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THE QUINQUAGENARY OF THE FREE REFORMED UNIVERSITY AT AMSTERDAM¹

IN an address delivered in 1872 by the aged church-historian Moll, professor at Amsterdam's Athenæum, on the subject of the idea of universities in its historical development, a warm plea was made for the founding of Free Universities alongside the State Universities, and the wish was expressed that such a Free University should be placed in Amsterdam for the welfare of city and nation, to which there was added a prophecy that this wish would witness its fulfilment before long. That prophecy was fulfilled, although in a different sense than Moll intended, when sixteen years later the first Free University in our land was opened in Amsterdam. Although the jubilees of a university are not counted by decades but by centuries, yet there is a reason, now that our University has existed half a century, why this should be remembered. Its founding was an act of faith. The future needed to show whether the heroic attempt to maintain such a school without government subsidy or privilege, resting only upon the power of its principle and the liberality of our Reformed people, would succeed or not. It has withstood this test gloriously. At this golden jubilee we need not doubt its vitality. The cutting planted in Netherland's garden grew up, to be sure, not like Jonah's miracle-vine, but at least showing gradual increase in strength. And although the storms that have beaten down upon it have been severe, storms that have robbed it of many a valuable branch and that have shocked it clear to its roots, it has seemed, to borrow the beautiful imagery of Isaiah, that just as the stock remaineth in the oak even when it is felled, so, too, for our University, the holy seed entrusted to it has never lost its strength. Thanks for this is not due to us, but to the Lord our God who, according to the words

¹ An address delivered by Professor Doctor H. H. Kuyper, rector magnificus, at a meeting commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Free (Reformed) University of Amsterdam, and translated from the Dutch original by Dr. W. Burggraaff, Milwaukee, U.S.A.

of its founder, gave it to us out of grace, and kept it standing in spite of all our weakness.

It is an honourable task which the Directors of our school have laid upon me to deliver a commemoration address on this feast-day. There is in that charge a silent tribute to the name which I bear. But that causes me to feel more deeply the responsibility of the task now that I, as a son, am called upon to outline for you the origin, development, and meaning of the university which has rightly been called the chief part of the life-work of my father. And since I am very conscious of the fact that genius is not a heritage, I trust that my plea for a kindly disposed ear, and indulgent judgment is not made in vain.

I shall speak to you, in the first place, about the origin of our School.

In his *Voorheen en Thans* Professor Fabius has shown that the idea which lies at the basis of our University was not first expressed by Dr. Kuyper, but forty years earlier by Isaac Da Costa and Groen Van Prinsterer. The struggle which began by making our lower and high schools Christian, thus asserting the Christian character of our people, needed to be carried on into the field of university education. And whereas it was impossible to bring our Christian principles into the State institutions because our most eminent Christians were shut out from the professorates at these State Universities, due to ostracism by the party then in authority, it became necessary, wrote Groen, to begin the work of establishing our own institution. The first weak effort to do this was begun by the circle of Christian friends at Amsterdam, with Groen as chairman, when in 1850 it was decided to found a Reformed Seminary for the preparation of ministers for the Established Church (Hervormde) and the Church of the Secession (Afgescheiden). The programme had been completed, and the date of the opening set, but a month earlier the entire plan burst because of some church quarrel within the group. A year later there was founded the so-called Scottish Seminary, thanks to the liberality of the Free Scottish Church, at which seminary Da Costa was an instructor, and Groen a curator; but the purpose was very limited, being only to train evangelists and missionaries. With all due respect for Da Costa's courage of faith which was so manifest in this effort, I feel that the question which Professor Woltjer Sr. asked is entirely justifiable: Was Da Costa the man to organise a Christian institution of higher learning alongside the

existing state institutions ? Surely Groen felt this. And the sad experience with this seminary disappointed Groen and Elout so greatly that the experiment was laid aside.

A new phase was entered upon when Dr. A. Kuyper made his plea for the erecting of a free university as something demanded by our anti-revolutionary principles. He made this plea in 1870 in the *Heraut*, and went more into detail in his articles in the *Standaard* in 1872. He did not approve of a withdrawal into a seminary. "Does it not bother you," he wrote, "that all other sciences are being developed in the modernistic spirit, breaking down in the life of society what you have built up in your seminary ? Do you then surrender the world ? Do you then surrender the development of the spirit ? Do you then surrender the sciences, just so that your theology can be taught in your seminary ? No Christian can desire this." Then he added, "Erect a Christian University, and the Christian spirit will rule unhindered." The Revolution had destroyed the Christian character of the universities. The nobility of the human was blotted out, and the high unity of the sciences, the aorta of all university education, was increasingly being hid behind the idea of compartments. The Revolution had done more ; it had not only robbed the universities of their Christian character, but it had brought those universities which once existed as free, independent, confederated republics, under the power of the State. Science (*wetenschap, wissenschaft*) needed to be loosed from those bonds.

"She is," so he went on in his inspiring message, "even as art, a free-born who may receive gifts, but who may never work for wages. She must live of the love which she awakens. Her priestly honour may never be stained by doing service as altar-boy at the altar of the State. She may not subject herself to marriage, neither with the State nor with the Church." Therefore the goal must be the establishment of a Free University "not patented, but recognised by the State, embracing all branches of science and founded by free-will gifts and offerings." With these words the kingly banner of freedom was unfurled bravely. But another ten years passed by before this goal was reached. I shall speak but briefly about the birth-pangs which preceded the founding of our school.

It is of interest to point out why the attempt made by Dr. A. Kuyper in 1875 to found a Christian University on a very broad

basis with the co-operation of all of orthodox Protestantism, was unsuccessful. A law intending to bring about a new regulation of higher education, in which it was proposed to do away with the theological faculty at the State Universities, was submitted at that time by Minister Heemskerck. But this brought with it the urgent question how one was to prevent theology from being thrown out of the circle of the sciences, and exiled to the seminary. Dr. Kuyper, who, along with Groen, was not in favour of keeping the theological faculty at the State Universities because it would lead to submission to the church, felt that the ideal moment had now arrived to establish a Free University.

The plan arranging for this was broadly discussed and decided upon between Dr. Kuyper, Groen and Elout. A group of Anti-Revolutionary members of Parliament were to make a plea in the Second Chamber, asking that the right to found a Free University should be acknowledged by law. In this matter they expected the support of the professors of the Athenæum at Amsterdam, who were desirous of having their Athenæum changed into a university, and who, with great liberality, asked the *jus examinandi* and *promovendi* not only for their school, but also for the Free University "in order that freedom of higher education might be upheld not only in appearance but also in reality." In order to secure the co-operation of the ethical-orthodox group Dr. Kuyper stepped into the background, and yielded the leadership to Dr. J. H. Gunning, under whose auspices the Free Christian University was to be founded. The entire Christian press greeted this plan with warm sympathy; and yet, it failed because of the decisive hesitation on the part of the ethical-irenical group to give their co-operation.

Dr. Kuyper did not lose courage, although he was bitterly disappointed by this failure which seemed to crush his life's ideal. A very serious nervous trouble necessitated an eighteen months' holiday in foreign countries, but even there the idea of a Free University did not leave him. Scarcely had he returned when he began to spend all his energy at this task. But—now it was to be a Reformed University. The foundation upon which the building should rise became narrower, but more solid. Only in this way could a connection be made with our glorious national history in which, according to the best historians, Groen, Fruin, and Acquoy, Calvinism had been the inspiring force, bringing success to our uprising against Spain, reforming our national

church, and putting its mark upon our national character. This was not the only reason why Dr. Kuyper wanted a Calvinistic University, but rather because by way of fearful soul-experience he had come to see that in Calvinism there was given to us the life and world-view which, because it flows out of the confession of the sovereignty of God, stands highest, but which also makes the inexorable demand that the sovereignty of God be maintained and honoured in the entire realm of the sciences.

This explains to you the origin of our University. Dr. Kuyper was the spiritual father, but I would fall short in the obligation of gratitude if I did not mention along with him the name of Dr. F. L. Rutgers. After a small group had come together at the home of Mr. Hovy, and the decision had been made to found such a university, there needed to be faced the very difficult task of calling into being a society or organisation which should in turn sponsor the university, and of making the constitution and by-laws which should control and guide the life of such a nation-wide organisation. This entire burden came to fall upon his shoulders. It was Dr. Rutgers who handled the trowel—permit me to borrow this figure from the reconstruction of Jerusalem—while Dr. Kuyper wielded the sword in resisting the attacks made upon the young institution. I need not remind you of the wonderful scientific tournament which took place, first with Dr. Van Toorenenbergen as to the confessional basis, and then with Dr. Bronsveld concerning the right of founding such a university. There was even greater danger in the seductive offer made by Dr. Vos to Messrs. Kuyper and Rutgers, in which the suggestion was made that the Classical Commission—irony of history—should recommend them to the General Synod as professors appointed and maintained by Synod, with this understanding, that the City Council of Amsterdam should receive them as professors in its university. But a deaf ear was turned to this siren song.

After the society had been formed, its statutes approved by Royal decree of February 12th, 1879, its directors and curators appointed; the next step, and the most important, was the appointment of the professors. I will not weary you by narrating how many useless efforts were made to secure men of scientific reputation such as Prof. Böhl of Vienna and the promising young professor, Dr. Bavinck, for our University; nor how Germany and Switzerland were traversed in a search for professors, without

finding what was sought. The theological faculty was completed first of all. Naturally, Dr. Kuyper and Dr. Rutgers were appointed; then there was added Dr. Hoedemaker, and Dr. Van Ronkel, who, after he had accepted the appointment, declined at the last moment because of ill-health. The literary faculty received licentiate F. W. Dilloo from Soldin; and the faculty of law received as professor of state-law and canonicus Prof. D. P. D. Fabius. It is interesting to recall here that the curators assigned the historical branches of theology to Dr. Kuyper, the exegetical to Dr. Rutgers, and the philosophical to Dr. Hoedemaker. The curators hesitated to entrust dogmatics to Dr. Kuyper because he had written his articles in the *Heraut*, stating that grace was *particular*. And it was not until Dr. Kuyper promised to develop the covenant-theology that dogmatics was assigned to him, and the historical subjects were given to Dr. Rutgers, and the exegesis to licentiate Dilloo.

After these preparatory measures had been completed the university could be opened. The opening exercises took place in the choir of the Nieuwe Kerk on the 20th of October, 1880, and made an unforgettable impression upon all who were witnesses of it. After the deed of founding had been read by the President-director, Mr. Hovy, there came forward the aged Elout van Soeterwoude, Groen's friend, to present the gift of one hundred thousand guilders given by the founders. Then the first rector, Dr. A. Kuyper, stepped into the pulpit to deliver his stirring address: "Souvereiniteit in eigen kring" (that is, sovereignty in one's own domain) in which he said what this school came to do in Netherland's garden, why it waved the cap of freedom and why it pored over the book of the Reformed religion. The salute of honour which he asked, was given by nearly the entire press. To be sure, one paper did write about the gown used by the professors, saying that it was a Romish gown, and about the silver image of Minerva which was mounted upon the mace, because it was a heathen idol. But Dr. Kuyper, who left no attack upon this child of his ideal unanswered, remarked very cleverly that this same image of Minerva could be seen on the title-page of the paper which had done the criticising, and that the professor's gowns had not been borrowed from Rome's church, but from the university of Leiden. Apart from this one dissonant note it must be said that the new institution was received very well. The *Handelsblad* and the *Amsterdammer* contained enthusiastic articles;

such men as Allard Pierson and Fruin expressed their wonder at this heroic effort ; and even Dr. Van Toorenenbergen sent his felicitations to Dr. Kuyper, expressing the hope that this school would unite all of the Reformed faith. The founding of this Christian University also received warm greetings from other countries. The Reformirter Bund in Germany sent Calaminus and Geyser. The Predigerschule at Basel sent her greetings. Best wishes were received even from the Scuola Theologica, the Waldensian school at Florence. And the Free Scottish church showed its sympathy not only in words but also in deeds.¹ Her mission-church, in which Da Costa's seminary had once had its home, was offered to house the new university, and the promise was made that a fund would be raised to help our students.

Having told you of the birth of our school, let me go on to outline for you the story of its development during this half-century. As Dr. Kuyper said in his opening address, the school made its appearance embarrassed to the point of blushing. There was no building, no auditorium, no class-rooms. For five years it had to accept the hospitality offered by the Scottish church. There were only five professors for the three faculties, and when the class lectures began in December there were but three enrolled in the Album Civium. Three more were added soon afterwards, but even then the enrolment was small, with not a single student in either the law or literary departments. This need not be wondered at. A genuine courage of faith was necessary in those days if one was to study at our school. The *effectus civilis* had not yet been obtained for our degrees. The graduates from the literary department could perhaps find positions in the Christian High Schools and Gymnasia, but the graduates in law were not admitted to the bar. The only way open to them was to take double examinations in order to get the *effectus civilis* ; but the graduates in theology, who wished to become ministers in the Established Church, were not even as fortunate as that, for the

¹ "The scheme associated with Dr. Hoedemaker, who addressed last Assembly, for the erection at Amsterdam of a theological institution, was found, on full enquiry into the whole case, to be one deserving of whatever support and encouragement could be given to it. In this conviction the Committee was confirmed by the opinion of Rev. J. H. Wilson of the Barclay Church, the Rev. R. Smith of Corsock, and Mr. F. Brown Douglas, who visited Amsterdam in Autumn, and made full enquiry.

Through their Secretary the Committee raised a limited sum (£70) in aid of the scheme. In their efforts on its behalf they were joined by friends of the Established and United Presbyterian Churches, and the united subscriptions amounted to a considerable sum. Dr. Hoedemaker reports to us that the institution has just been opened with two professors. Intended to stem the advancing tide of Rationalism in the Reformed Church of Holland, the Committee cannot but wish it all success.'—F. C. *Assembly Reports*, VII, 1880, p. 6. Fuller references can be found in the *Record* for that year.—Eds.

General Synod had shut the door with a double lock. In order to be admitted to the ecclesiastical examinations they needed not only to give proof that they had passed their examinations in theology at some State University, but they also needed to show *testimonia* proving that they had attended the lectures of the professors appointed by the Synod to teach at these universities. Is it any wonder that one night someone wrote in chalk upon the doors of the lecture-room the words which Dante put above the gates of hell: *Per me si va nella citta dolente, lasciate ogni speranza, voi che entrate*, that is, "abandon hope all ye who enter here" ? This test of faith did not last long for the theological students, because, when the first graduates left the university, there broke out the church strife which threw open for them the doors of the Free church. The students of literature and law waited a good while longer, for it took twenty-five years before higher education was completely set free and the *effectus civilis* given. It was expected at that time that the number of students enrolled in the literary and law departments would greatly increase now that the *effectus civilis* was granted. This however did not prove to be the case. Today there are 452 students enrolled in our University, of which 271 are in the theological department, ninety-eight in the law department, and seventy-three in the literary department. As far as students in law and literature are concerned, the number is smaller than at the State Universities ; but our number of theological students far outnumbers those at the other universities. The total of students enrolled since the founding of the university, is more than 1,500. It is a great joy to add that there are included in that number many students from South Africa, North America, Germany and Hungary. At present we have a Jew from Palestine and a Chinese from one of our colonies in our student body. We have steadily held to the position that university education must be open to all, and the doors of the lecture rooms locked to none. Our University requires no ecclesiastical passport. Only those who will not submit to its one established rule: *nil contra Deum aut bonos mores*, are turned away from its doors. It must be said to the honour of our student body that during these fifty years it has been only rarely that the Senate had to exercise disciplinary measures. In spite of the temptations of a large city, the spirit of our student group has always been fine. And the student-corps *Nil Desperandum Deo Duce* has been successful in maintaining

the unity of the students, even though their records do tell of an occasional *secessio in Aventinum*.

I called your attention to our students to show you the growth of our University; but although a university without students could be to little purpose, without professors it could not even exist. The vitality of our school needed to be shown in its success in securing men for its professorships, and extending its faculties so that it could more justly prove the worth of the high name of university which it bore. This did not go very smoothly. Often it seemed as if that which had been built up with care was razed to the ground. It would be too burdensome to give you a record of the changes in the professorships during the past fifty years; but let me remind you of the chief changes. The first period of our University, ending with the silver jubilee feast in 1905, was the most heroic but also the most disturbed period. Because of the weakness of the faculties of law and literature, attempts were made first of all to strengthen these. It was a great privilege when in 1881 we were successful in securing Dr. Woltjer, a man who has been one of the outstanding figures of our University, for our faculty of literature. And professor Fabius, who laid down his active work four years ago, received much needed help when the Hon. Mr. A. F. de Savornin Lohman, our great statesman, came to stand alongside of him, and later on his promising son, Hon. Mr. W. H. de Savornin Lohman, the first student to receive his doctor's degree from our school. And the theological faculty was enriched when Dr. de Hartog came to take charge of New Testament exegesis. But then came the reverses. Prof. Dilloo, who never felt at home in our Calvinistic circles, left for Germany, and his place remained vacant. The conflict in the church, breaking loose in 1886, cost us the loss of Prof. Hoedemaker and a large group of friends of the school who did not support the new church movement. And a much greater loss came when, as a result of difference of opinion as to the basis of our school, the Messrs. Lohman, father and son, left us. Then in the same year, Dr. de Hartog was removed by death. In 1889 the theological faculty was enriched by the addition of Prof. Geesink, but this gain, although I assure you that I appreciate the work of this splendid theologian very greatly, did not equal the loss which the university sustained when in 1901 Dr. Kuyper, its founder, exchanged the professorate for the Ministership, never to return to us again. Thus, after having existed for

sixteen years, our school was back to the point whence it began, with three theological professors, and one each in the departments of literature and law.

It is easily understood that this period of depression brought with it an attempt on the part of some to unite the university with the theological college at Kampen. But there were great dangers here. The uniting of University and Seminary would have produced a hybrid, by which the idea of sovereignty in the field of education would have been injured. I am very pleased that this attempt failed; and especially, because the somewhat strained relation which had existed between these schools gave way to a spirit of hearty co-operation which I trust will continue in the future.

The failure of these attempts at union resulted in the great gain of receiving Prof. Bavinck and his *fidus Achates*, Prof. Biesterveld, so that the professorship of dogmatics, made vacant by the departure of Dr. Kuyper, was then again worthily occupied. Bavinck belonged to the most eminent theologians, whose *Dogmatics*, along with Kuyper's *Theological Encyclopedia*, is one of the standard works produced by our Reformed theology in this century. And the faculties of literature and law were enlarged by the appointments of Dr. van Gelderen, Dr. Woltjer, Jun., Drs. Anema and Diepenhorst. The honour brought to these men a short time ago, proved how greatly their services at our University are appreciated. And so our school celebrated its first jubilee in 1905, having come to a period of growth after the period of temporary decline, and looking toward the future with hope.

Our Reformed people showed its gratitude at the time of this silver jubilee by making a gift of one hundred thousand guilders. But a greater gift was given by Dr. Kuyper who, as Minister of the Crown, fulfilled the wish which he himself had uttered in his address at the opening of the university, namely, that if the new university showed its worth, the government should not withhold the *effectus civilis*. This did not come to pass without great struggle. He dissolved the First Chamber of the States-General in order to break down the opposition. But finally, thanks to the masterly way in which he defended his spiritual child from all the attacks made upon it in the First Chamber, the law was passed which made it possible for non-State universities to secure the *effectus civilis*, under necessary restrictions, of course. On

December 4th, 1905, there came the royal decree granting to our University the right to grant the degree of doctor in law, classical and Semitic literature, and philosophy. In this way all that hindered the proper development of the school was taken away; a great stumbling block was removed from before the students; and our school was finally recognised in the circle of universities in our country.

The period of twenty-five years which followed that silver jubilee were years of quiet growth and development. There were no more shocks which threatened its life. There were serious losses because of the passing away of some of its professors such as—I mention only the more prominent—Woltjer, Rutgers, Bavinck and Geesink; and Prof. Fabius was released of his duties because of age. But whereas in former years some professorships were left vacant for long periods of time because none could be found to fill them, men could now be found for these positions. Our University had trained a generation of men who came to fill these places with honour. The literary faculty was increased by four professors, teaching history, Dutch language and literature and pedagogy; this last professorship being made possible by the National Society of Reformed Schools. So that this department now has eight professors. The faculty of law has just received its fifth professor. These facts are sufficient to deny the sneering remarks made in a Handbook of National Church History recently, when it stated that our University, although it had the name of a university, really was nothing more than a seminary with a semblance of a faculty of literature and one of law. The university of which the writer of that remark was professor did not, two years ago, have more professors in these two faculties than our university has now.

This period is characterised by the attempt not merely to enlarge the existing departments, but also to create a new department. The fact that our University exists because of the gifts of our Reformed people raised a great problem here. The so-called spiritual departments require nothing more than money for the salaries of the professors, but the Medical and Natural Science departments require clinics, laboratories, etc., and great sums of money are required for these. The public universities can reach both hands into the treasuries of the nation or of the city, and so have no problem on this point. The same is true in North America and South Africa, where the lords of wealth count

it an honour to give of their millions to universities. But that is not true in our country, although we do have exceptions, as I shall tell you later. And the liberality with which the Belgian Government supports the Free Universities of Brussels and Louvaine has not been shown by our government. In a law signed by King Albert on June 23rd, 1930, the sum is fixed at three-fifths of the amount credited to the state universities, so that a sum of ten million francs is divided between Brussels and Louvaine. In our country the law requires that private universities shall receive four thousand guilders to help pay for the cost of lecture rooms, and the government has added a gift of twenty thousand guilders for scientific research. While we as a university are grateful for these gifts, the contrast is still too great. We hope that the time is not far off when our country will show the same liberality toward private higher education as Belgium shows now. It is only then that matters will be straightened out, for it seems to us to be a wrong state of affairs when our Reformed people must pay taxes to support the state universities (and in the city of Amsterdam taxes are also added for the support of the university of Amsterdam), while their own university receives a bare pittance from the state.

At the same time, even though we do not receive proper assistance from the state, we could not be satisfied with just the three departments in our University. What urges us on is not merely the obligation to the law which had declared that in order to keep the *effectus civilis* we should have to add a department, each twenty-five years, until the five faculties were complete, but much more the demand of our principle that not only a *part*, but *all* of the field of learning needed to be governed by the Word of God. And so the Medical faculty was started. Our people felt the need of having Christian doctors. It seemed at first as if everything was working together for the success of our plans. The Christian Society for the care of the Insane, under the leadership of Prof. Lindeboom, who had always heartily supported the idea of a Medical faculty for our school, helped along wonderfully. In conference with this organisation, Prof. Bouman was appointed professor of psychiatry, and this Society built the Psychiatric-Neurological clinic which was opened in 1909. As second professor there was appointed Prof. Buytendyk, for biology. Then the Coeverden-Adriani-Fund, created by Rev. Van Coeverden-Adriani, turning over to it his immense wealth

with the purpose that it should help in the extension work of the non-theological departments at the Free University, used some of these funds to build a physiological laboratory right next to the above-mentioned clinic, a laboratory which was equipped with the latest apparatus. With this clinic and laboratory and the two professors, only one more professor was needed to meet with the requirements of the law by 1930. Then came the reverses. The splendid reputation which these men made for themselves resulted in their being called away. Prof. Buytendyk to the university of Groningen in 1924, and Prof. Bouman to the university of Utrecht in 1925; and both felt called to leave. Although Prof. Bouman retained a slight relation with us, and although in 1928 Prof. van der Horst was appointed professor of Psychiatry and Experimental Psychology, so that the medical department was not entirely gone, it was clear that other measures needed to be taken to meet the requirements of the law, now that the fatal hour was approaching. So the position of the rudder was changed and we steered into the direction of a department of Mathematics and Natural Science. Such a department was necessary in preparatory work for the study of medicine. And the constantly increasing number of Christian *gymnasia* and *lycea* created a need for instructors in natural science. Added to this, there was the fact to which Dr. Kuyper had already referred in his address on *Evolution*, that fundamental questions and problems requiring solutions were brought up in the field of natural science more than in the realm of medicine. The jubilee gift of three hundred thousand guilders, which our Board of Directors asked for this necessary extension work, was given, and our people have again showed their willingness to give in a remarkable degree. It was a more difficult task to find professors, but we have succeeded in doing it; so that, in the very year of our jubilee the new faculty has been constituted, having more professors than the law required. It is not necessary for me to say that the new faculty is a welcome addition to the university.

At this feast which recalls half a century of life for our University, it stands before you not yet mature—is any university ever full-grown?—but whoever thinks back over the years will thank God for the growth which He has given. The number of professors has increased from five to twenty-three. The departments of literature and law, which were so weak at the time of

its founding, now stand on equal footing with the theological department. Two branches—the medical and the natural science departments—have sprouted out of its trunk. It does not yet have an auditorium, but it does have lecture rooms, so that it does not need any longer to make use of the hospitality offered by others. It now has a home of its own on the Keizersgracht, housing at present also the lecture-rooms and the dormitory for the students. I admit that this combination is not desirable; for it is not in harmony with the *dignitas academica*. It is also apparent that we do not have sufficient room for lecture-rooms, rooms for meetings and examinations, library, etc. There were at one time very serious efforts made to erect a new building in Amsterdam-Zuid or in Nieuwer-Amstel, for which the burgomaster Colyn very kindly offered his assistance and support. The exceedingly high cost of this venture weighed down upon us so heavily, especially when the war broke out, that the plans were laid aside. The Board of Directors supplied the greatest need by purchasing the building adjoining the university on the Keizersgracht. I have already mentioned the clinic and physiological laboratory which now stands empty and unused. But now that the jubilee gift has been raised, a new laboratory for the department of natural science will be erected. We have our own library, which, although it is small, already fills all our attic space, and has great value because we are gathering here all literature which is related to Calvinism. Valuable additions have been made either by purchase or by the bequests of libraries, such as those of Professors Rutgers and Bavinck. It is evident that such extension of our school requires great financial expenditures. Funds such as that of Rev. Van Coeverden-Adriani, who gave his great wealth to help us, have been the exception. But we do have the Kuyper fund, which serves to endow a professorship in the faculty of law; and the Calvin fund, which enables us to invite Reformed men from other countries to lecture for us; and the Study fund to give financial assistance to our students; and we have the financial assistance of the Christian Society for the Care of the Insane, and the National Society of Reformed Schools. When we remember how great an effort it was at the time of the founding of our school to get together one hundred thousand guilders, we may make thankful announcement that one of the friends of the school, resident in the north, has just lately bequeathed such a sum to our University. But this is what is cause for wonder,

namely, that our Reformed people, among whom there are not many great or wealthy, makes an annual contribution—I am taking the report of the last year—of one hundred and fifty thousand guilders. I do not know of another example of such liberality for an institution of learning. Of even greater value is the love which lies behind these gifts, and the prayers with which our people support us. To express the thanks of our University at this time of jubilee is more than a duty—it is an urge of the heart. I also gladly bring this thanks to our Board of Directors who have taken such splendid care of the financial interest of the school. May I make special mention of the President of the Board of Directors, Mr. Colyn ? And this thanks is also due to the curators who have guarded the spiritual interest of the institution so carefully.

There is only one out of the circle of Directors, Curators and Professors at the time of the founding of the university who still remains with us—Professor Fabius. Even though he is not any longer on the faculty, having been honourably released from his duties when he reached the age of seventy years, I feel that a word of honour and praise must be spoken here. He was more at home in the writing of Groen, his teacher, than anyone else. In the midst of his heavy tasks as professor, he found time to write much in defence of the principles which were dear to him. This motto was his : *frangi non flecti*, rather break than bend. He has always refused to trim, to skip about from one position to another ; and as a result of his convictions, he often stood alone. May God, now that the evening of his life has fallen, strengthen him for the honourable position which he fills in the Council of State. But even though this one has still been left to us, I cannot but help think with tender sadness of the many who were once the glory of our University, and who have been taken away by death. Men such as Kuyper and Rutgers, Woltjer and Bavinck, have shone as stars of the first magnitude. It was God's grace which gave us these great men at a time when our University needed to win her spurs. I need not tell you how difficult it was for the following generation to take their places. May the beautiful words of Longfellow tend to encourage us :

Lives of great men all remind us
 We can make our lives sublime,
 And, departing, leave behind us,
 Footprints on the sands of time.

Now that I have given you a short résumé of the development of our school during these fifty years, I still need to tell you of its value and significance, or, if you would rather have it stated a bit differently, to what extent it has fulfilled its calling and to what degree it has remained true to its principle. It was called the *Free University*—let me remind you of that, first of all. It wanted no dominion by the State, nor by the Church. It asked that science (*wissenschaft*) be sovereign in her own field, so that it might develop according to its own nature. As long as it entertained no relation with the State, nor with the Church, it has been able to maintain this autonomy to the highest degree. It appointed its own professors, and outlined its own courses. Neither Church nor State dictated to it. But it was not possible to maintain this freedom. The *effectus civilis* of its degree placed it under the supervision of the State, and the contract which it made with the Reformed Church placed its theological faculty under the supervision of that church. Although I do not deny the element of danger involved here—and Dr. Kuyper pointed this out to us in the last address which he delivered to our society—yet I feel that it has not denied its principle. In the development of international law we have learned that where co-operation between nations was necessary the absolute sovereignty of each nation cannot be maintained. The requirements of the government have not been too heavy, and the Commission under whose supervision the government has placed us, has not been despotic at all, but has rather helped us and has pleaded our cause. I bring our thanks for the dignified and friendly way in which this Commission has acquitted itself of its task. The question of our relation to the church was more difficult. Dr. Kuyper never denied that a church which entrusted the preparation of its future ministers of the Word to a university, also had the right to exercise some supervision over its theological professors. But, while this contract relation between our University and the Reformed Church is not to be disapproved of, and although we cannot speak aught but praise for the way in which the Deputies appointed by Synod to exercise this supervision have carried on their work, our University may not become a Church School, neither does it wish to become that. It has showed this not only by recent appointments of professors, but no less when a church conflict raged in the bosom of the Reformed Churches, and it determined for itself what it considered to be the truths and

principles growing out of the Reformed confessions. It does not want to be a blessing merely for one group, but for the entire Reformed family of which the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands are a part.

In the second place let me remind you that our University arose as a school of science (*wissenschaft*), to train a generation of young men who should be able to defend the principles of the Christian religion in Church, in the field of Education, and in Social life. And I may add that it has fulfilled this task with honour. Even the Handbook for National Church History, which had scarcely a friendly word for our University, admits that we have produced excellent dissertations in the field of theology, a praise which must also be brought to the dissertations of other departments. Academically, we have maintained a high standard. More than one of our students has been appointed to a professorship, not only at our University, but also at other schools. The Theological School at Kampen has on its faculty three of our graduates; the State University of Utrecht has just recently appointed one of our students to the professorship in Roman Law; at the Theological Schools in Stellenbosch and Potchefstroom, South Africa, you will find four of our students as professors, while the University College at Potchefstroom also has one of our students as professor; and in North America the Theological School of the Christian Reformed Church at Grand Rapids has two of our students, and on the faculty of the newly instituted Westminster Seminary at Philadelphia there is one. The Protestant Theological faculty at Budapest also has a professor one of our disciples. I need not tell you what a great number of ministers of the Gospel, and missionaries, have gone forth to serve the church here in Holland and in Dutch East Indies. Our department of literature has produced many capable men who are now teaching in the Christian gymnasia and lycea in our country. And the fruit of the department of law is equally notable. Four of its students have been Ministers of State and we are proud to say that the present Minister for Education is a graduate of our school. In the highest judiciary in our country, the High Council, the chairmanship is now in the hands of one of our graduates. Our graduates in law take up everywhere positions of honour, in the States-General, in our judiciaries, among the Commissaries of the Queen, as burgomasters and councilmen, and in the various departments of State. I feel that

the *bene merita de patria et de ecclesia* can be spoken of a University that can show such results, and without exaggeration. I will spend no time to talk about the scientific contributions made by our professors. The handbook published by the Directors, notes the titles of their works, and I suggest that you look for them there. How much their services have been valued is evident in this, that the Government appointed them to several commissions, sent them as delegates to the conferences at Geneva, that the Royal Academy appointed two as members, and other honours were shown them. The time is past that our Reformed people were spoken of as belonging to the Night-school, and deserving nothing so much as to be abused and rooted out. And it is due largely to the Free University that we have escaped from that scorn and today occupy a place of honour in public opinion.

Permit me to remind you, in the last place, that our Free University arose not merely to plead for the sovereignty of learning in its own realm, not even to equip our Reformed people with properly trained leaders which it needed so badly, but, above all, to battle for the sovereignty of Christ, the King of learning, and to ask for Him the praise and the honour which a neutral humanistic science continued to withhold from Him. In the address with which the founder of our University opened it, reference was made to the sovereign authority of Him who said : " All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." It was the same message that had been sung to us by Da Costa :

Brengt aan dien Koning op uw knieën,
 O Koningen uw heer lykheid,
 Zy voor zyn voetbank, o genieën,
 Uw schatten need'rig neergeleid.
 Gy wetenschappen en gy kunsten,
 Gy krachten, machten, gaven, gunsten,
 Door d' adem Gods in ons verwekt,
 Weg met den dienst der heiligschennis,
 Gy hoort den Goël toe, wiens kennis,
 Eerlang het aardryk overdekt.

I shall not use the sharp language of a Da Costa in telling you how in the century which came after the Revolution, in spite of all its boasting about its enlargement, learning had turned to sacrilege because it had been torn loose from the root of faith. Let me rather speak in the sweet flowing words of France's great poet, Victor Hugo, who, after he had sung about the glory of his age in one of his odes, brings his song to a conclusion in this minor tone :

Mais parmi ces progrès, dont notre age se vante,
 Dans tout ce grand éclat d'un siècle éblouissant,
 Une chose o Jesus en secret m'épouvante,
 C'est l'écho de ta voix qui va s'affaiblissant.

This is not too strong a statement. The voice of the Christ who is the way, the truth and the life, also for science, was scarcely heard any more in our schools of learning. That is why our Free University was founded. It did not merely want to bring the offering of reverence and acclaim to lay them down at the feet of the King whom God had anointed, but it also wanted to shed abroad the light which He has lighted over all the realm of human knowledge. I am convinced, looking back over this half-century, that in spite of the human weakness which always clings to our endeavours, it has not been unfaithful to that high calling. And although it has not yet re-created the whole world of thought, nor changed the consciousness of all our people, it certainly has raised again the Banner of the Gospel over against the maelstrom of revolution and unbelief which threatened to drag us with it, and it has been the means in God's hands to save thousands from apostacy from the Christian faith. Thus, it enters into the new period of its existence. I am not unaware of the seriousness of the task that awaits it in these times that are pregnant with danger. The foundations are laid, but the building up of a Christian system of learning demands no less of our strength. And if, looking at the great weight of that calling, courage should all but fail, may the banner of our University, the *Auxilium nostrum in nomine Domini*, direct us to Him, our Father in heaven, the Fountain of all truth, the Source of all true knowledge, the Spring of all wisdom, and may the prayer which was uttered by the founder of this University on that memorable day fifty years ago be uttered anew: "Adorable Majesty, look with favour upon our institution. Let all its gold, its might, its wisdom be from Thee. Lord, Lord God, let our help be in Thy Name, and in Thy Name alone!"

It is building upon that help that I cry out my good wishes to it on this Jubilee day:

Vivat, crescat, floreat Universitas nostra!

H. H. KUYPER.

Amsterdam.