

High Lights
of
Twenty Years



ADDRESS

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HAD I the skill of an artist I would paint for you a picture in unforgettable colors—a picture showing so clearly the outlines of a noble undertaking that your hearts would be captivated, your souls enthralled. Lacking this gift, I call upon your memory and imagination to wield a magic brush.

The background of this reminiscent picture is, I think, a blending of vision, far-reaching and broad, of faith, and of bright-hued, all-conquering courage. Distinct against that background are the figures of the men and women who gathered in Broadway Church, Louisville, Ky., to celebrate that great adventure of Woman's Missionary Union, her Training School for Christian workers. Very modest, yet tremulously happy were the women of the local Board of Managers, represented by Mrs. S. E. Woody and Mrs. Geo. B. Eager. A roll call of that Board showed other names beloved of Baptists—Broadus, and McGlothlin, and Moses, and Whayne, and Huston, and Marvin, and Pratt, and Creal, and Druien, and Herancourt, and all the rest. Assiduously had they worked, bearing unflinchingly criticism and reproach, that a great need might be filled. Truly could they say, "If it had not been Jehovah was on our side, the waters had overwhelmed us." Now they had achieved—Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention, would organize and operate the school, the child of their love and prayers.

Calm and keen and thoughtful was our peerless President of the Union, Miss F. E. S. Heck, as she brought her fine intellect to bear on the weighty matter of launching a school with a world-wide mission, while with her were the women from the different States

representing the State Unions. The President and the professors of the Seminary were there, showing deep brotherly interest, and Dr. Gray, of the Home Mission Board, and Dr. W. H. Smith, of the Foreign Mission Board, wished us godspeed in behalf of their respective boards. Dr. Frost, of sainted memory, reinforced the greetings of the Sunday School Board by a check for \$20,500.00, thus enabling the school to enter its own building free of debt. And even among the shadows of our spacious picture never does the incubus of debt rear its ugly head, so wise has been the management of the Local Board, and so constant the support of the Union at large. Thus there is a high light in our picture showing the auspicious beginning.

The next group which catches the light is the one which celebrates the first Commencement, and it was fitting that these exercises should have been held in the Walnut Street Church, the mother church of this city. Dr. Mullins presided, and on the platform with him were Dr. R. J. Willingham, the speaker of the hour, and the venerable Dr. Hartwell, of China. Up the aisle came the white-clad student body, three Seniors leading, followed by perhaps twenty Juniors. Clearly and reverently rang out the fresh young voices in that great hymn of Christendom, so full of inspiration and longing, "Jerusalem the Golden." The audience was visibly moved, for eyes were dim, and many a handkerchief did duty. Those taking part in the procession-al wondered at this show of sadness, but friends, those tears were not from sorrow, but came from the knowledge that those young women were the visible answer to prayer. Laborers were being thrust out into the harvest fields of the world. From that day through all the years even unto this last stirring sight of these young volunteers this evening carrying palms of victory, and following their ban-

ner with its age-long cry, "We Would See Jesus," each Commencement has had its processional. And so this processional is symbolic of that goodly company steadily going out from this school, wearing engraven on their hearts that Word which is a Lamp unto their feet, and a Light unto their path.

Looking closely at our canvas, we see dark shadows, shadows made by sin and weakness, and need in the city of Louisville. Into this gloom cheerily went the willing feet and loving hands of our Training School students, even as messengers of mercy, spending and being spent, in the various missions of the city, and in the homes where the light of joy was out. Some years passed in this effective work. Recognizing the advantage of a work entirely under the control of the school, and the need of a clinic where the students might be trained for many-sided service, W. M. U. authorized the beginning of such a work. In October, 1912, the Good Will Center was opened, the first of its kind in our Southern territory. A beautiful and unselfish gesture in fulfillment of Christ's command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Nobly and unstintedly did Miss Leachman, then City Missionary under the Kentucky State Board of Missions, assist the Principal in the new undertaking. The girls threw themselves wholeheartedly into the task, while the Chairman and members of the Local Board showed such sympathetic interest that the enterprise, begun in Christ's name, could not fail. And yet how little was such work understood at that time. One of our finest denominational leaders was being shown the children in the clubs and classes of Good Will Center during its first winter, when he said with much interest, "I suppose all these children are orphans," his only knowledge of welfare work for the young being an orphanage. Splendidly has Good Will Center de-

veloped, taking its rightful place in the forefront of the welfare organizations of the city, and standing as the model for similar institutions among Southern Baptists. So the star, which is the symbol of our Good Will Centers, shines with increasing brightness among the shadows, which under its influence must flee away.

Not only did the Training School lead in the establishment of Good Will Centers, but she has made a distinct and valuable contribution to missionary pageantry among Southern Baptists. Beginning with the presentation of "An Episode in Training School Life" at the Nashville meeting of W. M. U. in 1914, the students of House Beautiful have given of their best talent toward making the dramatic events of missionary history glow and live before us. Earnestly and prayerfully have they approached the task, deep and lasting impressions for God and His cause resulting from their thoughtful work. Sometimes, yes, often, God spoke to one while she was studying the character she was to represent in a pageant. Thus, through the character of Ann of Ava, did God lead lovely Neale Young, of South Carolina, to give her beautiful young life to her black sisters of Africa. There are rich spots of color and the flame of bright fires in our picture showing the influence of missionary pageantry.

Ever and anon our memories picture Miss Heck as she came for counsel with the workers, or for some festive occasion. More and more crowded became the building as students multiplied, until every available space was utilized, and rooms across the street were rented. The house physician said we had reached the danger mark, should contagion arise. Into this busy life came Miss Heck for a visit one spring. Not having a guest room, she was given the one room used as an infirmary, with the strong hope that no illness

would come during her visit. All went well until the morning of Missionary Day, when, like a bolt from the blue, came the announcement from the physician that we had an unmistakable case of scarlet fever. Not a hospital in the city would receive the patient save the City Hospital, and this young woman, like her sex in general, had a will of her own, and refused to go to the contagious ward of the City Hospital. So a ward must be arranged in the house for her. Quick action was needed, for she had mingled freely with us all the previous day, and had attended church in the evening, leaning on the strong arm of one of the brethren from the Seminary. Visions of an epidemic danced before us—an epidemic which we would generously share with the Seminary. The rooms on the entire floor with the patient were speedily emptied, and when the students returned from the exercises at the Seminary they were sent to another floor to take up their abode wherever they discovered their bed and belongings. Fate played a prank on us, for that day was April First. In rooms where two seemed a close fit another was located, and in rooms where three were crowded two more were located. How they lived I do not know, for hat boxes, suit cases, bureau drawers and trunk trays were scarcely hidden by narrow beds, and counterpanes and curtains bulged in grotesque and fantastic shapes. Dr. Carver said they were so crowded that "they had to go out of doors to change their minds." The last six weeks of the session were spent in this irritating discomfort, but be it said to their honor, not a murmur came from these brave-hearted girls. It is no marvel then that when they scattered to the corners of the earth for their life work that again and again has come the testimony that these women are adaptable, and their effective work is not dependent on creature comforts or social pleasures. By way

of parenthesis, I will say that the scarlet fever did not spread—not even to the young man who had been so cruelly and mercilessly exposed. Later on they were married and lived happily ever afterwards.

Now the picture shows the great need of an adequate building to house the growing student body. Many were the plans to raise money. Believing that Baptists needed to know the progress and aims of this school, stereopticon slides were made, showing the work, workers and the proposed new building. Certainly the Southern Baptist Convention should be informed about this school which W. M. U. owned, so permission was graciously and perhaps unwittingly given by the Home Mission Board to use twenty minutes of their evening hour in showing these slides at the Asheville Convention. The evening came—the tabernacle was filled to the last seat, and the platform held the big men who were to take part on the programme.

The devotional period began, and a prayer was made by a brother whose soul recoiled at the very thought of a woman speaking in a mixed audience. Happily unaware of what was to follow, he was not disturbed in his petitions. At the close of the prayer Dr. Gray introduced Miss Mallory, who, in turn, introduced the Principal of the school. The lights were switched off, and under cover of darkness the Principal mounted a goods box on the sawdust floor that her voice might be heard, not presuming to stand on the platform. With shaking knees and pounding heart she very simply explained the rather crude, wholly innocent, slides as they were pictured on the screen, then sank in a chair to revive again as she listened to Dr. Mullins make a marvelous appeal for the school. The response of the audience was hearty, and four hundred men sent their dollars to the front that they might join the Dollar Club, our slogan being

"\$98,000 from 98,000 Baptists." In our judgment these pictures were quite inoffensive, but how far-reaching and dynamic they proved! The incident was a veritable boon to the denominational press, for all through the long, dull summer the columns of the papers bristled with sharp comment on the audacity of the women, Dr. Gambrell and Dr. Crumpton notably coming to the defense of the helpless females. To speak in the vernacular, it was thus that Miss Mallory and the Principal "broke into" the Southern Baptist Convention, and inadvertently stepped into the limelight, or was it a searchlight?

A very rosy light suffuses that part of the picture showing the workers in the Louisville Campaign for funds for the new building. A really great experience this, and one to be treasured, for the Baptist men of the city rallied to our need and, forming teams, canvassed the Baptist ranks in a great united drive, under the leadership of Mr. Philo Dix, raising \$30,000 in ten busy, hectic days. Who can tell but that later on our government modelled its Liberty Loan drives on the Louisville Campaign, so successfully put on by those whom we loved to call our "W. M. U. men"? Certain it is that no official of our government ever got more work out of any of its employees than did Mr. Dix secure from the loyal Baptists of that campaign.

Bright and luminous in the foreground of our picture is the completed building, House Beautiful indeed—as beautiful without as it had ever been within. The Dream House for which we had worked, and sacrificed, and prayed. Its very walls seem to speak of the self-denial of the Alumnae, and here and there we can still see the light of some precious jewel, sold that this house might be built. Almost too full of emotion to speak were those who gathered to dedicate this Power House of Prayer to the God who gave

it. Gone were two great spirits who had planned for this day, but their works do follow them, and in that hour I think none forgot Miss Heck or Dr. Frost. By this time Miss Heck's mantle had fallen on the capable shoulders of Mrs. W. C. James, who, throughout the years of her presidency, showed unfaltering interest in the school. To the new house came Alumnae from many lands, clasping hands with friends of other days, and humble thanksgiving mingled with victorious rejoicing.

Look above and below, there is a glorious shining mist pervading the entire picture, a mist that never disappears, a mist which seems to open closed doors, to break down strong barriers, to lighten darkness, to hearten the weary. Look closer still; there are "the golden bowls of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." These clouds of prayer float upward, ever moving, never ceasing until they reach the very throne of God.

Like the pictures of the great Tintoretto, our canvas is crowded with figures—the figures of those from all the States of the South who have loved and borne burdens that the young women who answer God's call to service might be fittingly trained—that this school might be holy unto the Lord. Their names crowd to my lips, for I see them clearly, but time fails to mention them individually. Their names are written ineffaceably in God's own record. In the midst of this throng, and upheld by their confidence and faith, stands Mrs. Geo. B. Eager, for nearly twenty years the Chairman of the Local Board of Managers. Her matchless work catches and holds the light, whose beams are soft and golden about her. Surely God placed upon her brow a crown of wisdom which has guided her through all the perplexities of this arduous undertaking, making her the peerless executive, the wise leader, the gracious and loyal friend

which this institution needed for its very existence. While she has recently chosen a path which lies not so near to the center of the picture, yet she can never fade from the canvas. The atmosphere of sincerity and efficiency, devotion and consecration radiating from her life will ever hover over this school to hallow and to bless.

Alert and helpful stands the figure of Miss Leachman, who for years gave unsparingly of her strength and unusual personality to this school, which lay so close to her heart. There was deep sorrow when God called her to other fields of labor, but He sent in his own way, compensation in the coming of Miss Littlejohn to dedicate her splendid gifts to the service of her Alma Mater. Shining and bright is her path, easing burdens, lifting loads.

Words are too weak as I would pay tribute to the Faculty of the Seminary, who year after year, through their classes and marvelous personality, have built up strong and enduring ideals for our students. These women the world around "rise up and call them blessed."

All honor to the Local Board and the Board of Trustees, who for twenty years have so nobly and devotedly served the school, cherishing it as a "vine of God's own planting."

Within House Beautiful, patiently and lovingly and earnestly, the Training School Faculty have poured out their lives that your daughters whom you trust to them might be stronger missionaries, purer, more unselfish Christians. None knows so well as I the devotion, the unflagging zeal, the unselfish abnegation of the Training School Faculty. Women of the Faculty of the Past, of the present, of the future, with uncovered head I salute you!

Mrs. S. E. Woody, so tireless and resourceful in the early years of the school, has re-

entered our picture as the strong, whole-souled, efficient Chairman of the Local Board of Managers. Fearlessly she joins hands with Mrs. Janie Cree Bose, the gifted, golden-tongued Principal of the school, whose splendid talents God is so mightily using. Together they stand, fit instruments, true yokefellows, looking out toward the future. Surely as you wield your magic brush you will place a halo around these two—these two set apart for a great mission.

Near to them stand the President and Corresponding Secretary of Woman's Missionary Union, Mrs. W. J. Cox, and Miss Kathleen Mallory, with listening ear and ready hand, full of enthusiasm and helpful interest in the school.

Last of all, the eye is caught by that company which, beginning in the background, is seen in ceaseless lines all through the picture—W. M. U. Training School Students. Our imagination follows them out to the ends of the earth, on mountain top, in deep valley, by the restless sea, in dense cities, in small hamlets, in lonely outposts on Home and Foreign Fields, always telling the story of God's love. For twenty years the women from House Beautiful have made gladsome sacrifice for God, have drunk deep of hardship in his service, have stood against all odds under the pall of indifference in the homeland, and under the impact of heathenism on Foreign Fields. Yes, and some have laid down their lives that Christ might be known in the earth.

Looking back over the path of twenty years, and noting the lives that have touched this school and, by God's great alchemy, been transmuted into its very life, I say with joy the school lives, gloriously lives, aye, and shall live until it shall have accomplished the full purpose for which God created it! Again I say, as years ago I said, in the words of Charles Rann Kennedy, "When you enter it

you hear a sound as of some mighty poem chanted. Listen long enough and you learn that it is made up of the beating of human hearts—of the nameless music of men's souls. It is no pile of stones and unmeaning timber. It is a living thing. The pillars of it go up like the brawny trunks of heroes: the sweet human flesh of men and women is moulded about its bulwarks, strong, impregnable: the faces of little children laugh out from every cornerstone: the terrible spans and arches of it are the joined hands of comrades: and up in the heights and spaces of it are inscribed the numberless musings of all the dreamers of the world. It is yet building and built upon. Sometimes the work goes forward in dense darkness, sometimes in blinding light; now beneath the burden of unutterable anguish; now to the tune of a great laughter, and heroic shoutings like the cry of thunder. Sometimes, in the silence of the night time, one may hear the tiny hammerings of the comrades at work up in the dome. The comrades who have climbed ahead."

Young women of the graduating class, you share a glorious yet costly heritage. Every sacrifice, every hope, every prayer, every longing of the pulsing life of this school must find its fulfillment, its fruition in you. Be true to the trust. It has been said that every institution is the elongated shadow of an individual. I love to think, and I say it reverently, that your Alma Mater is the elongated shadow of Jesus Christ, God's Son. As you move out from under this shadow may its influence follow you forever, and may you take your place among the shining ones of our picture, worthily bearing your part of Christ's burden.