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Miscellanea

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Miscellanea

The Graduate School of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

Why does Concordia Seminary offer graduate work, summer courses, pastors' institutes, and extension courses, and why the appeal to the clergy of our Church to avail themselves of these offerings? This was not considered necessary a generation or even a few decades ago, and why now? Is it just another passing fad of our day, or must it be taken more seriously?

This article endeavors to answer these questions and aims at the same time to appeal to the clergy of our Church, especially to the younger brethren, to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by Concordia Seminary for further study in the field of their immediate professional interest.

The demands made upon the pastors of our Church today are mounting from year to year.

The pastor today is expected to produce two, three, and more times as many sermons, lectures, addresses, and talks as his father and grandfather of a generation or more ago.

Our fathers would have become bewildered only to hear of the multiplicity of meetings, committees, boards, church organizations, social functions, adult classes, and the like, which have become a common routine in the lives of most of our pastors today. Our fathers had time for study, reading, and meditation. The slogan today is: Production, efficiency, organization, missionary calls, leadership, good mixer, etc. No one denies that all these things are important and unavoidable in our age, but the fact remains that because of these conditions there is but little time left to the average pastor for concentrated study and intellectual growth.

A generation ago the pastor was still the best, and frequently the only, educated man in his community. Even as late as 1910 there were few high-school students to be found in the average parish of our Church, and college graduates were exceedingly rare. In 1890 there were only 200,000 students in all the high schools of the United States. Last year this number had grown to 6,750,000, and our boys and girls are among them. As late as 1905 such well-known universities as Columbia, California, Wisconsin, Michigan, and others, still had comparatively small enrolments. Columbia at that time had an enrolment of 4,200; today it is in excess of 17,000. California then had 3,294; now over 27,000. Wisconsin, then 3,010; now approximately 12,000. All the other schools have experienced a proportionate increase. The total enrolment of college students in 1900 was 114,372; in 1939 this number had grown to 1,208,000. In 1900 we still had fewer than 500 colleges and universities in this country. In 1935, 1,706 institutions of higher learning were listed. As late as 1910 there were fewer students in the high schools than there are now students in the American colleges and universities. Members with one or more college degrees are now to be

found in nearly every parish of our Church. College graduates wait upon us in the stores, at the bank, in the filling station, in the office, or operate on modern farms. Again, our young men and women are among them. The student census of 1939 reports 8,375 students from the Synodical Conference attending American schools of higher learning. With 9,000,000 people still unemployed and with the Government aid through the N. Y. A., the number of young people acquiring a college education is bound to increase.

To the general expansion of colleges and universities there have been added the summer-schools, extension courses, and opportunities for adult education. A generation ago summer-schools or extension courses were unknown in America. The first State university to offer summer courses was the University of North Carolina, where such a course was first offered under private auspices between 1877 and 1884 and then discontinued. The University of Wisconsin was next to follow in 1887. Gradually this movement gained in momentum. In 1913 Minnesota University had an enrolment of only 531 students in its summer sessions, but by 1930 this number had grown to 6,210. Columbia had 4,539 in the summer of 1913 but 14,016 in 1930. A similar growth has taken place in other schools. In 1915 the total number of summer-school students of American colleges and universities was 83,234; by 1936, 262,839 students were enrolled in summer sessions. Today there is hardly a first-rate college or university which has not a flourishing summer-school.

In addition to the summer-school, extension courses have been established at most of the leading schools. In 1932 the University of Wisconsin had an enrolment of 24,000 students in its extension courses. In 1918 there was a total of 50,014 students enrolled in all American extension courses; by 1936 this number had increased to 230,548.

Adult education is the latest development in education to broaden the intellectual horizon of the American people. Chicago alone reported an enrolment of 9,000 in the adult-education classes last year. Nearly 3,000 of these were between the ages of 40 and 50 and nearly 100 over seventy. Every larger school system of the country is offering similar courses.

The children of the world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. They are quick to discern the needs of the times and find ways and means to meet these needs.

The Church must do its work in the world as it is today, not as it was in 1890 or 1910. A theological training fully adequate for the needs in 1900 is no longer adequate for the needs in 1940. He who fails to keep in step will eventually step out or at least hold up the procession.

A generation ago the thought-life of the majority of our people was still comparatively simple. Their reading activity was limited largely to religious, semireligious, or a wholesome and harmless type of secular literature. The *Lutheraner*, the *Abendschule*, the *Kinder- und Jugendblatt*, the *Rundschau*, the *Germania*, the *Westliche Post*, Alfred Ira, Zigel, Margareta Lenk, Schmidt, etc., were the papers, periodicals, and authors that were most commonly read in the homes of our German Lutheran people; but nowhere has there been a more radical change

than here. Today the lurid periodicals of the news-stand, books of every description and every kind of philosophy secured from the lending libraries, book-of-the-month clubs, and other sources find their way into the homes of our people. Imagine the youth of today being satisfied with, and interested in, the kind of literature listed above. Our age is sophisticated and worldly-wise. There is nothing so profound, so sacred, and so secret which is not discussed in mixed and other gatherings by the youthful philosophers of our day. Our young people are growing up in this world, and they cannot escape entirely its influence.

All this constitutes a tremendous challenge to the ministry of today. The means by which sinners are converted and children of God are kept in the faith are, of course, forever the same; but the methods by which these means are administered or applied must be adjusted to the age in which they live.

The laity of our Church today takes for granted that the pastor is orthodox, that he is a Christian, a gentleman, and that he can speak English; but in addition they expect of their pastor that he be alert, abreast of the times, fresh and original, a man who, when he speaks of matters pertaining to his office, speaks as one who knows and one who speaks with authority. There is no doubt that the task of the ministry has increased in complexity and in intellectual and spiritual difficulties, more in the last generation than in the entire period from Muhlenberg to Pieper. No pastor, not even the most gifted, can hope to meet this challenge, unless he follows the most rigid plan of systematic study. A battery that is constantly discharged and never recharged will soon lose its spark. We say that such a battery is dead. Mere inspirational meetings, pious retreats, interesting lectures, practical conferences, and the like, may all be helpful, but they are not sufficient. Intellectual and spiritual growth requires an exercise more vigorous than that.

It is here that Concordia Seminary endeavors to be of help — to you. The Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia is listed for 1939—40 with 90 undergraduate students. This seminary is reported to have an enrolment of 116 graduate students for the present school-year. Concordia Seminary, with an enrolment of over 400 undergraduates, should have a graduate school of at least 150 to 200. Think this over and consider whether you ought not to be a student of this graduate school. No Church has a finer record for a well-trained clergy than the Lutheran Church, and no Church has made a greater contribution in the field of thoroughgoing theological scholarship than our own Church. At the old Lutheran universities of Germany and Scandinavia theological scholarship kept abreast with the scholarship of the other faculties.

Education of our day is definitely on the march. The world is moving forward with it. Shall we remain behind and explain our attitude and position with the complacent "We are different"? History teaches that nothing is so deadly as self-satisfied complacency; for that is progressive intellectual and spiritual death. Periods of achievement and greatness in the history of the Church were periods of intellectual and spiritual revival. Together with the revival in missionary zeal and the general

spirituality which we are experiencing at the present time, we must cultivate intellectual revival and genuine Christian scholarship, or obscurantism will be inevitable and church-leadership is destined to pass into other hands.

The Faculty Committee of Concordia Seminary in charge of the Graduate School makes this announcement:

Concordia Seminary has reopened its Graduate School and hopes to develop it for greater service to our Church. The following opportunities for studies on this level are offered:

1. Graduate work for credit and leading to a degree, offered throughout the regular school-year. This is available only for students in residence or for those who live within driving distance of the Seminary.
2. A six-week Graduate Course for credit and leading to a degree, offered in the period from Easter to the end of the school-year. This course is made available for those who are able to establish residence for a six-week period or who live within driving distance of the Seminary.
3. A six-week Graduate Summer Course for credit and leading to a degree, offered this year at River Forest from June 24 to August 3 simultaneously with the regular River Forest Summer-school.
4. A Pastors' Institute at Concordia Seminary from July 8 to 12. No academic credit for work done.
5. A Pastors' Institute at River Forest, Ill., from July 15 to 19. No academic credit will be given for work done.
6. Extension courses offered by the Extension Department of Concordia Seminary. Work can be carried on throughout the year for credit and leading to a degree.

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