

A FUNDAMENTALIST/LIBERAL CONTROVERSY IN DENVER
AND AT THE ILIFF SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, 1919-1924

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for Information

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When we as Methodists say that we test our faith, our actions and affirmations by the Wesleyan quadrilateral--tradition, scripture, experience and reason--we often do not know what a big project we have undertaken.¹ Indeed, those religious groups which have credal standards, or liturgical statements, or an overwhelming sense of tradition, may seem to have an easier task in maintaining their faith and their religious institutions intact. This is not necessarily true, however, because upheavals in all Christian institutions in the late 19th century were no respectors of institutional loyalties, and no group was immune from the necessity to think and rethink its approach to the faith which was supposedly delivered once and for all times.

In the centuries before there was a Methodism, and even more centuries before the Wesleyan Quadrilateral was clearly spelled out, there were many instances where experience seemed to modify tradition, or reason seemed to challenge scripture, or some other combination. For example, when in the year of his death, 1543, Nicholas Copernicus, a Polish astronomer, published his book entitled Concerning the Revolution of the Celestial Spheres, he used reason to challenge a fairly widely-held tradition.² He disagreed with the tradition which assumed that the earth stood still and that the sun and all the

¹The "Wesleyan Quadrilateral" was first worked out by the Theological Study Commission on Doctrines and Doctrinal Statements, with Albert Outler as Chairman. It was in preparation for the General Conference of 1972. The analysis of the four parts first appeared in the 1972 Discipline, Section 70, pp. 75-78, and they appear in subsequent editions of the Discipline.

²There are many studies of Copernicus (1473-1543) and his influence. Some examples are: Owen Gingerich, ed., The Nature of Scientific Discovery, a symposium commemorating the 500th birthday of Copernicus in 1973 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1975); Angus Armitage, The World of Copernicus: Sun, Stand Thou Still (New York: Henry Schuman, 1947. Mentor paper book, 1951); Robert S. Westman, ed., The Copernican Achievement (Berkeley, California: The University of California Press, 1975).

heavenly bodies moved around it in various ways. He dared to deny this and state that the earth was actually hurtling through space around the sun. This idea, unpublished until his death, seems not to have been widely known in his lifetime, however, for he lived on a stipend from the Roman Catholic Church and functioned as a canon--in charge of Church property--until his death.

A half century later these ideas were accepted and expanded by Galilei Galileo.³ He argued that two bodies of unequal weight because they were affected by the same gravity, would fall equally fast, and proved this by dropping different sized objects off the leaning tower in his home town of Pisa. For his rash new ideas, he was forced to leave the University of Pisa. He made other discoveries and had other problems for much of his life. In 1632 when he was 68 years old the Roman Catholic Inquisition called him to account, and forced him to deny his findings that the earth moved. After they forced him to admit that the earth really stood still, he is supposed to have said under his breath, "I still say the earth moves." His works were put on the Index of Forbidden Books of the Roman church where they remained for 200 years.

Copernicus and Galileo formed the foundation for Huygen, Kepler and Isaac Newton. All these men worked in the fields of natural sciences, and they caused reactions in their own day. I know we all studied these men in our high school science courses, and we take their theories for granted--the movement of the earth, gravity, and the like. Some of us may have difficulty understanding why these ideas should have caused such a stir in religious circles.

³Some representative studies of Galileo (1561-1642) and his influence are: William Dodge Gray, Harold Underwood Faulkner, eds., The Defense of Galileo, by Thomas Campanella, trans., Grant McColley (Northampton, Mass.: Department of History of Smith College, 1937, reprint 1975); Giorgio de Santilla, The Crime of Galileo (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955).

The problems for the the religious establishment were far from over, however, in fact just beginning. The scientific age posed many questions and presented many answers which the pre-Scientific age could not have known about. Think, for example, of Charles Darwin and his Origin of the Species of 1859.⁴ Think of the Scopes trial in 1925 and the reactionary arguments for the traditional pre-scientific ideas put forth by William Jennings Bryan, twice a serious candidate for President of our country. Think of the law requiring teaching the Bible as scientific theory which was just struck down in Louisiana this year. Think of the whole field of psychology, topped off with Sigmund Freud's ideas, which assume that our personality is not some separate entity or soul, but is formed as an interaction among our various psycho-somatic energies. We all know of other seeming conflicts between science and religion in many areas.⁵

I want to concentrate today, however, in one other portion of our tradition, and one which had a specific reference to The Iliff School of Theology and the Denver area. This concerns how to study the Bible and how to use these new insights. In this instance reason was given a significant place to augment, or even to correct what had been assumed in tradition or in scriptural interpretation. The whole 19th century was a period of rapid development in methods of Bible research, and not often did new insights merely parrot

⁴Darwin's book was the culmination of many scientific studies before his own time. Darwin (1809-1882) is the center of countless studies since his time. Two quite different examples are: Howard E. Gruber, Darwin on Man: a psychological study of Scientific Creativity (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974, 1981); and Neal C. Gillespie, Charles Darwin and the Problem of Creation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

⁵A much-quoted study, although somewhat out of date, is that of Andrew Dickson White, The Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom (2 vols.. New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1896, reprint 1922, reprint 1963).

from an earlier age--perhaps I should say never did they merely repeat the tradition of the past. They augmented, or even challenged earlier presuppositions.

I think the whole field of what is called "higher criticism" of the Bible is too little known in our churches. I take every opportunity I have to share this information with lay groups in many denominations. The development of these new insights in Bible study did not come without some rather sharp conflict, however. For example, to suggest that the Bible was written by real human beings like you and me was almost sacrilege; to suggest that oral tradition continued and was modified many times before it appeared in the written form as we have it was to impugn the validity of the "sacred" scripture; the suggestion that there are quite different theological concepts and traditions woven together--sometimes side by side in the same books--was to deny that God had one and only one uniform message from cover to cover, and hence was to suggest that the Bible authors acted from impure motives. What then is unchanging and solidly fundamental to the faith?

In our country there did not seem to be serious reactions to this new scholarship until after the civil war. From then to World War I the dissent grew louder and more organized. In 1876 there was a huge "prophecy conference" in New York; and in 1878 a similar one in Chicago.⁶ There were also the Niagara Bible Conferences, named because of where they met every summer from 1875 to 1901.⁷ The leaders emphasized not only the literal second coming of Jesus, but sought a pattern in God's action--called Dispensationalism.

⁶Sidney Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 808.

⁷C. Allyn Russell, Voices of American Fundamentalism: Seven Biographical Studies (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), p. 17.

Soon these groups developed "Bible Colleges" to maintain the anti-higher criticism approach to the Bible. Two big names of the period were Dwight L. Moody and Cyrus Ingersoll Scofield--the one has a Bible school named for him, and the latter is known for his reference Bible which was not troubled by any of the new insights of Biblical understanding. Some of Scofield's unscholarly emphases and some of his followers were ultimately organized into what is now the Dallas Theological Seminary.⁸

While these reactions to contemporary Bible study often became "independent" and claimed to be above all denominations--often called by the misnomer of "non-denominational," they often had their origins in more credal churches as the Presbyterians. In the two decades before 1900 several doctrines were widely discussed, which became the so-called "five points" of Fundamentalism.⁹

⁸Ahlstrom, *Ibid.*, pp. 808-810

⁹There is some confusion about the origin of the famous "Five Points" of Fundamentalism. Steward G. Cole, in his The History of Fundamentalism (New York: R. R. Smith, 1931), pp. 34, 98-99, states that they were formulated at a Niagara Conference meeting in 1895. It seems more likely, however, that they were discussed, along with other aspects of belief, at the various Niagara Conferences during the period. They were officially adopted by the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1910, and reaffirmed in 1916 and 1923. Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. xiv; George M. Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism: 1870-1925 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 117. These points are also summarized in Norman F. Furniss, The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1919-1931 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1954; reprinted in Archon Books, 1963), p. 13.

The Fundamentalist attitudes were furthered during the next two decades by such organizations as the following twelve:

1. Victorious Life Testimony;
2. Christian Fundamentals League
3. Association of Conservative Evangelical Colleges;
4. The League of Evangelical Students;
5. Anti-Evolution League of America
6. The Bryan Bible League;
7. Defenders of the Christian Faith;
8. Bible Crusaders of America;
9. The Supreme Kingdom. (a Biblically-based rival of the Ku

These were, it was presumed, Fundamental to every Christian approach, finally given official approval in the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1910. They were:

1. Absolute belief in the Virgin Birth of Jesus;
2. Substitutionary atonement by Christ on the cross;
3. literal physical resurrection;
4. visible, bodily return of Jesus on earth--the second coming;
5. absolute inerrancy of the scriptures, including literal belief in the miracles of Jesus.

Soon two wealthy laymen provided for the publication of 12 small volumes, called "The Fundamentals," appearing between 1910 and 1915. Before World War I they had circulated about three million copies to ministers, professors, and YMCA leaders.¹⁰ The pamphlets were opposed to other contemporary ideas such as:

1. the thought of Darwin, evolution, modern biology;
2. historical analysis of Bible and of theology and the creeds;
3. liberal and open-minded tendencies in many Protestant churches;
4. the social gospel--or the belief that the church should deal with issues such as: a. hunger; b. poverty; c. race relations; d. war and peace; and economic issues and labor movements.¹¹

Klux Klan, and there were some leaders common to both the Supreme Kingdom and the Klan);

10. The Baptist Bible Union of North America;
11. The American Conference of Undenominational Churches;
12. The World's Christian Fundamentals Association.

¹⁰Ahlstrom, Ibid., p. 815. Iliff possesses a complete set of these booklets. Samples of the essays are: "Fallacies of Higher Criticism"; "History of Higher Criticism"; "My Personal Experience with Higher Criticism"; "A Potent Argument for Fulfilled Prophecy"; "One Isaiah."

¹¹Norman Furness, Ibid., gives a good context for the whole movement in his second chapter, entitled "The appearance of the Controversy."

While Methodism as a whole has had only a minimum of heresy-hunting over these doctrinal matters, early in this century Iliff became the object of such charges led by the Denver Presbytery. In the Rocky Mountain News of January 19, 1919, there appeared a headline: "Presbytery Asks Boycott of Denver University and The Iliff School."¹² The sub-title stated that a special committee had found both schools "hotbeds of infidelity." The committee to make the report had been appointed the previous year and various critics evaluated the books being used in D.U.'s religion courses, and at Iliff. They summarized their concerns in three points:

1. these schools do not give enough emphasis to the divinity of Christ;
2. these schools do not emphasize sufficiently the inspiration of scripture; in fact, they even teach "higher criticism" of the Bible; and 3. these schools were suspected of accepting the doctrine of evolution. The Presbyterians stated that until things changed, they would send none of their students to these schools, or at least they would give them no financial help. Some suggested that the Presbytery should form their own college on an "orthodox" basis. They awaited the response from the University and The Iliff School of Theology, two Methodist institutions on adjacent campuses.

The next day the newspaper carried a note that the two institutions would reply--with a front page story--the very next Sunday. In the meantime several ministers of differing denominations were interviewed concerning the controversy. The title of this article was: "'God Bless DU' assert defenders: 'Liberalism a fallacy,' say critics."¹³ While many ministers agreed with the Presbyterian charges, a congregational minister stated: "No thinking person

¹²Rocky Mountain News, January 19, 1919.

¹³Rocky Mountain News, January 20, 1919.

today refuses to believe in evolution. Children have to face modern thought when they go out into the world, and if Denver University and The Iliff School of Theology are giving their students modern teaching, I say, 'God bless them.'"¹⁴

As promised, the next Sunday, the newspapers carried replies from the Chancellor of the University of Denver, and the President of Iliff. The paper also carried the full report of the Presbyterian challenges. The statement by Chancellor Buchtel was entitled: "Forward look, hunt for truth, DU's aim, Buchtel tells his critics."¹⁵ He gave many statistics, numbers of ministers and missionaries trained, growth of the school. The faculty represents about a dozen denominations, and are highly respected in their fields. Chapel is held each day, and various professors and visitors are speakers. He summarized,

"We frankly avow that we at the University of Denver seek constantly to cultivate the forward look, with hospitality to new ideals, keeping ourselves free from bondage either to antiquity or to novelty, but also seeking to discover and to verify the truth, striving sincerely and eagerly to bring facts to life. In the realm of science, in the realm of philosophy, . . . social welfare, . . . religion, whether these facts validate or invalidate previously accepted opinions, we have the highest authority for maintaining that it is the truth which makes men free."¹⁶

President Beebe, of The Iliff School of Theology, stated in the same issue: "I do not feel that the report of the Denver Presbytery merits a reply. We extended a most cordial invitation to the Committee to visit the school, attend the classes and talk with the students and professors, and not one of them put a foot inside our buildings."¹⁷

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Rocky Mountain News, January 26, 1919.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

While Chancellor Buchtel and President Beebe considered the case closed, it was not. The same issue of the newspaper carried the whole Presbyterian report, filling four and one half columns of the paper. Some of the emotional, and even irrelevant argument is interesting now more than sixty years later. The Presbyterian report is headed: "Presbytery says scriptures give way to theory at school."¹⁰ If the schools, so the Presbyterians argued, sought to instill religious values in students, by what logic should they be denying exactly what they purport to affirm? "What would you think of a restaurateur whose menus would in the main be composed of dishes containing poisonous elements, and who was willing to take the responsibility for the death of his patrons? Again, let it be asked why such a professed Christian institution be guilty of this in the more precious realm of the spiritual?"

In January 1919 World War I had been over only two months, and the Presbyterians were suspicious of anything "made in Germany," especially the Biblical scholarship.

"In these days when there has been such a slump in German values, one wonders whether they are still disposed admiringly to drive golden nails into these wooden statues. In view of the fact that much of this teaching has been held responsible for the eclipse of faith which produced Prussian militarism and its harvest of woes, it would be pertinent to inquire whether a true Christian patriotism does not point to the propriety of exercising such educational censorship as may deliver our youth from being honeycombed with the element of decay and death."

On the point of evolution, the Presbyterians were equally hostile.

"According to this theory, as held by these authors, man was at first naught but an emergent brute, and the earliest religious experience of the race was fetishism, which by evolutionary development was carried forward without divine intervention through later

¹⁰Ibid.

phases--Christianity included. . . . Monotheism, instead of being first, was last. It was an evolutionary achievement."¹⁷

This, they said, disagreed with the Bible, because the writers of Genesis assumed that human beings were created perfect and unchanging.

Some of the argument waxes eloquent with its emotional argument. Concerning the divinity of Jesus, they stated: "They have taken away our Lord and when they pretend to lead us to Him, He turns out to be a counterfeit, for they have divested him of his deity." The elaborate and detailed studies of Biblical authorship were both misunderstood, and ridiculed. "Biblical authorship and chronology, whereby Moses was a legislator and prophet, is largely relegated to the scrap heap; Deuteronomy being foisted on the nation in the days of Josiah; and the balance of the Pentateuch being post-exilic."²⁰ Concerning the newer ideas that there were repetitions, and retellings of the same stories from different points of view, the Presbyterians complained that the scholars were whittling down the Bible to a shorter version to suit themselves.

One of these canons is to the effect that when you run afoul of more than one story of the same event, cut out the chronologically later one. . . . The reason for this is that the latter are more liable to get be-whiskered with the miraculous. . . . So the testament must be put in the higher critic drydock that it may be made seaworthy. When finally it leaves . . . we will have, according to them, a smaller craft to be sure, but trimmer and much more dependable than the old one which has sailed in blessing over sinful human seas for the antecedent centuries. . . . If the sacred writers were as incompetent, unreliable and moved by such questionable considerations as in certain instances, the higher critics declare them to be. Our Lord included, then goodbye, old Bible. You are not a seaworthy craft in which to set sail for eternity."

¹⁷Ibid. The same report was carried by The Denver Times on the same day.

²⁰Ibid.

What they wanted to get back to, so they said, was the "apostolic declaration" that we have the scriptures because "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,"²¹ and this assumption for them left no room for analysis or scholarship.

Illiff's heritage of liberalism is not denied. Indeed, its founding leaders were among the liberals of their day. Bishop Henry White Warren made a significant statement at the opening of the Illiff Hall in 1893: "The Illiff School of Theology has been established to promote progress in doctrine and experience. In doctrine it fears no criticism, courts always an advance."²²

Twenty years before that, however, when he was a minister in Philadelphia he gave a lecture entitled "The Duty of the Church to the Intellect." This was one of the Lycaean presentations in Philadelphia which evidently had great influence in that part of our history. Remembering that Darwin's Origin of the Species was published only in 1859, and remembering also the tremendous emotional outbursts which have been directed at that work, it is interesting to read that only 12 years after this publication Warren had said in 1871:

Among the millions that look to our church for instruction in mind and inspiration of spirit may be the future Newtons, Kirchoffs, Tyndalls, and Darwins of our future science--a science that shall be so sublime that we are incapable of reading the very primer of it today. Let these men know that the church is the source of development; it is not merely friendly to knowledge, but the inspiration of it, and they will learn that all science and religion are one, and both of God.²³

Warren was not one to be swayed by the Fundamentalist reactionary pleas. He retired at age 81 in May 1912, and died two months later.

²¹Ibid.

²²This statement is carried in each issue of the catalog of The Illiff School of Theology.

²³Warren's lecture was filed in the Warren papers, the Archives of the Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church, housed in The Illiff School of Theology Library.

By that time Harris Franklin Rall was President of Iliff, and taught some theology. He was a liberal for his day. Not only was he a contemporary with Borden Parker Bowne of Boston, but he emphasized a similar liberal idealism, as we can discern from his later published works. Rall moved to Garrett in 1915 where he remained the rest of his career. He was followed at Iliff in theology by Borden Bowne Kessler. I think that name is interesting--Borden Bowne Kessler. I have located nothing of his writing except class descriptions. I assume his theology was similar to that of Rall.²⁴

Remembering the charge that too much of the theology and Bible study was "Made in Germany" it is interesting to note that that was largely true at Iliff. President Rall had studied at Halle-Wittenberg, the successor school to Luther's University. Lisgar Eckhardt who also taught theology for a while studied in Berlin. Borden Bowne Kessler had studied at Berlin. William Lowstutter, professor of New Testament in the same period, studied both at Marburg and Berlin. In fact, in this decade beginning in 1910 everyone who taught at Iliff except for one or two persons had part of his training in Germany.²⁵ Add to this the fact that after Bishop Warren retired and died in 1912, the next bishop in Denver was Francis J. McConnell, well-known for his liberal views, especially in social action.

Most influential in the school in this period, and the major figure in Bible study, was Dr. Lindsay B. Longacre. He had degrees in mining engineering and music before he decided on the ministry. He went to Jena, in Germany, and later to Berlin for his Old Testament training. There he was introduced to

²⁴The old catalogs of The Iliff School of Theology are filed in the Rocky Mountain Conference Archives.

²⁵Ibid.

Biblical scholarship at its best. They were teaching the doctrinal and analyzing authorship and doctrinal differences. Longacre was student and quickly saw how he could apply this new knowledge Testament study for the ministry and for teaching. Consequently, when to teach at Iliff in 1910 he introduced the most advanced German and he continued at Iliff up to his retirement in 1942.

Since the Fundamentalists had the most problems with Bible and since Professor Longacre summarized his thought in a lecture series easily check the accuracy of the Fundamentalist criticisms. They could, for example, that critical scholarship taught that the Old Testament was by many individuals of diverse beliefs. Longacre wrote:

The Old Testament as it now stands is highly composite. This is not only that it consists of many different books by different authors but also that the books are in most cases themselves collections of different writings and sayings separated from each other by time and authorship. While this is fairly obvious in such books as Judges and Kings, it is equally true of books which bear the names of individuals. Such titles as "Isaiah" or "Jeremiah" are recognized to be simply convenient labels for rolls which, although they began as collections of the words of these men, contain in their present expanded form the words and sayings of others.²⁶

The Fundamentalists charged that the new scholarship assumed various theological positions in the Bible, not just one--which was --Longacre states:

The fact that the material is composite involves not only the author but a collector, and the points of view of both are recognized. Any particular passage may thus represent two points of view; That which the first speaker intended and that which the collector desired to propose or confirm.²⁷

Finally, the Fundamentalists argued that truth in religion was handed down from God, and they charged that the scholars believed that religion was

²⁶Lindsay B. Longacre, The Old Testament: Its Form and Function (New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945), p. 7.

²⁷Ibid... p. 8.

from human needs toward God. Longacre also confirmed that this suspicion was correct:

The study of the Old Testament is a means whereby the Christian may get some understanding of the ways in which men have found God. His aim will be to discover what he can of the spirit and motive, the hopes and fears, the successes and failure, of those ancient Hebrews --not so much that he may recite their words as that he may imitate their faith. He will realize that the religion of these men preceded the Old Testament, that the Old Testament is the product of their religion and not the source of it, that its words may be looked at as ends in themselves or may be looked through until one sees beyond them the rich religious life out of which they came.²⁸

What was the outcome of the charges? Five years later, in 1924 a new Methodist bishop, Charles L. Mead, was leading Methodism in this area, and a new President, Edwin Wesley Dunlavy, had come to lead Iliff. In this year another phase of the controversy was published in the public press.²⁹ Some charged that there was insubordination on the part of certain faculty against the President of Iliff. Others charged that the Fundamentalist/Liberal controversy was still alive and that President Dunlavy was jeopardizing academic freedom as he sided with the more reactionary ministers and against certain professors at Iliff. Late in 1923 a group of Methodist ministers lodged a formal complaint with the Board of Trustees of Iliff. They expressed concern that the divisions within the faculty and administration were hurting the confidence many had in the school, and the financial program was also affected. This time it was an issue among Methodists. The complaints charged insubordination on the part of at least three professors against the president of the school.³⁰ They were directed against Dr. Longacre, the senior member of

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Rocky Mountain News, February 12, 1924.

³⁰Minutes of the Board of Trustees, The Iliff School of Theology, December 4, 1923.

the faculty, Dr. Borden Bowne Kessler, Professor of Theology, and Ora Miner, Professor of the Rural Church. The ministers' group urged that these three be dismissed. Other ministers supported the liberal group at Iliff. Longacre was a leader among the liberal forces in the region, while President Dunlavy was a leader among the conservatives. There must have been some interesting faculty meetings at that time. Alumni groups in Denver and elsewhere sent statements supporting their professors,³¹ while the Board of Trustees waited for the return to Denver of Bishop Mead, Chairman of the Iliff Board of Trustees.³²

The trustees formed a special committee charged with interviewing everyone involved in the controversy, President Dunlavy and all professors, to report back to the Board at its earliest convenience. Much of the discussion was continued in secret meetings, for which no minutes have been preserved. Finally, during a meeting of the Board of Trustees, on March 19, 1924, President Dunlavy resigned the presidency to return to Indiana whence he had come.³³ Professor Longacre was invited by the board to continue teaching Old Testament, but Borden B. Kessler was not retained.³⁴ He went to the University of London. Ora Miner also did not remain at Iliff, although no record exists as to his future career.

³¹Rocky Mountain News, April 13, 1924.

³²Rocky Mountain News, April 11, 1924; and Ibid., April 19, 1924.

³³Minutes of the Board of Trustees. The Iliff School of Theology, March 19, 1924. The report was carried in the Rocky Mountain News, March 20, 1924.

³⁴An item in the Iliff Archives, with source unclear, indicates that Kessler was an "ousted" professor. It is suggested that he was "designated for the role of scapegoat" who refused to succumb to charges made against the three professors by President Dunlavy. The trustees' minutes carry the records indicating that on three occasions his name came to them to be approved as a continuing professor. Each time he failed to receive a majority vote, in this period when the trustees voted on each faculty member each year!

Methodism and Iliff did not succumb to pressures to undercut its scholarship as had happened in several other instances--largely in Presbyterian institutions--in the previous decades. While Professor Longacre consistently refused to discuss his part in the controversy, he stated, however, that never again was religious and academic freedom an issue at Iliff. It never has been an issue in the forty-three years since Longacre retired in 1942.

In October that same year (1924) all officers of the Denver Methodist Ministerial Association resigned--many had been partisan in the controversy --and a completely new slate was elected, "in the spirit of peace and harmony."³⁵ Most of the new leaders were relative newcomers to Denver, having been appointed to new churches recently, and none of the new officers had taken any part in the controversy of the past year or more. A new day had dawned, and the Fundamentalist challenge had been unable to divert the more balanced Wesleyan quadrilateral--although it was not called that then. The Methodists were again able to balance their tradition and scripture along with experience and especially with reason, and were able to grow with the new thought of the new age. With this balance, other new issues of the next decades could be analyzed at Iliff, and worked into the curriculum of the school without the tension and the sharp conflicts of the immediate past. Longacre and Warren probably would hardly recognize the school, its departments, its teachings today. What would be similar, however, is that, in the eyes of a student of the period of the 1920s, Iliff still "could look truth squarely in the eye and not blink."³⁶

³⁵Rocky Mountain News. October 7. 1924.

³⁶A statement made to the author by the late Rev. Arthur Coole, a student at Iliff during the 1920s and a long-time missionary to China.