

Samuel W. Bowne Hall



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History

Former Names: University Refectory, University Graduate Center

Constructed: 1912-1913

Opening and Dedication: 1913

This building was the final gift of [S.W. Bowne](#). It was originally used as a dormitory/dining hall and also housed faculty for a short time. The main dining room (Great Hall) is a replica of the famous hall of Christ Church College, Oxford, where John Wesley was a student. The magnificent hall can hold up to 250 people for concerts and lectures. During the 1920-1921 academic year, Bowne Hall was used exclusively as women's housing until a new dorm could be built. During the 1930 commencement, four stained glass windows at the head of Great Hall were dedicated – these were the final gifts of Mrs. S.W. Bowne. In 1940 the dormitory not only housed women students but also a dietitian and a resident nurse. After the university center opened as the main dining hall, Bowne was still used for additional academic facilities. In 1960 the building seemed to have housed four seminar rooms, five faculty offices, a general classroom, and a large colloquium commons room. By 1960-1961 Bowne Hall was called the University Graduate Center and contained a large lecture room, seminar rooms, office for the Graduate School faculty, an archaeological museum, the graduate commons, and a dormitory space for men in the graduate school. In 1967 the building no longer housed students. By 1981-1983 the building contained the humanities department and later was home to the Women's Studies Office (in the basement) and a graduate continuing education center.

Credits

Composed by Anthony D. Rogers, Courtesy of the [Drew University Archives](#).

Text from 'The Samuel W. Bowne Hall' pamphlet, published 1913' Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey.

The Samuel W. Bowne Hall, the latest addition to an already important group of buildings on the famous campus of Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey, is the gift of a great and good man whose honored name it bears, who died in Christ October 29th, 1910. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they do rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

Samuel W. Bowne was a benevolent man. He was a generous giver, not through training, but by nature. Giving was an unerring impulse with him as breathing, and when he ceased to breathe, his works continued their holy ministries, and will through long years. What a good heart his was! He was interested in churches, in colleges and schools, in hospitals, in homes for children and for the aged, in philanthropic enterprises of many names- his sympathies were broad as the world and catholic as the gospel. But to no institution of learning did he give as largely as to Drew Theological Seminary. For many years this school was one of his favorite causes. He became a trustee of the seminary in 1888, and in 1901 was elected President of the Board of Trustees. His first large gift to Drew was when he and Mr. William Hoyt, another most generous friend of the Seminary, together erected the largest and most important of the dormitories on the campus, which is known as Hoyt-Bowne Hall. Next he gave the gymnasium, which was being built at the time he was stricken- the Bowne Gymnasium, complete in every detail, and with a fine swimming pool- and now this other and last building has risen here in the midst of these noble trees which he loved, having been provided for among other bequests to the Seminary in his remarkable will. Indeed, "his works do follow him!"

This Hall had long been in his thought. The room which for years was used for a dining hall did not appeal to him. It was not ample enough, nor was it good enough, he said more than once. Mr. Bowne liked things large. The open country, the far reach of the mountains, the boundless sea, the love of God, "broader than the measure of man's mind"; in all such how he reveled! When he thought of a dining hall here, for his "boys", as he affectionately spoke of them, he desired something spacious and beautiful. Pettiness of any sort, smallness of plan or enterprise, was always repugnant to him. He was fond of travel, and had traveled widely. He knew the Old World quite as familiarly as his own land. Moreover he was a Methodist churchman, devoted to the history and traditions of the denomination. He had visited the Methodist shrines of England, and more than once had been to Oxford, which must ever be regarded as the birthplace of the Evangelical Movement of the 18th century. Methodism and Oxford are closely related. How many places in that old English university city are closely associated with Methodism! Queen's College, Exeter, Lincoln, Pembroke, Corpus Christi, Brazenose, Jesus and Christ Church Colleges, and all the well-known walks and streets. In the beginnings of Methodism Oxford looms large. It is no idle boast that Methodism was born in that great academic center. Nor was this the first great religious movement which had its rise there. In the 14th century the poor preachers of John Wycliffe had gone forth from Oxford to take the Scriptures to every town and hamlet. And again in the 16th century the followers of Erasmus had from Oxford sounded the trumpet of a new reformation.

Here also in the 18th century (the year was 1729) was organized the famous Holy Club, which met regularly thereafter for the study of the Holy Scriptures, and which may well be regarded as the first Methodist Theological Seminary.

It was in Lincoln College, "in the room opposite the clock tower in the first quadrangle," that a few earnest students of the Bible met. Marshall Claxton's well-known painting shows the student-group at work in Wesley's room. At the head of the table stands the teacher, John Wesley, twenty-six years of age, who has been in historic Oxford now nine years. The book on which his hand rests is the Book of books. "From the very beginning," Wesley himself said, "from the time that four young men united together- each of them was *homo unius libri*; a man of one book." It was this devotion to the Bible which brought upon them many terms of reproach and derision, such as Bible Bigots, Bible Moths, because they fed, it was said, upon the Bible as moths do on cloth. It were well that this fundamental fact in the history of Methodism should never be forgotten, and Drew Theological Seminary has ever sought to hold the Bible at the center of all its instruction and of its life.

For more than a quarter of a century Wesley was connected with Lincoln College, and its name appears on the title pages of all his works. In the minds of many the name of Wesley is most closely associated with Lincoln. In the dining hall his portrait hangs. Here in this college is pointed out his room, here in the ante-chapel is preserved the pulpit from which he preached, and here in the quiet quadrangle is there "Wesley Vine" from which hundreds of Methodists from all over the world have plucked leaves and sometimes branches which have taken root, like the Wesleyan movement, in the far places of the earth.

But Wesley's "college" was Christ Church. Hither in 1720 he came up from the Charterhouse, London, which he had entered as a student in 1715, when he was eleven, and the year George Whitefield was born. His father had been a student at Exeter College, but it was at Christ Church College that Samuel Wesley Jr., had taken his degree, and this college was chosen by his brothers John, and six years later Charles, the hymnist of Methodism. More than half a century after he entered Christ Church, Wesley was in Oxford, and wrote in his journal: "Having an hour to spare, I walked to Christ Church, for which I cannot but still retain a peculiar affection. What lovely mansions are these!" And again, some years later, in his journal he records that he "observed narrowly the *Hall*" the gardens, and the walks, and declared that he had seen nothing anywhere to compare with them. And Wesley knew Oxford well! As a youth of seventeen, to use the phrases of the historian, he passed through the "tom Gateway" which the fallen Wesley had left unfinished and which Wren completed. Milton once lived within hearing of the great bell which hung there, sounding curfew, and "Swinging slow with sullen roar."

Passing into the great quadrangle, finished forty-five years before, the coming evangelist of England faced the spot where once an ancient stone cross and postern stood, from which John Wycliffe preached. Passing up the stone staircase, with its roof of graceful fan tracery, he entered the splendid hall where Henry VIII was feasted, where the public disputations were held in the days of Edward VI, where Queen Elizabeth and her successors witnessed stage plays, and where Charles I held if Oxford Parliament. Down the staircase and beyond the old cloisters was the cathedral, more ancient than the college, linking its history with Saxon times. South of the cathedral is the thirteenth century Chapter House, and beyond the walls are the meadow walks and avenue of elms, where the young Whitefield was to pass through one of his great spiritual experiences. Here in this college Wesley spent his undergraduate days, now and again troubled about his health, having a constant struggle financially to make ends meet; writing his parents frequently and affectionately, "gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humor," and, as a contemporary describes him, "a very sensible and acute collegian, baffling every man by the subtleties of logic, and laughing at them for being so easily routed, a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments." Wesley enjoyed his days at Oxford. A letter from a university friend gives a swift glance at the academic, precise student. Kirkham, describes with a good deal of satisfaction a dinner of "Calves-head and bacon, with some of the best green cabbage in town," at which time the diners discussed "your most deserving queer character, your little and handsome person and your obliging and desirable conversation." The Lucullus feasts were not numerous in those days, but John Wesley knew what was good to eat, and enjoyed it when he could get it. He was a good provider too, when he had the money to spend. In 1727 he revisited the Charter house as one of the Stewards for the Founder's Day Dinner. The bill of fare, which has been preserved, would indicate a most generous forethought and an adequate preparation for the needs of everybody. It would take too much space to give the entirety of the bill of fare, but among the multitude of viands were "four dishes of Pullets and Oysters; four ditto Rabbits and Chickens fricaseed; four dozen Minced Pies, Five in a dish, four dozen venison pasties, four dishes of wild fowl, four dozen tamed pigeons, four dozen sweetbreads and asparagus, four dozen almond tarts, four dozen roasted lobsters, four dozen pear tarts creamed" and a "sirloin of beef on the sideboard" all with linen, china, etc, to be furnished "for the sum of thirty pounds." Rather an ample dinner, one might be inclined to think. He took his bachelor's degree at Christ Church, "one of the noblest colleges in that illustrious seat of learning," in 1724.

The Hall of Christ Church is not only the finest in Oxford, but also, on the judgment of the best authorities, in all England. And when it was suggested to Mr. Bowne that one something like it would look well on this Drew Campus and would serve a large purpose, the idea appealed strongly to him, and the last time he went to Europe, in 1909, he journeyed to Oxford to behold the glory and beauty of the world-famed Hall of John Wesley's College. No wonder that size of it impressed him. It was his kind of a room. Not less did the grandeur of it appeal to him. Nor was he unmindful of the sentiment of it all, and he determined that the students of Drew Theological Seminary should have the privileges and joys of similar facilities and surroundings, and the Samuel W. Bowne Hall is the outcome of his beneficial purpose.

The architects have not in any sense made an exact copy of that ancient Oxford refractory, but they have succeeded in a most admirable way in reproducing its spirit. A brief description of Christ Church Hall, taken from a book on Oxford, may not be uninteresting:

"Its length is 115 feet, breadth 40 feet, height 50 feet. Its lofty roof (dated 1529) is of Irish oak, decorated with armorial bearings. The dais or high table at the upper end of the room is lighted on the south side by a large and splendid oriel window, the glass containing exquisitely wrought full length portraits of Cardinal Wosley, Sir Thomas Moore, Erasmus, Earl Surrey, Archbishop Warham, Dean Colet, Linacre, and Lily. The series was in 1894 continued in the lower lights of the window on the north side by portraits of the four Christ Church worthies of the 17th century: Burton, Fell, Aldrich, and John Locke. The upper lights were inserted in 1867 in commemoration of the membership of King Edward VII when Prince of Wales, and Prince Fredrick of Denmark.

"The walls are adorned with a magnificent collection of portraits of persons belonging to the foundation by such eminent painters as Sir Peter Lely, Sir Thos. Gainsborough, Sir Godfrey Kneller, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Sir Joshua Reynolds. Wosley's portrait (possibly by Holbein) gives a view of the earlier buildings, Cathedral, Hall and Kitchen. Over all presides the striking portrait of Henry VIII, usually ascribed to Holbein. Among the latest additions to this grand collection are lifelike portraits of Mr. Gladstone by the late Sir J. E. Millais, Dr. Liddon by H. von Herkomer, Dr. Pusey by Professor Richmond, and Dean Liddell by G. F. Watts, who also painted the portrait of the Rev. C. L. Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), the author of 'Alice in Wonderland.' Beneath the portrait of Dean Liddell is a marble bust of Queen Victoria. A replica of the well-known portrait of John Wesley by Romney hangs on the wall near the entrance doorway."

The architects of this new-world Hall describe it as follows: "The building has a frontage of 135'-6" by 36'-6", with an all 21'-0"x54'0", which contains the kitchen. The exterior of the building on all sides has been constructed of a grey granite from the vicinity of Concord, New Hampshire, with trimmings of a lighter colored stone. The roofing material, wherever appearing above the walls, is Imperial Spanish Tile in dull red tones. The style of architecture of Collegiate Gothic.

"The building will be used for a Dining Hall and Dormitory, the dormitory rooms being located on the first floor, with Dining Hall and Kitchen above. The main Dining Hall is 85' long by 33' wide; its side walls, 29'6" high, have paneled quartered white oak wainscoting, 10'6" high, above which there are seven large windows open each side of the wall, 6'x15', having massive stone tracery with leaded glass, let directly into the stone. At the ends, the wainscot is 18' high. The Hall is 38'-6" high in the center. The ceiling is paneled in wood, with molded and carved 'open timber work' corbels and pendants. The trusses are 'hammer beam,' from the end of which depend twelve lighting fixtures of harmonious design, which light the great Hall by the indirect method.

"The floor of the westerly end of the Hall is elevated two steps above the main floor and will be used by the Faculty. At this end appears a fine three-quarter length painting of Mr. Bowne. The opposite end is furnished by a large open fireplace of monumental proportions. The principle access to the Dining Hall is at its easterly end by a massive stone stairway, with broad treads and low rise, with open work balustrade, with a massive carved newel at its foot. The floor of the staircase hall is of quarry tile in color to match the stonework of the stairway, The walls of this staircase hall from bottom to top are in several tones of old gold and brown tapestry brick, the patterns to accentuate in a quiet way certain architectural lines of the hall. The ceiling of the staircase hall is massively paneled with great wooden beams and trusses in a dignified way, stained a deep brown color, extremely harmonious with the brickwork below.

"At the westerly end of the building, corresponding in a general way with the staircase hall at the opposite end of the building is a smaller dining room, 22'-6"x32'-0", with an oriel window on the north side 8' wide by 3' deep. This room communicates with the main hall through a door in the paneling, so arranged as to be very inconspicuous on the main hall side. All the windows in this room have molded stone tracery, the glass being inserted directly into the stone without wooden sash. The room is approached by a doorway leading to a stairway directly from a vestibule at the west end of the building, or through the door from the main dining hall.

"The kitchen has direct communication with both the main and the smaller, or Class Dining Room. The kitchen is thoroughly modern and completely equipped for service. The ceiling, where possible, has been made lofty, and at these points high windows have been located, giving unusual light and ventilation. The kitchen has a sanitary flooring, with a floor drain, so that the whole may be thoroughly washed, and is as simple and free from any possible means of collecting dust and germs as any model hospital. The cooking will all be done by gas.

"From the main staircase hall on the east end of the building, a corridor 7' wide, between fireproof walls, extends the entire length of the building, the rooms for students opening from this on each side. The furnishings of these rooms are unusually attractive. All the rooms have closets. In addition to these dormitory rooms, there are apartments for the housekeeper, provided for in the extension on the first floor, and two rooms for guests of the Seminary, each with a private bath.

"The plumbing throughout is of the most modern description. The heating is from a central plant, with lines taken through an underground conduit of heavy vitrified earthenware, set in Portland cement, with supply and return pipes solidly packed in mineral wool. The heating of the main dining hall is by indirect coils, placed in recesses behind wainscoting, fresh air being brought from the outside directly over the coils and introduced into the Hall above the wainscoting, the panels of the wainscot being protected from heat by heavy sheets of asbestos and all covered with galvanized iron.

"A vacuum cleaner has been installed, with outlets conveniently located throughout the building. In the cellars are large refrigerators and numerous storage rooms."

The architects were Messrs. Milton See & Son, New York City, the contractors Messrs. Henry H. Vought & Co., also of New York, and the superintendent of construction Mr A. A. Austin. That they have all wrought well, the splendid structure which bears above its main entrance the inscription, "Samuel W. Bowne Hall" is witness.

Beautiful, complete, educational in its influence, this whole building is a worthy memorial of the great-hearted Christian gentleman, who before going away, with sublime faith in the future of Drew Theological Seminary, and overflowing with affection for the men who would come from all lands for their specific training for the ministry in this Seminary, so dear to his heart, dreamed this building and ordained that it should rise on this campus. Here at Drew Theological Seminary, as elsewhere, his name will forever be held in most precious remembrance, and from this place his influence will be carried by his sons in the Gospel unto the ends of the earth.

The corner stone of this building was laid by Mrs. Bowne, whose interest has been as constant as her devotion to the memory of her distinguished husband is complete, October 24th, 1912. The superb portrait of Mr. Bowne, which hangs at the westerly end of the great Hall above the Faculty platform, and which is indeed the crown of the building, is the gift of Mrs. Bowne, who also gives the complete furnishings for the Kitchen and Hall, including the linen, china, glass and silver.

At the laying of the corner stone, two addresses of singular felicity and beauty were given, by the Rev. Doctor Frank Mason North, speaking for the trustees, and the Rev. Professor Robert W. Rogers, speaking for the faculty.

Address of Professor Rogers

'Sir,' said Samuel Johnson to Boswell, 'it is a great thing to dine with the canons of Christ Church.' A fine sentiment, boldly expressed by that mighty master of letters and morals, who had seen much in the sixty-seven years of life which had then passed over his sage head. It was indeed a great thing to dine with the canons of Christ Church, and it still is a great thing to dine with them, for they have been and are men of distinction, of culture, of piety, and often of eminence. I should rather be able to repeat the names of them all than to recite the Popes or even the archbishops of Canterbury. I can do neither, though Macaulay, who himself sometimes went a bit astray among the Urbans and Clements was sure no man could fail to know his archbishops.

"It is also a great thing to dine with the canons of Christ Church, because they dine at the high table in the noblest hall, in the most beautiful academic city in all this fair world. The hall at Magdalen is a room of surpassing distinction indeed, as is also the light and airy hall of Queen's College, both designed by Sir Christopher Wren, but beautiful as they are, they are easily surpassed by the stately, solemn, dignified room which Cardinal Wolsey himself built in the late perpendicular style for the scholars of his new college, whom he meant to have housed as men of learning were never housed before. I can see it now, the long line of mullioned windows, the great oak paneled walls, the richly carved ceiling of Irish oak, with its elegant and refined pendants bearing the arms and badges of Henry VIII and Catharine of Aragon, and all round its four walls the double row of portraits of those whose names are forever associated with it. There they are, Henry VIII by no less a master than Holbein himself, and good Queen Bess, cardinal Wolsey and John Locke, William Ewart Gladstone and Canon Liddon, Archbishop Robinson and Archbishop Markham, aye, and John Wesley, too, who sat there as an undergraduate. There are surely few rooms in the whole world where more great ghosts might walk than here. Behold the room where John Fell presided as dean and was immortalized in Tom Brown's famous couplet; where Sir Robert Peel dined and made ready to take a double first in his examinations, as Gladstone did after him; where Cyril Jackson, greatest of the deans of Christ Church, said of Alexander Gaisford: 'You will never be a gentleman, but you may succeed with certainty as a scholar,' and half of it came true! Here, when Gaisford himself was a dean, he received a letter beginning: 'The dean of Oriel presents his compliments to the dean of Christ Church,' and made at once the classical comment, 'Alexander the copper-smith sends greetings to Alexander the Great.'

"What a room this is, hallowed forever by memories of the great and the good, the wise and the simple-hearted, saints and sages, wits and scholars! By day somber and solemn, by night warm with light, redolent of the past and smacking of dear creature comfort, visible from afar as Matthew Arnold saw from distant hilltop 'The line of festival light in Christ Church Hall.'

"Here we are today, three thousand miles away from its visible stone and wood, assembled to lay the cornerstone of a Hall designed by the cunning brain of an American architect and intended to be like it and to remind our longing eyes of its distant beauty. We are the sons of John Wesley, who was a member of that house, and our benefactor, Samuel W. Bowne, has thought to build us a hall like unto it. The last time that I had a long walk with him we went with Mrs. Bowne from Saint Mary's Church in Oxford, along the High and down Cornmarket and through the wide and tree-lined spaces of Saint Giles and fair out the Woodstock Road, and as we walked he spoke of this place which he loved and said, in confidence, that he had resolved to build for this seminary a decent and comfortable place in which its students might dine. He is now sainted and looks down from above on this dream now about to be fulfilled.

"I am frankly glad that the Methodist preachers of tomorrow, who are here to study the various theological disciplines, are henceforth to dine amid surroundings of elegance, refinement and historical suggestion. I hope, indeed, that they may be men of spiritual passion, lovers of the Lord and lovers of men, but I hope also that they will be gentlemen. Gentlemen are indeed not made by their environment; there must be innate beauty of soul to make courtesy, gentleness, recognition of the rights of others spring instant to demand, but these qualities are all helped to a finer, a more fitting expression by the silent influence of beautiful and comely material things. I hope that they may find inspiration to manliness and courage, to nobility of character and to generosity of soul as they look up at Samuel, W. Bowne, whose portrait may, I hope, stand in this place where Henry VIII does in Christ Church Hall. I hope that some of them may rise to distinction as scholars and that all of them may here learn to love learning, even though they possess but little of its precious treasure. If they come to fame, may their portraits adorn these walls, even as their prototypes amid the glory of Oxford, until we also have academic tradition of learning. Until that day dawn we must glory in our historic connection with Oxford with Christ Church and with Lincoln College through John Wesley and with Jesus College through Thomas Coke. May those who are here to sit think often of our inheritance of learning, and let their hearts go out in day dreams to Oxford, "To that high city, throned beyond all song," whose lesser image is here to rise, beautiful for situation and in coming days destined to be rich in her own fair memories."

Address of Doctor North

"Who, standing here, can be unconscious of these other buildings, the silent watchers of these new foundations. Serene and steadfast they will mark the uplift of these graceful walls and, one might almost believe, will wonder what this newcomer may be.

"Through the vista of the years we see the grateful groups who gathered around when those other corner stones were put in place and the founders whose generous purpose planned them. The library, John B. Cornell, benignant and imperial; the dormitory, William Hoyt, keen of wit, warm of heart, and Samuel W. Bowne, and the administration building, William Hoyt and John S. McLean, a gentleman of the old school with modern learnings; the gymnasium Samuel W. Bowne, a gentleman of the new school, with an ancient faith.

"Already with two of these buildings is associated the name which is on every tongue today, that genial, heart-cheering personality, with every remembrance of whom our pulses start to the quickened beat of gratitude and love.

"These were genuine, loyal, noble men. Even that robber Time cannot steal from us their influence. Fresh occasions cannot dim their worth, nor can the broader vision leave them out of the extending scene.

"There were not scholastics. They aspired to no academic degrees. No one of them was a graduate from college or university. The terms and technique of theology gave them but slight concern. It may be doubted if they would have ever understood the thrill with which a really godly, dogmatic tactician strikes up his opponent's guard or the holy glee with which a devout spirit may at times contemplate the confusion of a righteous but routed antagonist. Yet were they dogmatists! Stoutly they stood for the reality and the sincerity of the experience of conscious deliverance from sin through faith in a perfect, crucified, risen, divine Saviour. They would have been restless in a chair of practical theology, yet well they understood the thing for which the chair was built. Disclaiming the right or the power to preach, they were experts in preaching and their analysis of the preacher rarely needed revision. Their motive on this ground is well worth our remembering. Here they were not mere philanthropists, bent on bettering conditions. They were not patrons of education, planning good roadbeds for well-built intellectual motorcars. They were not misery haters, intent on foiling pain and so aware of suffering that to abate it was their highest ambition. John B. Cornell found his spiritual certainty in a warmhearted missionary Bible class. William Hoyt came into successful manhood out of the fellowship of a devout Christian home. John S. McLean was a loyal and participating member of the warmest evangelistic church known in the earlier history of metropolitan Methodism. Samuel W. Bowne, at home where any Christian man has a right to be at home, was never more at home than in the quiet prayer meeting of his own church or in some hall of rescue, where the miracles of salvation were being wrought.

"These stalwarts of the faith, those whom I have named, and many others who were like them and stood with them, belong not only to the past but to the present; they live not alone in what they have done, but in what they were and what they are; they are here a permanent possession of our hearts, not because they have made it possible for these corner stones, one after another, to be laid, but because their own characters were built upon Him who is the Chief Corner Stone and were squared forever to Him.

"And what place is this new building to have amid the symbols and centers of the high fellowship here? Has anyone traced the relation of the Refectory to the Lecture Room? Had the medieval menu any significance upon the medieval philosophy? Has a generous diet ever modified the severity of logic or scant and ill-cooked rations determined the interpretation of a puzzling text? In his Enigmas of Life, a skeptic's book upon which, however, the dust should not be allowed to gather too thickly, W. R. Greg descants with deep conviction upon the alleged fact that only in disease and disaster does the soul find its clearest vision and its highest activity. Perhaps in the group about us is the genius who will some day produce the classic upon the Refectory and the Lecture Room. And some other, let us hope, will go deep into the subtle relationship between the Refectory and the Chapel. Have not fasting and feasting both in their kinship with worship? Could Saint Francis have served his own and other generations had he been less often hungry? Was Luther's stalwart faith, alert and eager, at all conditioned by his larder, which, it is believed, was exceptionally well provided? It is a tradition that, with the exception now and again of a heroic semi-invalid like Asbury, the Methodist itinerant was ever, to use an outlived term, a good trencherman. When you took your table d'hôtel dinners at Constance, in the fine dining-room of the Insel Hotel, and remembered that in this room, their chapel, the monks gathered for prayer in the days of Huss; when you stood upon the little platform of the old refectory at Beaulieu Abbey, where it was some one's duty to read aloud in a godly book while the rest ate their frugal meal; when at Studley Royal from Anne Boleyn's Seat you looked down upon the foundation outlines of Fountains Abbey; the wonderful, and found yourself asking with equal interest which was the refectory, which was the chapel, in a word, whenever you are betrayed into the admission that you are curious about men's meals as really you are their prayers, you have given warrant indeed for that treatise on the Refectory and the Chapel which some man now here or wonder in the years is bound to produce.

"The air clears for us when we once for all agree that the unsane, the unwholesome, the inconvenient, the ugly are not of the essence of the faith. For right thinking it is well that good digestion should wait on appetite. Whatever may be said for voluntary cross-bearing, to whatever heights the patience of suffering and lowliness of heart may lift the spirit, physical unsoundness or discomfort is no a prerequisite for a clear conscious, a pure heart, or a holy life. The crude, the unrefined, the antiquated are not necessarily religious.

"Something like this must have moved in that generous and discerning heart which prompted this remarkable provision upon these grounds for the physical basis of community life. How well I remember when Mr. Bowne first began to talk about the dormitory! He kept close to the plans. He discussed materials. He watched architect and builder. The best was not too good. For rest and study these students should have a fair chance. Then came that striking interest of his later months- the gymnasium. It was built in his mind long before its corner stone was laid here. These students should have physical training and facilities for exercise, an essential part of their preparation for their great calling. In his vacation days in Europe he wrote me of the project and the plan. Then, in his thoughtful forecast, he prepared for the building which soon will stand here. He made his dream of it a lien upon his possessions even before the hand which, when it touches ever so lightly, leaves its mark, was laid upon him. This building is one added thought for the physical basis for scholarship and faith.

"We honor best his memory by using his gift and promoting his purpose. For he and those who preceded him, could they speak to us, would bid us with unfaltering purpose front the future. They have provided not only corner stones, but foundations, broad enough to command and construct a great institution. Today one almost ventures to hail the advent of the theological university of which so often he has spoken who for generation has inspired and led the enterprise.

"The ardent enthusiasm and broadening program revealed and set forth in the inaugural address today are a pledge of progress. The trustees aspire to high cooperation in this large service. Standing under the shadow of the sorrow which the translation of their late president brought them, sharing with her who sorrows most, both in her sense of loss and in her desire to fill out to completeness her noble husband's generous designs, the trustees renew their vows of fidelity to their great trust while in this forest campus this new corner stone is laid."

Work on the building progressed steadily during the year 1912-1913, and on October 16, 1913, the Samuel W. Bowne Hall was formally presented to the trustees by Mrs. Bowne, and dedicated by the Reverend Bishop Luther B. Wilson, LL.D., Resident Bishop of New York and President of the Board of Trustees of Drew Theological Seminary.

In a characteristic letter of Mr. Bowne, dated February 5, 1896, addressed to the Board of Trustees of the Seminary, acknowledging the receipt of a testimonial which had been sent by them expressing their appreciation of his share of the gift of the Dormitory, known as Hoyt-Bowne Hall, he closes with these significant words:

"I join you all in the hope that this is the beginning of the day of broader and better things for our beloved Seminary." And it was. So also is this last gift of the Christian gentleman and unfailingly devoted friend of Drew the ushering in of a still more glorious day for his and our "beloved Seminary."

Taken from "The Samuel W. Bowne Hall" pamphlet, published 1913' Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey.