanded means some whites had employed to ensure this.⁴ To his credit, Dargan "openly criticized . . . Lost Cause mythology," a popular belief in the South that the Civil War's primary cause was state's rights, not slavery.⁵ No record of Dargan's views on training black and white students together is mentioned, but, like Broadus, Dargan was willing to instruct black students in segregated contexts. He participated in the New Era Institute, a training program created by the Kentucky Baptist Convention aimed at training black ministers.⁶

As noted, Gardner's early, shockingly low view of the intelligence and moral aptitude of people of African origin was connected to his views of their evolutionary descent and the racial pseudo-science of his day.⁷ Gardner justified many of the "segregation codes of the Jim Crow South,"⁸ yet he condemned many abuses of black people, including lynching and harassment. He argued that white Christians had a duty to help blacks because of their (blacks) inferior endowments—a sub-biblical and condescending position, but one Gardner believed warranted by science and Jesus's call

³ Edwin Charles Dargan, *Harmony Hall: Recollections of an Old Southern Home, 1852-1882* (Columbia, SC: The State Company, 1912), 49.

⁴ SBTS, *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 32.

⁵ SBTS, *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 47.

⁶ SBTS, *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 49.

⁷ See Charles S. Gardner, "The Negro and the White Man," box 2, folder 8, p. 6, Gardner Papers.

⁸ SBTS, *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 52.

to help the weak and less fortunate. During his time at SBTS, Gardner's views on race noticeably shifted, and he eventually argued that no inferiority existed between the races. Henry Warnock connects Gardner's later, more progressive views on race with the entrance of black students to the seminary in 1951: "It was only a generation from Gardner's denial of racial inferiority to the Southern Seminary's admission of blacks as full academic citizens."⁹ Ultimately, it may have been Gardner's influence, more than any other faculty member during this time, that led to the first black students being taught how to preach at SBTS.

For each negative element unearthed about these men and their views on race, there also exists a flawed yet counter-intuitive element that gives nuance to a portrait of their lives. This does not excuse the sin of their views and actions, but it does prevent a two-dimensional understanding of their persons. The faith they espoused did not keep them from grave sin regarding race and slavery, but it does seem to have kept them from their worst expressions if it. The seminary's report aptly describes the legacy of many of its faculty, saying that these men held "contradictory commitments to both the essential inferiority and the divinely assigned human equality of blacks."¹⁰ It was a tragic contradiction, and nothing in this thesis should be interpreted as an endorsement of their views on slavery and race.

⁹ Henry Y. Warnock, "Prophets of Change: Some Southern Baptist Leaders and the Problem of Race, 1900-1921," *Baptist History and Heritage* 7, no. 3 (July 1972): 183.

¹⁰ SBTS, *Report on Slavery and Racism*, 33.

APPENDIX 2

BROADUS, DARGAN, AND GARDNER'S REQUIRED READING AT A GLANCE

Below is a chart reflecting the required reading listed in the seminary's course catalogs under Broadus, Dargan, and Gardner. Shading within the table denotes each year a different man took over the professorship and the years including and immediately following the Civil War (1861-1868). The chart reflects the titles as documented in the catalogs, although in many instances, a book's title in the catalog differs from its published title. For example, some are abbreviations, and others appear to contain minor unintentional errors. Also, while this chart reflects the books singled out as required texts for the homiletics class, typically found in the section of each catalog and designated as "Text-Books," the catalogs also frequently refer to other reading without specifying definite titles or amounts. Only works positively identified by title as being read by the homiletics class are listed.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1859-1860	John Albert Broadus	Ripley's Sacred Rhetoric, with portions of Vinet's Homiletics, and various Sermons. ¹
1860-1861	John Albert Broadus	Ripley's Sacred Rhetoric, with portions of Vinet's Homiletics, and Whatley's Rhetoric, and various Sermons as mentioned above.
1861-1862	N/A	N/A
1862-1863	N/A	N/A
1863-1864	N/A	N/A
1864-1865	N/A	N/A
1865-1866	N/A	N/A
1866-1867	N/A	N/A
1867-1868	N/A	N/A
1868-1869	John Albert Broadus	Ripley's Sacred Rhetoric, with portions of Vinet's Homiletics, and Whatley's Rhetoric, and various Sermons
1869-1870	Basil Manly Jr.	Broadus on Preparation and Delivery of Sermons
1870-1871	Basil Manly Jr.	Broadus on Preparation and Delivery of Sermons
1871-1872	N/A	Broadus on Preparation and Delivery of Sermons
1872-1873	John Albert Broadus	Broadus on Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, "Beecher's volume"
1873-1874	John Albert Broadus	Broadus on Preaching; Beecher's Yale Lectures on Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the 19th Century.
1874-1875	John Albert Broadus	Broadus on Preaching; Beecher's Yale Lectures on Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the 19th Century.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1875-1876	John Albert Broadus	Broadus On Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence
1876-1877	John Albert Broadus	Broadus On Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence
1877-1878	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching some volume of the Yale Lectures, or of Spurgeon's Lectures to his Students; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1878-1879	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; some volume of the Yale Lectures, or of Spurgeon's Lectures to his Students; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1879-1880	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; some volume of the Yale Lectures, or of Spurgeon's Lectures to his Students; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1880-1881	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; some volume of the Yale Lectures, or of Spurgeon's Lectures to his Students; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1881-1882	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; some volume of the Yale Lectures, or of Spurgeon's Lectures to his Students; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1882-1883	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1883-1884	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1884-1885	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1885-1886	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1886-1887	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Beecher's Yale Lectures, First Series; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1887-1888	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Beecher's Yale Lectures, First Series; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1888-1889	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Beecher's Yale Lectures, First Series; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1889-1890	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Beecher's Yale Lectures, First Series; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1890-1891	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Beecher's Yale Lectures, First Series; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1891-1892	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1892-1893	John Albert Broadus	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1893-1894	John Albert Broadus, Co-Professor Edwin Charles Dargan	The Professor's Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, and his Lectures on the History of Preaching; Fish's Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence, and Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century.
1894-1895	John Albert Broadus, Co-Professor Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, History of Preaching, and Syllabus of Hymnology; The Homiletical Exercise Book; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1895-1896	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, History of Preaching, and Syllabus of Hymnology; The Homiletical Exercise Book; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1896-1897	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, History of Preaching, and Syllabus of Hymnology; The Homiletical Exercise Book; Russell's Vocal Culture.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1897-1898	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), History of Preaching, and Syllabus of Hymnology; The Homiletical Exercise Book; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1898-1899	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), History of Preaching, and Syllabus of Hymnology; The Homiletical Exercise Book; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1899-1900	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), History of Preaching, and Syllabus of Hymnology; The Homiletical Exercise Book; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1900-1901	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), History of Preaching, and Syllabus of Hymnology; The Homiletical Exercise Book; Russell's Vocal Culture; Campbell's Hymns and Hymn Makers
1901-1902	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), History of Preaching, Russell's Vocal Culture; Campbell's Hymns and Hymn Makers; Sursum Corda (hymn book).
1902-1903	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), History of Preaching, Russell's Vocal Culture; Campbell's Hymns and Hymn Makers; Sursum Corda (hymn book).

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1903-1904	Edwin Charles Dargan	Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), Broadus's History of Preaching; Russel's Vocal Culture
1904-1905	Edwin Charles Dargan	Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), Dargan's History of Preaching and Syllabus on Modern European Preaching; Russel's Vocal Culture.
1905-1906	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), Dargan's History of Preaching and Syllabus on Modern European Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1906-1907	Edwin Charles Dargan	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (revised edition), Dargan's History of Preaching and Syllabus on Modern European Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1907-1908	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition, and Dargan's History of Preaching.
1908-1909	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition, and Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1909-1910	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition, and Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1910-1911	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition, and Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1911-1912	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; The Professor's Syllabus of Lectures on Homiletics; Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1912-1913	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; The Professor's Syllabus of Lectures on Homiletics; Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1913-1914	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; The Professor's Syllabus of Lectures on Homiletics; Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1914-1915	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; The Professor's Syllabus of Lectures on Homiletics; Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1915-1916	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; The Professor's Syllabus of Lectures on Homiletics; Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1916-1917	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; The Professor's Syllabus of Lectures on Homiletics; Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1917-1918	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1918-1919	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Dargan's History of Preaching; Russell's Vocal Culture.
1919-1920	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Dargan's History of Preaching; Shoemaker's Elocution.
1920-1921	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Dargan's History of Preaching; Emerson's The Evolution of Expression.
1921-1922	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Horne's Romance of Preaching; Hoyt's Vital Elements of Preaching; Emerson's The Evolution of Expression.
1922-1923	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Horne's Romance of Preaching; Hoyt's Vital Elements of Preaching; Emerson's The Evolution of Expression.
1923-1924	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Horne's Romance of Preaching; Hoyt's Vital Elements of Preaching; Emerson's The Evolution of Expression.

Academic Year	Preaching Professor	Textbooks
1924-1925	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Horne's Romance of Preaching; Hoyt's Vital Elements of Preaching.
1925-1926	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Horne's Romance of Preaching; Hoyt's Vital Elements of Preaching.
1926-1927	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Horne's Romance of Preaching; Hoyt's Vital Elements of Preaching.
1927-1928	Charles Spurgeon Gardner	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Horne's Romance of Preaching; Hoyt's Vital Elements of Preaching.
1928-1929	Jesse Burton Weatherspoon	Broadus's Preparation and Delivery of Sermons, revised edition; Gardner's Psychology and Preaching; Horne's Romance of Preaching; Hoyt's Vital Elements of Preaching.

APPENDIX 3

GARDNER'S VIEW OF SBTS AND ITS HISTORY

What follows is a transcript of Gardner's 1945 Founders' Day address to the students and faculty of SBTS, titled "The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God." This address is an excellent example of his matured understanding of the seminary and its history.¹

¹ Charles S. Gardner, "The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God" (Founders' Day address at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, January 11, 1945).

The Seminary as a Factor in the Kingdom of God

It has long been a matter of sentimental interest to me that the seminary and I were born the same year. That means nothing to the seminary, of course, but a great deal to me. However, it should be borne in mind that the years which bring old age and decrepitude to a man mean only youth and vigor to a great institution. And I confidently believe that the seminary is in its youth; that the days of its greatest achievement and usefulness lie ahead of it and not behind it.

I have chosen this theme because I believe that without egotism I can claim some qualification to speak with a measure of authority on it. I have studied the seminary from the standpoint of a student in it; from the standpoint of a pastor on the field; from the standpoint of a teacher of important subjects in it; and from the standpoint of an emeritus or retired professor. And I believe that each of these points of view has its specific advantage for a true appraisal of the institution's work. I have had the privilege of knowing more or less intimately each of its six presidents; and have had also a more or less intimate acquaintance with all the other men who have been professors in the institution, with the exception of two members of the earlier Faculty, Dr. William Williams and Dr. Crawford H. Toy; and also with the exception of two or three of the latest additions [sic] to its present Faculty. There are, I think, only two men living who are better qualified to discuss this theme by reason of long and intimate acquaintance with the inner life of the seminary. I refer to my friends and colleagues, Dr. Sampey and Dr. Carver.

The seminary, I have said, is in its youth; but it has lived long enough to have made significant history, and to have established for itself a unique position among the factors that are working for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

As one surveys that history it becomes impressively apparent that it covers one of the most important epochs in the whole life of Christianity. To help grasp the

importance of this epoch, let us note some of the great tidal movements in the thinking and practical affairs of men that have distinguished it.

I. First, I call attention to the mighty tide of evolutionary philosophy that has swept over the world. It is a rather striking coincidence that in the very year in which the seminary opened its doors Charles Darwin published his epoch-making book, "The Origin of Species." Now, some form of the evolution theory had been held by some thinkers from the days of ancient Greek philosophy. But Darwin's work gave it a mighty hold upon the imagination of this age; and its repercussions were mightily felt throughout the whole range of human affairs; and human interests were disturbed about it in proportion to their fundamental character. Nowhere, therefore, was it felt more disturbingly than in religion. The whole edifice of Christian theology was shaken to its foundation. Some indeed hastily jumped to the conclusion that evolution eliminated God from the universe as a personal, active, creative agent; and that, of course, knocked out the very foundation of religious life, as religion had always been understood.

So pervasive and extensive became the influence of this evolution theory that there was no escaping it. It permeated all literature—history, fiction, poetry—and found more or less crude expression in periodicals of every description, including the weekly and daily newspapers; and very general became the tendency to give it a purely physical or materialistic connotation. Many shortsighted people hastily concluded that it had eliminated from among realities not only God, but everything which could not be apprehended and measured by the physical senses of human beings.

One of the curious fruits of this new philosophy was the notion that progress is necessary and inevitable; is, indeed, a law of nature, an expression of the constitution of the universe, and is as true of humanity as of the lower orders of life. Man and his social institutions must according to this notion, continually improve as he moves toward the realization of ever-expanding and higher ideals.

Along with this trend of thought many men came to assume that man is the

highest and most significant being of whom we have any real knowledge; and this led to the glorification, if not the deification, of man. This type of humanism has infected the theological thinking of a considerable group of men in a most subtle and pervasive manner. For example, I have heard it boldly declared by a minister of the gospel from a university platform: "There is nothing outside of man that is necessary to his salvation."

This type of humanistic theology—as indeed the whole body of thought of which it is a part—has received a setback within the last twenty-five years. The theological reaction in Europe led by Karl Barth, who has also exerted a notable influence in American thought, has tended to depose man from the high pedestal upon which some liberal enthusiasts had placed him. And for the present, at least, the idea of the inherent and self-sufficient perfectibility of man is in partial eclipse. But the end is not yet, and that notion still persists as an insidious influence in the intellectual life of our time—strong enough to affect, if not to determine the theological thinking of a considerable number of men.

But that number diminishes as in this day men stand aghast in contemplation of the unspeakable world-tragedy which this man-god has brought upon himself as he enthusiastically devotes to the purposes of wholesale destruction all the achievements of his boasted progress.

In the meantime, the anti-theistic pride of this philosophy has been punctured by another scientific discovery. When De Vries announced the discovery of the immensely important fact of "mutation," another turn was given to this whole theory. There is no time now to elaborate, but in short, it indicates that fundamental changes sometimes take place in those primary elements of life called "genes," thus giving rise to new species; and also that so far as physical science has been able to determine the specific character of these changes cannot be traced to physical causes. On the basis of these facts the great South African statesman and thinker, Jan Smuts, has built his doctrine of "Emergent Evolution;" and it is becoming more and more apparent to clear

thinking that the demonstrable facts which are alleged as the basis of the evolution theory do not at all preclude the direct creative activity of God in the processes of nature and life. But still the battle rages; and agitation still prevades [sic] the whole theological realm.

II. Another coincidence—hardly less striking—is to be noted. Just eleven years before the seminary opened its doors Karl Marx and Frederick Engels published their famous “Communist Manifesto” and proceeded to organize the German “Workingmen’s Association.” That publication and that organization gave initial form and direction to the international socialist movement. Just eight years after the opening of the seminary, Marx, having been banished from Germany and taken refuge in London, published the first volume of his monumental work “Das Kapital.” Thus was launched about the time this beloved institution unfurled its banner, that great socialistic revolutionary movement which has disturbed the very foundations of the social order, and is apparently moving toward its culmination in the tremendously tragic days in which we live.

This movement also has reacted with colossal force upon Christianity both in its theological, or doctrinal, content and in its practical expression. There is likewise no possibility of evading it. The insistent question rises and is echoed by increasing millions of voices: What has Christianity to say that precipitated a great racial revolution which has not yet run its course, and appears now to be but a local phase of a world-wide racial problem which is subjecting our religion to a most severe strain?

In the face of all these difficulties, economic, political and racial, the question is pressed upon our consciences, has not the Christian, in the very act of accepting Jesus as Savior and Lord, committed himself to principles of action and a way of life which sharply separate him from the world about him and inevitably bring him into painful conflict with that world? This conflict was uppermost in the consciousness of the early Christians. In this conflict they found their cross, as did their Lord before them. If we avoid this conflict by going with the world in its ways of thinking and acting, do we not

thereby eliminate the cross from the Christianity of our day? These questions are strenuously pressed upon the conscience of Christendom today, and are deeply disturbing multitudes throughout the world.

III. All these disturbing factors in the life of this epoch have been heavily accentuated by a situation which has developed during the life of the seminary, and which seems to me unprecedented in all previous human history. Herbert Spencer once declared that the world develops through a series of alternate processes of differentiation and integration. Now, in preceding times the process of differentiation prevailed; and in that process the earth came to be filled with widely variant races; with nations that were strikingly divergent in mentality and in political organization and ideals; many of them intensely ambitious to acquire power and to extend their sway over large areas of the earth; but quite unequal in their capacity or opportunity to do so. The natural resources of the earth thus became more and more unequally distributed amongst them. At the same time in the internal economic development of each nation occupational groups became highly differentiated and deplorably unequal in their privileges, possessions and power.

But in recent years, man's scientific control over the forces of nature has led to an incredible improvement in to a society distracted and torn asunder by internal conflicts and disturbing ethical agitations, which too often drown the voice of the minister and cripple the churches in their efforts to win the masses of men? Must Christianity stand dumb before this scene?

IV. In this connection it is well to recall still another coincidence. When the seminary opened its doors our country was already under the shadow of the most terrific storm that has ever yet darkened our domestic landscape, a storm the means and methods of travel and intercommunication; and all these variant, divergent and potentially antagonistic types of humanity have with almost stunning suddenness been brought into increasingly close contact. Now, it is a well known law of human association that when widely diverse types of men are drawn more and more closely together the more certainly

and the more violently will conflict flare up between them. Physical proximity without mental and spiritual harmony usually results in disaster in human relations. And surely we are now witnessing in these chaotic and discordant times the demonstration of this truth on a truly global scale. It is “One World.” Yes, but it is also a thousand more or less violent antagonisms integrated into one terrific [sic] world conflict.

V. I must call attention to one other line of development which has paralleled the life of the seminary. It is not possible to say just when the sectarian antagonisms which developed after the Reformation reached their zenith; but it is safe to say that it was not far from the middle of the nineteenth century. Following this came the more or less rapid abatement of sectarian bitterness; and the last two or three decades have been signalized by growing denominational fraternity; and that has been followed by the rapid rise of the modern ecumenical movement. “Christians throughout the world must get together” is the cry which one hears on every hand. And it is hardly a matter of wonder that many men under the spell of this enthusiasm should overlook the fact that this is not the first time that an ecumenical movement has run its course in the history of Christianity. The first ecumenical movement in the course of several centuries, we know, resulted in the creation and development of the Catholic church; and there are some cautious souls, who while maintaining an attitude of brotherly affection for all, of whatever name, who love the Lord Jesus, are warning that the development of another Catholic church is by no means desirable. You may take the suggestion for what it is worth; but it seems a curious fact that the present ecumenical enthusiasts have not taken the trouble to invent a new terminology for their movement, but have adopted the same old phrase, “church council,” to describe the organizations through which their movement is developing, apparently forgetting that the Catholic system was developed through a series of church councils and seemed to be a logical resultant of them.

But I have dwelt too long on the historical environment in which the seminary has been functioning; and must now consider the more important question, HOW has the

seminary functioned under such conditions?

I. I must emphasize the consistent and persistent attitude which the seminary has maintained through all the confusion and disturbing agitations of this epoch. That attitude has been one of open-minded conservatism. Now, in such periods of profound agitation and conflict two trends will always become apparent among men. One is a trend toward radicalism and the other toward purblind traditionalism. These extremes both become dogmatic and intolerant. The period I have been discussing has developed these extremes in extraordinary strength, and between them they have kept the minds of men in extraordinary turmoil. Often the conflict between them has been waged with great bitterness.

In such circumstances it is not easy to be moderate; it becomes really difficult to be conservative and yet openminded and progressive. Whoever endeavors to do so becomes a target for both extremes and is caught in a withering cross-fire. This has been strikingly true of this institution throughout nearly all its history. While in active service here I used to try to calculate from which direction came the most galling fire; and after trying to do this for many years I reached the conclusion that the fire from these opposite directions was about equally sharp. The reactionaries insisted that we were preparing to surrender the citadel of Christianity to its would-be destroyers; and the radicals insisted with equal vehemence that we had closed our minds, and worse, were attempting to close the minds of students to all new truth and every fresh insight into the great mysteries of the universe. Of course, they were both wrong, and a good proof of that was the fact that their dogmatic charges flatly contradicted each other. If we were going over to radicalism, why did the radicals find so much fault with us? Or if we were drifting into purblind traditionalism, why should the reactionaries be firing at us?

Those great men who with much toil and many tears laid the foundations of this institution and gave it its orientation perceived the immensely important principle that one most surely finds the truth who seeks for it with a conservative and reverent

spirit, but with an open mind; and if the two are not always found together, it is not because they are inconsistent with one another. Let us be grateful that those who took up this work as it fell from the hands of the founders did not lose this true insight into the conditions of successful search for truth.

II. From the first the emphasis here has been upon training men for practical efficiency in the work of the ministry—the preaching of the gospel and pastoral service. This seminary has by no means discounted scholarship nor undervalued intellectual culture. On the contrary it has developed some scholars of world renown. But it has valued scholarship and culture not as ends in themselves but as they contributed to efficiency in the minister's special task. In this emphasis it seems to be following the great Master. However one may estimate the various phases of our Lord's earthly work—and it is impossible to overestimate his revelation of the Eternal Father, or his atoning sacrifice, or his triumph over death, whereby the gospel was created—it must nevertheless be acknowledged that an exceedingly important part of his earthly ministry was the training of a group of men to be the heralds of his gospel to the world. To this much of his time and energy was devoted. Preaching, **preaching**, PREACHING, supplemented by the pastoral care of souls—that was and is his chosen method of preparation for the coming of the Kingdom of God. And I submit that there is no more important work to be done by his people in this or in any time than the proper training of men for this supremely vital function in the work of the Kingdom.

III. In the third place, this seminary has been characterized by a high appreciation of the Bible. It is not bibliolatry. We do not worship a book, but we gratefully recognize the Bible as the greatest spiritual treasure of the human race. Suppose the Bible eliminated from the life of the world. O, what a blackout that would be! Like blotting the sun from the sky! Along with this high appreciation of the Bible, has stood absolute loyalty to Jesus, whose life and death story is the rich, ripe fruitage of this supreme revelation of God through the ages.

This attitude of the seminary is exemplified not only in the emphasis placed upon its great courses in the Old and New Testaments; but is apparent in every other course given here. The course in Theology, for instance, is but the analysis and synthesis in a philosophical framework of the fundamental truths about God and man set forth in the Bible. The course in Church History, when boiled down, is only the story of the fidelity or laxity with which organized Christianity in its polities and practices has adhered to the principles of the New Testament. The course in homiletics has emphasized the presentation of Biblical truth in the manner best calculated to win the sincere acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. And so on with every course given in this school. Appreciation of the Bible and loyalty to Jesus are the essential spirit of the institution. For it is the deep and abiding conviction of those who work here that Jesus Christ must be the cornerstone of civilization if civilization is to endure; and that his way is the only way for the individual soul to find peace with God and an entrance into the life eternal. There is no hope for the individual and no hope for human society except in him! Along with absolute loyalty to Jesus Christ the seminary has stressed, as a necessary corollary, the principle of the freedom of the individual soul in matters of conscience and faith. No human constraint, political or ecclesiastical, is permissible. Only Christ commands the soul, and that authority is not and cannot be delegated to any earthly individual, any earthly potentate, or any institution or government. This is spiritual democracy and the foundation of any other democracy worthy of the name.

IV. Our seminary has emphasized and magnified in an extraordinary way the final command of the Lord Jesus, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," etc. So far as my knowledge goes no other educational institution in the world has done so much to develop and give direction to the spirit of world missions. Indeed, I do not hesitate to express my conviction that this seminary is the greatest power for the missionary enterprise which Baptists have in the world; and I doubt whether I should not omit the denomination limitation. This dynamic influence in Foreign Missions

has been due for the most part to the establishment of the course in “Comparative Religion and Missions” and the brilliant work in that course done by our distinguished missionary scholar and statesman, W. O. Carver. In addition, the monthly missionary day exercises—so marked a feature of the life of this institution—have also made a notable contribution to this end. No student with a sensitive spirit can spend a year in this seminary without having his soul fired with holy zeal for this blessed cause. Every one of the multitude of men who come here to study and go out into the pastorate carries with him an infectious enthusiasm for that cause which is communicated in some measure to his people; and literally hundreds of the men and women who study here dedicate their lives to the preaching and teaching of the everlasting gospel in many foreign lands.

Well, I am not claiming perfection for this institution. It is a human institution, manned by fallible human beings; and that means imperfection in all its work. I have been stating the ideals and standards adopted by its founders, and loyally accepted by those who followed them. No one who has ever worked here has claimed for the seminary perfection; nor claimed exemption for himself from legitimate criticism. In this democratically controlled institution we know that the critical eyes of our brethren are upon us and should be upon us. We only ask that the criticism be understanding and brotherly, considerate and sympathetic; constructive and not destructive. For it is certainly true that on the whole, notwithstanding temporary short-comings and individual failures, inevitable in any human institution, this seminary has loyally adhered to the high standards set up by its noble founders; and we believe that the presence of this multitude of capable students drawn from every section of our country and, under normal conditions, from many foreign lands, is incontestible [sic] evidence that it commands the confidence of the great host of our Baptist people in all parts of the world.

I close by saying that in my judgment no heavier responsibility rests upon any group of men any where in the world than rests upon you who are gathered here today. First, are you members of the Faculty? Those who administer and teach in this seminary

occupy, when all the facts are considered, the most strategic post in the whole battlefield of Christianity. From this post it is possible, it seems to me, to project one's influence further, in more different directions and more potently than from any other of which I have any knowledge. Do these words sound extravagant? I tell you, NO. They are spoken advisedly, as the result of long study and profound conviction. God has called you to an unparalleled [sic] opportunity. Are you students? You are preparing to go out and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, absolutely the only effective answer to the desperate needs of this tragic world, whether those needs be individual, national or international, moral, spiritual, economic, political or racial. Let us shout it to the whole world. There is absolutely no other remedy for the evils of this world, individual or social. And you are the heralds of that gospel! O, how can a man stand up to preach that gospel to this needy world without feeling his heart break!

Such is my last message to you. And so, hail and farewell.

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ABSTRACT

THE EVOLUTION OF HOMILETIC INSTRUCTION AT THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY FROM JOHN BROADUS TO CHARLES GARDNER

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2024
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This thesis describes the evolution of homiletic instruction at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary across the tenures of its first three preaching professors, John Broadus, Edwin Dargan, and Charles Gardner, and argues that there was a significant shift away from Broadus's original conception of the course toward early twentieth-century modernism and psychology under Gardner's leadership. Chapter 1 surveys the relevant literature related to the early School of Homiletics at SBTS and the current void in the literature. The next three chapters present the tenures of Broadus (chap. 2), Dargan (chap. 3), and Gardner (chap. 4), describing the School of Homiletics under each professor's leadership by analyzing the school's catalogs, each professor's works, and the required reading for homiletics. Chapter 5 draws together elements associated with change from across the tenures of the first three professors of homiletics, with attention given to their relation to the stability or instability of Broadus's original vision.

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