
—Reviewed by John A. Battle

Having thoroughly enjoyed the first volume in this two-volume series, I looked forward to the publication of the second volume. I was not disappointed. Calhoun maintains the same combination of readability and scholarship found in the first. He has amassed a tremendous amount of data, and written it in a way that holds one’s attention.

Beginning where he left off, Calhoun takes up the story from the 1860’s and brings it down to the reorganization of Princeton in 1929. Through twenty-two chapters Calhoun traces the development of the seminary (and Princeton College to some extent, as well), both in external growth and in the academic, spiritual, and theological areas. Major attention is given to the mature career of Charles Hodge at Princeton, including not only his theological position and contributions, but also the impact he had and the respect he enjoyed, culminating in the unprecedented tribute paid him by all the academic world on the occasion of his fiftieth anniversary at Princeton in 1872.

The chapters progress through the careers of the other great professors, including such men as Archibald Alexander Hodge, William Henry Green, Robert Dick Wilson, Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, and John Gresham Machen. Along with these most well-known representatives of the Old Princeton the other professors are discussed and their contributions noted. The book traces not only the lives and contributions of these distinguished faculty, but also provides much enlightening information about the spiritual life and accomplishments of the seminary—its students and graduates. Princeton had a tremendous evangelistic and missionary emphasis and outreach which is not often appreciated. The spiritual atmosphere of the school was fostered and maintained.

Of course, we are greatly interested in the forces which led to the reorganization of Princeton and its subsequent loss of its role as the world’s theological leader of Calvinistic orthodoxy. Here the book gives us great assistance. Calhoun traces the earlier similar departure of Princeton University; I found especially interesting the role of the university’s president Woodrow Wilson (later president of the USA) in the theological broadening of that institution. The seminary stood strong for biblical inerrancy and related doctrines all through the turbulent decades of the early twentieth century. As the Presbyterian Church (USA) was infiltrated more heavily by Modernism, and as inclusivism became the reigning attitude, Princeton became a sore point for many churchmen. The valiant rear-guard actions of Machen and others at Princeton receive detailed and sympathetic treatment in this book. It will provide an invaluable source of information for students of the period.

As the first volume, the second includes a very helpful summary biography of each Princeton professor of the period covered. Also there are ample endnotes and a helpful index. This book belongs on the shelf of all who follow the Old Princeton tradition.