

EXERCISES COMMEMORATING
THE
TWO-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
BIRTH OF JONATHAN EDWARDS
HELD AT
ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
OCTOBER 4 AND 5
1903

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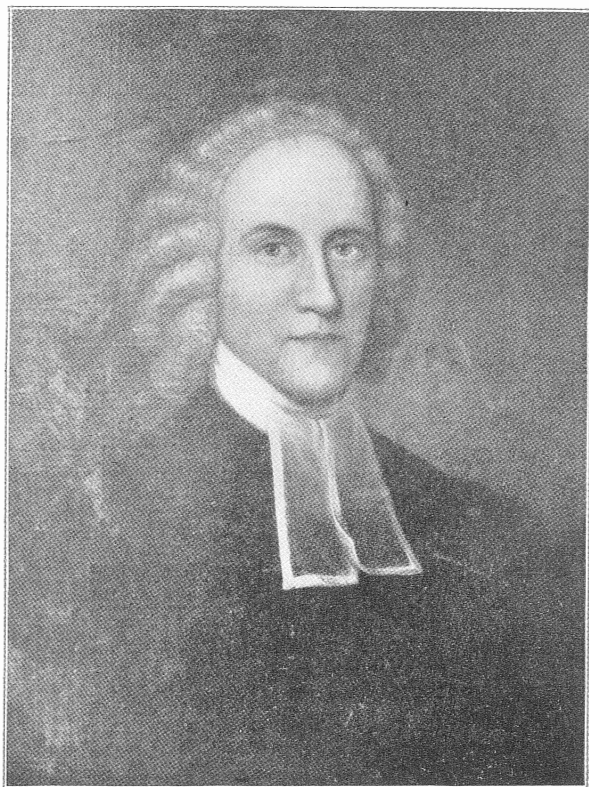
Exercises Commemorating the Two-Hundredth Anniversary of
the Birth of Jonathan Edwards

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JONATHAN EDWARDS

1703 - - 1903

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF
EGBERT COFFIN SMYTH, D.D., LL.D.
CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR
THEOLOGIAN, HISTORIAN
PROFESSOR IN ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
1863-1904

PREFACE

As the oldest Congregational school of theology in America, Andover Seminary esteemed it a duty, while she also counted it an honor, to celebrate the bicentenary of America's foremost theologian. Within her lecture-rooms the system of Jonathan Edwards has been diligently studied and sympathetically expounded. Her first professor of sacred theology, Dr. Leonard Woods, is commonly represented as a mediator between the two divisions of orthodox Congregationalism in his day, yet in substance he was a vigorous advocate of the Edwardean system, and his successor, Professor Park, was even more widely known as its interpreter. If Edwardeanism no longer controls the doctrinal instruction at Andover, the fact is due to no lack of reverence, on the part of her teachers, for the power of philosophical analysis and logical construction which has made Edwards famous for all time, or for the fundamental truths which he strove in thought to apprehend, but rather to causes whose operation no philosophical or theological system of the past is able permanently to withstand.

The aim of the bicentennial celebration was not merely to honor the memory of a great Christian leader, but also to attempt a discriminating estimate of the enduring value of his work,—an attempt which the lapse of time and the subsidence of dogmatic strife have at last brought within the range of possibility. Accordingly, in addition to representatives of her own faculty, the Seminary invited scholars of widely different antecedents, from outside of New England, to participate in the proceedings. The reader of the papers here published will observe differences in point of view which will at least relieve the record of monotony, and, it is hoped, will not detract from its value.

PREFACE

The celebration began on Sunday, October fourth, with public worship in the Chapel, where a large congregation gathered to listen to the commemorative sermon by the Reverend William R. Richards, D.D., an alumnus of the Seminary, now pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York. For the public exercises on Monday afternoon a distinguished audience was assembled, including a large number of alumni and other ministers from neighboring towns, together with professors from Harvard and from Boston University. The church had been handsomely decorated for the occasion, and portraits of President and Mrs. Edwards, loaned by Miss Park, stood on either side of the pulpit. Professor Day presided, and on behalf of the Seminary extended a welcome to the guests. By way of introduction to the more formal papers, Professor Platner sketched in outline the religious conditions of New England in the time of Edwards, after which Professor Woodbridge, of Columbia University, presented a critical analysis of Edwards's work as a philosopher. At the close of this session the invited guests adjourned to Bartlet Chapel, where a reception was held and supper was served. Many took advantage of this opportunity to examine the loan exhibition, consisting of the principal editions of Edwards's works, unpublished manuscripts and letters, and other objects of historical interest.¹

Another large audience assembled for the evening exercises, at which Professor Hincks presided. The first address was a sympathetic presentation of the salient features of Edwards's theology by Professor Smyth, who was a life-long student of the subject. A poem, entitled "A Witness to the Truth," was read by its author, an Andover alumnus, the Reverend Samuel V. Cole, D.D.,

¹ A list of the most important objects exhibited will be found in Appendix II.

PREFACE

President of Wheaton Seminary. It elicited much favorable comment. An interesting feature of the program was the reading of a congratulatory message¹ from the Senate of the United Free Church College, Glasgow, which formed a suitable introduction to the closing address of the day, by Professor James Orr, D.D., of Glasgow, who spoke upon "The Influence of Edwards." The exercises concluded with a piece of ancient psalmody, sung by the congregation to the tune of St. Martins.

The memorial sermon, the poem, and the addresses of Professors Smyth and Woodbridge are here printed practically without change. Professor Orr's address is slightly enlarged. Professor Platner's address, which was not read from manuscript, will be found to vary somewhat from the form in which it was delivered. In Appendix I are printed extracts from hitherto unpublished notes by Edwards, collected by Professor Smyth in illustration of statements made in his address.

Thanks are due to Dr. Owen H. Gates for aid in correcting the proof sheets, and to Miss Mary W. Dwight for completing Professor Smyth's copy and for a careful revision of the proofs.

The sudden death of Professor Smyth lends a peculiar interest to the publication of this little book, for it contains the final labors of his pen. He had taken the deepest interest in the Edwards celebration from the beginning, and was earnestly desirous that the printed record should be not unworthy of its subject. It is fitting that the volume should forever be closely associated with Dr. Smyth, to whose memory it is affectionately dedicated.

J. W. P.

ANDOVER, May 12, 1904.

¹ This message, with reply, is printed in Appendix II.

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PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, OCT. 4

10.30 A. M.

PUBLIC WORSHIP in the Seminary Church.

Sermon by the REV. WILLIAM ROGERS RICHARDS, D.D.
New York

MONDAY, OCT. 5

AFTERNOON SESSION

3.30 O'CLOCK

PROFESSOR CHARLES ORRIN DAY, D.D., presiding.

DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

HYMN, No. 38. "All people that on earth do dwell."

WORDS OF WELCOME. . . . PROFESSOR DAY

ADDRESS: Religious Conditions in New England in the
Time of Edwards.

PROFESSOR JOHN WINTHROP PLATNER, D.D.

ADDRESS: The Philosophy of Edwards.

PROFESSOR FREDERICK J. E. WOODBRIDGE, LL.D.
Columbia University

HYMN, No. 190. "Holy Spirit, Lord of Light." (5 stanzas)

RECEPTION AND COLLATION

BARTLET CHAPEL, 5.30 O'CLOCK

(For invited guests)

Exhibition of autograph and published writings of President Edwards and other objects of historical interest, loaned for the occasion.

EVENING SESSION

7.00 O'CLOCK

PROFESSOR EDWARD YOUNG HINCKS, D.D., presiding.

HYMN, No. 299. "Come, we who love the Lord."

PRAYER.

ADDRESS: The Theology of Edwards.

PROFESSOR EGBERT COFFIN SMYTH, D.D., LL.D.

HYMN, No. 14. "Before Jehovah's awful throne."

POEM. - PRESIDENT SAMUEL VALENTINE COLE, D.D.
Wheaton Seminary

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE, from the Senate of the
United Free Church College, Glasgow.

ADDRESS: The Influence of Edwards.

PROFESSOR JAMES ORR, D.D., Glasgow.

HYMN, No. 663. "Let children hear the mighty deeds."

BENEDICTION.

SERMON

The Rev. WILLIAM ROGERS RICHARDS, D.D.

PASTOR OF

The Brick Presbyterian Church

NEW YORK CITY

SERMON

JEREMIAH 33: 17 — "For thus saith the Lord,
David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne
of the house of Israel."

The words are a prophecy of Christ and his eternal Kingdom, but the people who were first comforted by them had no clear expectation of that coming Kingdom. When they were told that David should never want a man, what they could first understand, — and no doubt did understand, — was this, that the breed of men of the old David-type was never to run out in Israel; that in every time of emergency and peril, when hearts were failing and knees trembling, — as in the old Philistine wars, when some Goliath was striding up and down between the camps insolently challenging any champion to appear for Israel, — in such dark days the right champion would appear; so the prophet says, the good cause would never be left to fall to the ground for lack of him. The Lord pledges his word to this. The thing is as sure as that covenant of the day and night which cannot fail while the world stands. And really that was the best promise that could be made to a people. For the gift of such a man as David was worth more to a nation than any other kind of gift that the Providence of God has ever bestowed. All the gold of India, and all the things that gold could buy, would not compare in value with this gift of a man.

What a poor little kingdom Israel was, judged by our common standards of wealth and power. There were richer nations on every side, better armed nations, more populous nations. But Israel had the man; no other of these nations, not all of them together, could show in those days a man like David, a man fit to sit on David's throne, a man with David's love for God, and trust in God, and earnest longing for God: and now those other nations, Babylon and Nineveh and Tyre and Egypt, with all their wealth and power, are mostly buried and forgotten as if they had never been; but David, this king of Israel! why, more people are singing his songs today, a hundred times over, than he ever ruled when he was alive. This influence is still increasing in the world. Such a man as that was the best gift that God could make to a nation. Now the promise was that so long as the nation of Israel continued, God would continue to bless them periodically with this gift of men. Of course there were some periods of great degeneracy when such men seemed very scarce, but the supply never quite ran out. Even in the worst times, when all things were falling into chaos, always just at the crisis would appear some Elijah, or John Baptist, or other like man, firm enough to stand, if need be, alone against the world, and pull the world his way, God's way. The man was never wanting in the old days in Israel.

And the man never shall be wanting. The

COMMEMORATIVE SERMON

promise still stands in our Bible, only it has been freed from its old restriction to the nation of Israel. We have been taught to take all these promises more generously, but the promise has not been revoked. God is pledged to the world to keep up the breed of men. They may not always be Jews now ; they may not always be Greeks, or Romans, or Englishmen, or even Americans ; but there shall be such men ; the race is not to run out. Whatever the pessimists may say, the final outcome of this great world-experiment is not to be the hopeless degeneracy of manhood. Today, tomorrow, next year, — so long as the old world stands, if ever old David should come back to it again, the promise is that he shall find somewhere the man fit to sit upon his throne. We may not always see this man, for we do not know where to look for him. In times of quiet when the world is moving on its way smoothly and easily, we may often doubt his existence ; but when once more the storm breaks upon us, such times as try men's souls, there he stands, your Savonarola, Luther, Cromwell, Washington ; all down through the ages, David has not lacked his man yet.

That is the promise ; and, friends, how good a promise it is. For this manhood is God's most precious commodity : of all the things he has made this has cost the most to make, and is worth the most when made. We Christians always get some hint of the infinite costliness of manhood when we

read in this book the price of our redemption, the precious blood of Jesus Christ. But even the older records of the rocks could tell a like story, for they show how lavishly the Creator has been using up whole races of his creatures in making way for man. If you are speaking of the expenditure of creative energy involved, I suppose a great mountain range is a very cheap product compared with one little child who is playing at the base of it. The whole land of Canaan had not cost so much in the making as that one man David.

And as this gift of manhood has cost more than all others, so it is worth more. Any great crisis proves it. Watch those tremendous forces of the French Revolution running out into horrible disaster, because, as Carlyle says, no Cromwell had appeared in France, no man able to control these forces. There were certain dark days in the earlier part of our own civil war, when, as someone has said, a man able to lead the army of the Potomac would have been worth to the national government in hard cash not less than a million dollars a day. For lack of such a leader the war was dragging on at that awful expenditure of wealth.

Our own age is one of great material progress, and there may be the more need to remind ourselves of this superlative value of manhood. Man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth, said the Master; but man is always in danger of thinking that it does consist in those