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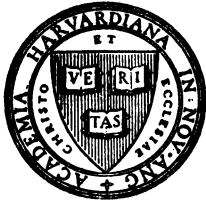
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Addresses of Inauguration in the Theological
Seminary of the Northwest - 1884.



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FROM

Rev. Jno. F. Tuttle

ADDRESSES

AT THE

INAUGURATION

OF

REV. DAVID C. MARQUIS, D. D.,

AS

PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE
AND EXEGESIS,

AND OF

REV. HERRICK JOHNSON, D.D., LL. D.,

AS

PROFESSOR OF SACRED RHETORIC AND
PASTORAL THEOLOGY,

IN THE

Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest,

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

DELIVERED IN THE FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
CHICAGO, APRIL 3, 1884.

CHICAGO.

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1884.

INAUGURATION EXERCISES.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest, in April, 1883, Rev. David C. Marquis, D. D., then pastor of the Lafayette Park Church, of St. Louis, Missouri, was elected Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis.

At the same meeting of the Board, Rev. Herrick Johnson, D. D., LL. D., pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church, of Chicago, Ill., who for the past three years had acted as Instructor in the Seminary, was elected Professor of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology.

Both these elections were approved by the General Assembly which met in Saratoga, N. Y., in May, 1883. They entered upon the duties of their respective chairs at the opening of the Seminary year, September, 1883.

Their formal inauguration took place, by appointment of the Board, on Thursday, April 3, 1884, at 8 o'clock p. m., in the Fourth Presbyterian Church, of Chicago. The Order of Exercises on the occasion was as follows:

PRAYER, by Rev. William W. Harsha, D. D., of Jacksonville, Illinois.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES, by Rev. Thomas D. Ewing, D. D., President of Parsons College, Fairfield, Iowa.

THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS, by Rev. Robert F. Sample, D. D., of Minneapolis, Minn.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS, by Professor Marquis.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS, by Professor Johnson.

PRAYER, by Rev. John Crozier.

The three Addresses were furnished for publication at the request of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

BY

REV. ROBERT F. SAMPLE, D. D.,

(OF MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.)

IN BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

The Board of Directors of the Seminary of the Northwest, in accordance with an established usage, have requested me to deliver an address on the occasion of the inauguration of the two Professors whose induction into office we are about to witness. This is an auspicious hour in the history of the institution, in the interests of which we are met, for which we express devout gratitude to the great Head of the Church, from whom all good proceeds.

Before giving the customary charge, I wish to call attention to a few leading principles in theological instruction, not hoping to adduce anything new, but to express, as may be fitting, our loyalty to truth, and to indicate the purpose of the Seminary to prosecute its work in harmony with the convictions of our beloved church.

The Ministry is Christ's Ascension Gift. It represents our absent Lord. The human teacher goes forth to his mission with an open Bible. From this he receives his authority, and from this he draws his theme. He tells of God and our original relations to him, disturbed by sin; of Christ the God-Man, in whom God is reconciling the world unto himself, and of the Holy Ghost whose province it is to lead men from sin to holiness and back to God.

The minister of the Word should be thoroughly furnished for his important mission. The School of the Prophets is a needful parenthesis separating his call from his work. In its comparative isolation he prepares himself for public service. With an enlightened understanding, an elevated heart, a conse-

crated will, and an increased likeness to Christ, he goes forth better fitted to tell the lost of an open Heaven and lead the way.

This suggests, as related to the two departments of theological instruction represented in this service,

FIRST, The devout and critical study of the sacred Scriptures ; and, SECONDLY, The public proclamation of the Word.

I.

In entire consistency with this is my first thought, which has respect to,—

1. The Immutability of the Divine Truth.

Truth is reality or its expression. In its nature it is indestructible, unchangeable, eternal, if the reality be so. In its divine sphere it is the memory and fore-knowledge of God. It may be unknown, as to astronomers worlds have been undiscovered ; but our ignorance does not affect its existence. It may be eclipsed, but it still shines in its native heaven. It may be entombed in the catacombs of a corrupt church, or concealed in distorted creeds, or remanded to the shades of a barbaric age, but it lives unchanged and changeless as God himself.

Saving truth, written as with a sunbeam, is immutable as the soul's need, and the eternity of God. The germ of the Christian system was embodied in the first promise. The Babe of Bethlehem appeared at the gate of Eden. Sin and salvation were the great facts of the earliest theology. The symbolism of the patriarchal times, the institutions of the Hebrew Church, and the adumbrations of prophecy, were the unfoldings, in logical sequence, of original truth, and when Christ came he could do no more than repeat the old story. Hence he said to the Father, " I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me."

The evangelists, in their retrospect, tread a familiar path. One outstrips another along the line of immutable truth. Matthew sets forth the offices of Jesus as the son of Abraham, his ancestral line passing through the house of David, illustrating the old facts of the Abrahamic covenant, and the fulfillment of ancient promises in the life of the Regal Law-Giver. Then Mark enters a wider field and tells of Christ's expansive sympathy, before which old barriers fall and old lines fade ; and

of his power which traversed both visible and invisible realms, superior to disease, and devils, and death itself. Luke follows in an orderly succession. He removes the middle wall which separated Jews and Gentiles. The apostle of a world-wide humanity, he announces Jesus to be the Son of Adam, the King of Nations, and the brother of all mankind. In the last of the four gospels, John enters the invisible spaces beyond the creation, and stops not until he conducts us into the heaven of heavens, where we behold Jesus, the Son of Adam, enthroned as the Son of God, angels adoring him, whilst his glorious train fills the temple. Then the apostles declare the mystery of godliness, God Manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory; maintaining still the unity of truth, pursuing the same undeviating line which joins two eternities, the great principle of truth unfolding as inspiration extends and culminates in the Apocalyptic vision, the circle completed amid the splendors of that world from which Christ came to ours that we might ascend to his.

It is true that revelation advanced with the ages. It was like the sun when he goeth forth in his might. The field of prophecy widened continually. Isaiah attained greater heights and a more comprehensive vision than David, whilst Daniel and Micah saw the tops of distant thoughts which had been dimly outlined to the son of Amos. Yet all this was largely the growth of a primal truth. Take a representative fact which illustrates this development. Revelation begins with the announcement that God made the heavens and the earth. The Patriarchs and Moses believed in a personal, extra-mundane God, and assigned him an imperial throne. They studied the heavens in the land of the Chaldees, on the plains of Canaan, and in the classic schools of Egypt. They accepted, on God's authority, the great facts of creation, as do we. So far we are simply their equals. Nothing essentially new has ever been learned in this department of truth. With Job we affirm that God hangeth the world upon nothing, and with Isaiah, that the Creator sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and with Paul, that by him all things consist.

Since inspiration ceased, no additional truth has been declared. Nothing can be added to that which is its own comple-

ment. Revelation is a full-orbed sphere, steadily shining through the long night of time. As the noonday sun has not shifted its position since the morning, nor undergone any essential change, though the early mists have disappeared, so our investigations may eliminate mere traditions from a formulated creed and present in clearer symbols our holy faith, but can never change a single feature of truth, or supplant any Bible doctrine by a new hypothesis. Athanasius made no new discoveries concerning the person of Christ, or Augustine concerning original sin, or Luther concerning the doctrine of justification by faith. They simply developed or recovered truth, indicated the relations of the several parts, and made more intelligible facts already revealed.

Interpretations may grow. Historical reconstructions may advance. Ethics may attain higher ground. Eschatology may clarify the vision. Ecclesiology may realize organic unity. And yet we would emphasise what even an advocate of progress has declared, that "Primal Christian faiths are not departing, and shall never be swept away." "The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever." At the same time we recognize the fact that there is:

2. Progress in the Knowledge of Truth.

It is so both as respects nature and revelation. The first utterance of inspiration brings all worlds to view. And yet great highways of travel have been opened across the fields of nature, and fleet couriers come and go. We have learned much about the extent of creation, the laws which govern it, and the omnipresence of that energy by which all things, minute and vast, continue. Respecting all this Copernicus knew more than Ptolemy, and Ptolemy more than Hebrew shepherds who watched their flocks and scanned the heavens by night. The professor of theology goes in advance of his pupil, and the theological student of the spiritual novice; always learning more concerning what they knew at first. Biblical hermeneutics bring into clearer view and set in more logical order truths that are eternal as their source. In every stage of their progress they may add confirmation to the word of God, and strengthen our faith in that system of doctrine which Martin Luther restored, and John Calvin formulated, and John

Knox preached in the grand old temples of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's.

We might study the mystery of godliness forever and be always learning, yet never fathom its depths. The glory of Christ's person is as measureless as his infinity. The doctrine of justification by faith is as inexhaustible as its author. But all progress is along a straight line. Essential truth is a ladder, on the first round of which we planted our feet the moment we believed.

That there has been advance in systematic theology the most conservative admit. Charles Hodge has done a nobler service for the church than did Thomas Aquinas, and furnished better definitions of truth than did Anselm or Turretin. And these, our brethren, whom the church deems especially fitted for the positions they have taken, may discover more clearly the relations of truths, such as God's sovereignty and man's free agency, faith and works, the proper Godhead and true humanity of Christ in the hypostatical union, than the evangelical teachers of the seventeenth or a later century, and yet they will believe what Owen, Newton, and Henry believed, and believe because thus "it is written."

And of this we are assured, that whatever the progress of theological and physical truths, there can never be any conflict between them. Natural science when matured will join hands with revelation, and the two will vie with each other in adoring Him who is the Truth. Moses and Bacon, Isaiah and Kepler, all alike sit at God's feet, and in the interchange of thought find the testimony of his works in accord with his word. Further we would magnify:

3. The Authority on which we believe.

Reason does not occupy the first place, as John Scotus and many others have taught, but revelation. The latter deserves our credence and demands it. With us the question is not, what is the testimony of personal illumination, or what does the church teach, but what say the sacred Scriptures? God's word is the standard of truth, and the electrometer of creeds. We should watch against the rationalism which throws the shadow of discredit upon the divine word, and guard ourselves from drifting into the fog banks of agnosticism, or entering on the deceitful sea of so-called liberal Christianity, or adopting any

theory which refers the teachings of the Holy Ghost to the subjectivity of the sacred writers.

We do not surrender our intelligence when we subject it to authority. We are never so divine as when we sit at God's feet. We never pursue our investigations so safely as when His word is our guide. This recognition of authority enters the whole domain of truth. Intellectual philosophy travels through invisible realms with firm yet cautious steps, accepting the testimony of personal consciousness derived from God, and bowing to divine authority expressed in the constitution and laws of sentient being. Physical science, guided by the senses and native reason, with its crucible and drills, its microscope and telescope, its logarithms and scales, intelligently or unwittingly admits, at the first and always, that God's voice in nature is true and His word more enduring than earth and skies. And if in one field of inquiry we recognize the authority of God and take no steps without it, why not do the same in the other? The stairway which is planted on the earth reaches into heaven. The laws of the visible govern our passage into the unseen. The Spirit of the Age opposes old systems of faith. Republicanism is restive under imperial rule. But we must submit ourselves to God and accept his word as our rule of faith, or we shall walk in darkness and see no light.

This suggests the indispensable necessity of,

4. The Knowledge of Truth.

We cannot be saved without it. We cannot communicate what we do not ourselves possess. The student of theology is not to stand on the margin of great thoughts catching some gleams of the radiance further on, but he is required to enter the great world of truth, explore its heights and depths, mark well its bulwarks, study its means of defense, seek the sources and trace the channels of its life-giving rivers, and take his outlook from the summits God's own hands have reared.

Much of our literature is permeated with the virus of unbelief. Great intellects, blinded by the god of this world, are arrayed against revealed religion. The high priests of modern civilization are seeking to swathe in ceremonies what they pronounce an *effete* religion, born of superstition and to be buried with it. It is the old warfare which Cain inaugurated; the reproach of Christ which Moses accepted; and the false philoso-

phy which Paul confronted on Mars Hill. It will wane with the increase of light and be destroyed with the brightness of Christ's appearing.

Moreover the church should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. We are called not to defend the outposts simply of Christianity, but the citadel itself; the authority of the divine word, and the Christology of revelation. It is doubtless true that some should be pre-eminently qualified to command the defenses of religion, whilst others are occupied with more peaceful pursuits. The Captain of our salvation will distribute his forces wisely. It is not necessary that every minister should be an invincible disputant like Luther, or have the scholastic acumen of a Calvin, or possess the varied attainments of a Theodore Beza, yet the wider the acquisitions the greater the fitness of the ministry for their work. It is well to have Wallace's double-handed sword, though Cincinnatus-like, we are habitually engaged with fallow ground and harvests. There have been ministers who could not read the scriptures in the original tongues, who could not state the Augustinian doctrine of sin, or the Athanasian doctrine of the trinity, or define the higher criticism, or tell anything about the Council of Nice, or the Solemn League and Covenant; who could not answer intelligently Hume's objections to miracles, or Owen's to the chronology of Moses, or Tyndall's to prayer, and yet were wise in winning souls to Christ. But their influence would have filled a wider sphere and been a mightier factor in the world's redemption, if whilst they preached Christ with simplicity and power they had been able to compass the gravest errors, maintain the truth with an irresistible logic, and with the dignity of conscious intelligence defend the sanctuary of our precious hope. There is no theological or scientific or scholastic learning that may not be consecrated to Christ and extend the triumphs of the truth, whilst a ministry which combines piety with inexcusable ignorance only degrades the faith that was born in heaven.

II.

And now we pass from the knowledge of truth to its proclamation. It has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. We are born of God's word, then

others are born of ours. Vinet has well said, "Natural pater-nity is the symbol of our spiritual relationships; we mutually engender one another." Thought finds expression in speech. Christ is the word. The voice that walked in the garden, still walks, in the persons of the Christian ministry, among men.

Preaching is both a science and an art. It is knowledge ap-propriately expressed. "Because the preacher was wise he still taught the people knowledge. . . . The preacher sought to find out acceptable words." Hence the teacher of Sacred Rhetoric is at the top. His responsibility is great. His influ-ence is far-reaching. He teaches others to teach, and he lives in other lives. He should see to it that his students obtain proper conceptions of their work, and secure every attainable qualification for it. The preaching demanded by the age may not be that adapted to it. Our duty is plain. A ministry is commanded to preach immutable Bible truth; that to which all the learning of the schools is subsidiary and subordinate. Bible truth; not philosophy or science, poetry or æsthetics, morality or hygiene, though he should know something of all these. Apologetics and polemics, as already indicated, have their place, but it is an inferior one. Our primary and habitual duty is not to combat the errors of Plato or Aristotle, as resurrected in the teachings of a Parker or Emerson, or to disprove the positivism of Comte, or the pantheism of Spinoza, or to wander through the laby-rinths of Hegelian metaphysics. There is little use in contend-ing with old enemies, though they come in new clothes. Di-rect assaults upon error are of little account. You may pierce the night with bayonets, or smite it with battering rams, but it will stay on. Only when truth is in the ascendant does error flee. The last words of Goethe may well be the preacher's motto, "Open the shutters and let in the light." He must be familiar with error if he would resist its assaults and maintain the respect of his people. Justin Martyr, Tertullian and Carlstadt illustrated this necessity by their polemic failures. But the truth remains firm as Gibraltar and luminous as the sun, that the ministry is true to God, to itself and to souls only when it preaches the fundamental truths of sin and of sal-vation by the cross.

Whether we preach without the manuscript, as did Christ, his apostles and the early fathers, as did Origen, Augustine and

Chrysostom, as did Robert Hall and Robertson, whose premeditated thoughts were caught by reporters on the wing of impassioned utterance; or whether we read our messages, as did Chalmers, Candlish, and Edwards; whether the sermons lack rhetorical finish and logical order, as did those of Livingstone and Whitefield, whether they are ornate and imaginative and argumentative, as Guthrie's, Hamilton's and Melvill's, it will not matter greatly if we only adhere to our commission, set up the cross against the background of sin, awaken longings after holiness, and make men more meet for heaven.

There is much preaching in these days which plays on the circumference of saving truth, and never reaches the center; that does not possess the spirit, seek the end, or attain the results of the ministry of Christ. The Great Teacher went to the roots of sin, to the heart of salvation by blood, and with an intense earnestness and affection held all truth on the battlements of heaven or on the border line of hell. We cannot preach like him, but we can make him our model. We may not attain the perfection of the pastor of Anworth, of the preacher of Dundee, or of the loving Tillotson whose portrait hangs on the wall of Lambeth Palace, but we may rise by setting our standard high; by maintaining the devout study of the sacred word, and by long communings with Christ in the oratory of private devotion.

To meet the wants of the age we require a large increase of ministerial force. The field of labor is widening, extending. This great city is on the Eastern border of a vast empire; an empire exceeding in extent all the Russias, extending to the long mountain ranges, and thence to the far Pacific. The flood-tide of emigration is sweeping on. The center of population will soon pass the spot on which we stand to-night. Great is the work before these, our honored brothers, and their associates; even greater than that of Moses Stuart, Henry Boynton Smith, the Alexanders, and the elder Skinner. Civilization was never so fleet of foot. Potential events come in battalions. The possibilities of power rapidly increase. The mysteries of nature are trooping into the light. The very elements are our messengers. Highways pierce the mountains. Oceans shrink into rivers. The one word of God is the polyglot of nations. Christian England is advancing Eastward, and Christian Amer-

ica is hastening Westward. If both are faithful to their trust they will soon meet in the land of Sinim, and possess the world for Christ. Have we not come to the kingdom, brethren, for such a time as this,—a momentous period, when history is written with the lightnings, and to be living is sublime?

CHARGE.

DEAR BRETHERN: The Directors of the Seminary have with entire unanimity called you to positions of great responsibility, and the church at large approves their action. The service expected of you is one of the greatest that can engage cultivated minds, varied scholarship, and thoroughly consecrated lives. Of the many suggestions of the hour and of the foregoing discussion, there are but two that shall claim our present attention.

1. I charge you, my dear brethren, in all your instructions, to magnify Christ. Let this truth be impressed upon the minds of your students; let it be wrought into the texture of all their thought and work, that they have been called to preach Christ and to glory only in his cross. All their preparations should have reference to this end, and they should go forth to their ministry with definite and intelligent views as to their commission and the manner of its execution. It has been well said that, "The pulpit of this land need have no panic about infidelity if they will faithfully preach Christ as the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Men attain to a knowledge of God only through his Son. Nature is interpreted in man; man is interpreted in Christ; and the divine-human Christ conducts to God. The devout Greek, leaving the plain watered by the Illissus, and passing the contiguous foothills, ascended to the summit of Hymettus, where the earth seemed less earthly, raised above the world's turmoil and toil, and nearer the concave of the heavens, and hoped he might there receive some communication from the invisible One that would answer his anxious inquiries, and a divine afflatus by which he would be better fitted for life's duties and a residence with God. It was the soul's instinctive searching for the ladder of Jacob's vision,—that which conducts through the incarnate Son to the Father, in whom man who was made for God, finds

eternal rest. Ah, the soul needs Christ; it hungers for him, aspires to be with him and by him attains the end of its creation. It demands nothing more; it can be satisfied with nothing less. "So vital is Christ in Christian experience," said Professor H. B. Smith, "that many are withheld from speculation upon his nature from the unspeakable depth and tenderness of their love for him."

When we come to the House of God we want to see his glorious Son. It is a crime to take away our Lord and not even tell us where he is laid. We can get on without hearing even one syllable about Darwin, or Huxley, or John Stuart Mill, but we cannot live without Christ. Theories of sound and light and heat, of spontaneous generation and evolution, may interest us at other times and in other places, but the pulpit should enthroned Christ and the sanctuary should be the vestibule of heaven.

Hence that preaching is meaningless, a mockery, dead, which does not give prominence to Christ. Sinai should point to Calvary. Sin should suggest the atoning Lamb. Sorrow should lead to Jesus: Joy should sing its *Te Deum* in his presence. History should find its center in him. Nature should ascend to its Maker. There is no pulpit theme that should not be born of Christ or discover him. He is the root and offspring of David, the premise and conclusion of all truth, the author and finisher of our faith, the world's light and heaven's glory.

2. Urge upon your students the necessity of spiritual growth, and aid it by your Christian example. The ministry must be unmistakably Christ-like or their work will come to nought. Personal holiness should be sought by the student as the highest good and the chief qualification for his work. There is no culture that can be compared to this. It stands alone as Mont Blanc among the Alps. There is no power comparable to this. It is of the nature of that which in far Palestine raised the dead. What the church needs most is not men of great intellects, profound scholarship, rare accomplishments,—though all these have their value,—but men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost; men who possess that holy unction which cannot be feigned, born of communion with God and a faith which dwells beyond all visible worlds. We need more preachers like Poyson, Nettleton, McCheyne, Wesley, Burns, John Welsh of Ayr,

and him whom our fathers heard with the marrow of their bones, whose night cry is yet heard in heaven, "Give me Scotland or I die." An army of these, though small as Gideon's, would soon bring the latter-day glory. Without them it will never come.

But in the cultivation of personal piety our theological schools may fail. Often, indeed, the young man just matriculated, who thought the Seminary would be a nursery of piety, and that in its spiritual air his soul would grow strong, is keenly disappointed, and perchance as the months go on, in all the attributes of a Christian manhood is increasingly dwarfed. Christ is often crucified between hermeneutics and homiletics, and the resurrection with power is long delayed or never comes. The Bible may be critically studied, and as an exegete the student may excel. He may learn to present the truth with logical exactness and homiletic perfection. Orthodoxy may determine every shade and expression of thought, and yet his soul may be barren as a desert-heath, and he may go forth to utter messages which will suggest the marbles of Angelo,—beautiful but cold; scriptural but impotent and dead. Life is begotten of life. Heart-power, born of Bible truth, is worth more than scholarship or logic. Hence the student and the preacher should read the Scriptures devotionally, should translate the truth into holy living, should keep the heart warm by fellowship with Christ. He should aspire to high degrees in holiness; not taking Thomas a-Kempis, or John Flavel, or David Brainerd for his model, but asking Christ to determine his type of piety, and fit him for his appropriate niche in the spiritual temple.

To you, dear brethren, this suggests your personal responsibility and duty. Your spiritual life will go far to mould that of your pupils. They will seek your level, walk in your steps, and report you wherever they go. Coming then as you do, from the pastorate, with hearts warmed by the care of souls, I charge you to keep your altar-fires burning. Be men of piety; men of prayer; men of God. Teach Christ and live Christ. Carry the atmosphere of heaven into all your days, and through all your work. Then shall this Princeton of the West be as distinguished for its piety as for its learning, attracting the truly consecrated and lifting to higher grounds those whom the Master is calling thither.

Through your teaching and example, beloved brethren, may the number of evangelical preachers be greatly multiplied ; men of God, called of him, baptized with the Holy Ghost, who with simplicity, affection, self-abnegation and holy fervor, shall tell the old story, ever new, of death by sin and salvation by the cross ; who shall watch for souls as those that must give account ; who shall teach publicly and from house to house, and feed the church of God which he has purchased with his blood.

The Lord be with you. May you know the knowledge which dwells in his presence, the strength that resides in his arm, the rest which is found in his bosom. Take now the standard your King gives you, and bear it to the tops of the mountains, drawing thither the thoughts and hearts of men ;—that serene height your spiritual Pisgah from which to witness, perchance, the Millennial dawn, ascending thence, when your work is done, to the land which is not afar off, there to return your commission to him who gave it, and receive in its stead the crown of life which fadeth not away.

Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

BY

REV. DAVID C. MARQUIS, D. D.

Gentlemen of the Board—Fathers and Brethren:

In appearing before you in answer to your call, to enter formally and officially upon the work of instruction in the department of New Testament literature and exegesis in the seminary of which you are the responsible guardians, I cannot refrain from giving expression to some thoughts and feelings, personal to myself, which crowd upon me in this presence and on this occasion.

I come from an experience of pastoral work, extending over a period of twenty years, to take the place of a teacher in the school where I once sat as a student. I find here many of the friends of other years, whose friendship the lapse of time has not cooled, but rather has warmed and strengthened. I have been received and welcomed with most cordial kindness, not only by those endeared to me by past association, but by all the representatives of our beloved church in this most hospitable city.

I could not then be otherwise than deeply impressed and filled with a sincere and earnest gratitude in view of the many pleasing circumstances which attend my entrance upon this important work.

The work to which you have called me is to teach God's ministers how to study God's Word.

It is due to you that I should indicate, at least in outline, the views and principles and purposes that will guide me in the conduct of this work.

I.

The study of the New Testament is to be undertaken and conducted with the full conviction that, in this collection of writings, we are dealing with the Word of God.

By this phrase I do not mean, only, that we have here a record which contains God's revelation, and that the record of that revelation is solely the work of men, and subject to the imperfections and mistakes which pertain to all things human—not that. Nor do I mean that we have here a record which is itself the revelation, every word of which was dictated by the Lord himself, and written mechanically by men—not that. But I do mean that we have here a record of things which God revealed to men at sundry times and in divers manners; and that this record was written by men who set down the thoughts which the Holy Spirit suggested; those thoughts clothed in words which the Holy Spirit selected; and yet those thoughts and words so cast in the mold of the writer's mind as that no man's individuality is lost, and no man's personal peculiarities are concealed.

If it be said that this definition reduces the whole question of inspiration to the level of a dictation that is purely mechanical, I answer that the difference between the two is just as marked as is the difference between the doctrine of the Docetæ and the true doctrine of the Person of our Lord. The idea of a mechanical inspiration eliminates the human element from Scripture, which is the written Word, just as the teachings of the Docetæ eliminated the human nature from the Person of Christ, who is the living Word.

But truth affirms the human and the divine as co-existent both in the Person of Christ and in the Sacred Scriptures, both in the living Word and in the written Word. And just as we cannot stop short of an absolute divinity as attaching to the Person of the Lord, so we cannot stop short of an absolute divinity as belonging to the Scripture record; a divinity that shapes the expression of the thought as well as the thought itself; in other words, that men spake from God borne on by the Holy Ghost.

To my mind, that is not a plenary inspiration which draws its line of demarcation between the thoughts and the words of Scripture, making the thought divine and the expression human. Let us, rather, say that thoughts and words are both divine, while at the same time both are human: human, in the sense that each production bears the cast of its writer's mind and the impress of his times: human, too, in the sense that the

record is to be interpreted by each writer's modes of thought, and by the circumstances under which he wrote: but divine in the sense that nothing is therein written save that which came into the mind of man direct from the mind of God: divine, too, in the sense that the words which men chose to express the thought are words chosen by direction of the Spirit of God.

If asked to make the above statement harmonize with the discrepancies and apparent incongruities of Scripture, it seems to me reasonable enough to say that the Holy Spirit, in directing men to make a record of the facts which contain God's revelation, had regard to the laws of evidence and to the credibility of testimony. For example—if Matthew and Mark give differing accounts of the healing of a blind man at Jericho, that does not argue that the Holy Spirit could not have given precise directions to each one what to write: neither does it argue that the same spirit gave two contradictory accounts of the same event. It merely suggests that the Holy Spirit directed each writer to narrate the event as he knew it. The divine director recalled to each writer's mind those features of the incident which made most impression upon himself. And, by so doing, He made more manifest the credibility of the witness and gave added weight to his testimony.

I see no reason, therefore, for modifying, in the least degree, the expression of the church's faith touching the doctrine of inspiration. We believe and teach that the Holy Scriptures are God's words setting forth God's revelation. It is a belief which, in my judgment, can be made to appear consistent with the facts of Scripture to a greater extent than any of the numerous theories which are attempting to displace it. If difficulties should be found which we are unable to harmonize with this belief, we are willing to wait for farther light. Meanwhile, we are satisfied with the apostolic testimony and are prepared to stand by the rendering of that testimony as it appears in the authorized English version. We believe and teach that the King James version is both grammatically and logically correct when it says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," or, Every writing of these Holy Scriptures is God-inspired.

II.

We are to teach that the documents we call Holy Scripture are the very writings which they claim to be, *i. e.*, written by apostles or by apostolic men.

Here we touch the domain of history and are called to explore the writings of the fathers of the church, some of whom were the acquaintances and pupils and co-laborers of the men who companied with the apostles of the Lord; and some of them confirmed their testimony with the seal of martyr blood. When we find them making use of these very Scriptures without a question of their genuineness; quoting them more or less accurately in the very words which we read to-day upon our printed page, until, from the collected writings of the first four Christian centuries, almost the entire New Testament could be reproduced; and when, in the course of years, we find them separating the apostolic writings from the mass of Christian literature which grew up around them, designating those writings which were known to be of apostolic origin, settling the canon, not by any churchly authority and not by any dictum of scholarship, but by a simple consensus of facts; and when we find this testimony certifying to the existence and the authorship of these very books which we hold to constitute the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; in the presence of these manifold testimonies we are not to be disturbed by any fear lest these books may be the production of later times.

Whatever apparent anachronisms a hostile criticism may discover, whatever incongruities of subject or of style that criticism may claim to have disclosed, the testimony of history, descending in unbroken line, is not to be set aside by the varying imaginations of men.

And just as surely as the testimonies of history establish the genuine apostolicity of the New Testament, so surely do we believe that the witness of Christ and his apostles verifies to us the genuineness of the Old Testament. Jewish writers and the early Christian fathers agree in certifying that there is no difference between the canon of Old Testament Scripture as we have it now and as it existed in the time of our Lord. The books of the Old Testament, which we receive as sacred and inspired, are the very same as those which were received as Holy Scripture when Christ was on the earth.

And to this canon of Holy Scripture Christ and his apostles have given their repeated and unqualified endorsement. To the verity of its history, to the divinity of its prophecy, to the inspiration of its poetry, they have testified again and again. So that all who bow to the authority of Christ, all who call themselves by the Christian name, are absolutely estopped from any interpretation of the Old Testament that would be inconsistent with the testimonies of the New.

Whatever importance may be attached to criticisms upon matters of style, and upon questions of historic consistency (and that these things are important, in their place, no one will question), human opinion is too variable, and human judgment based on such opinion is too unreliable ever to be allowed to change, or even to modify the positive historic testimony that comes to us in the witness of the Lord. Inside the limits of the historic verity of Scripture, as established by the word of Christ, there is a place for critical study. Inside this limit the criticism of style and structure may assist in the interpretation of the word. But only in subordination to the better testimonies of a history that is authenticated by the word of the Lord. Whenever criticisms of style and structure suggest a modification of the testimonies of Christ, then is the time to stop and confess that human opinion is often wrong, that conclusions based upon human judgment are always fallible, but the word of the Lord abideth forever.

III.

In the study of this book we are to enquire whether these Scriptures are trustworthy copies of what the apostles wrote.

In determining questions of this character we must appeal to the testimony of manuscripts, versions and fathers, the manuscripts containing the text itself, the versions being translations of the text into other tongues, and the fathers containing quotations which indicate the text as it existed in their day. The manuscripts date back to the earlier part of the fourth century, the versions and fathers to a period much nearer the days of the apostles. Tracing the text on down through the centuries until the invention of printing fixed its form, we find the manuscript copies greatly multiplied. They are still being discovered and unearthed from crypt and cloister in such numbers as may well

tax the scholarship of the world for generations to come, to note their variations and rightly to estimate the value of their testimony.

Comparatively few of the known manuscripts have, as yet, been critically examined. Yet these few disclose variations from each other and from a common standard, such as, at first glance, might awaken serious apprehensions.

But our confidence is restored and confirmed when it is discovered that the variations very rarely affect the meaning of a sentence, and still more rarely do they affect the genuineness of a passage. With all the many thousand various readings, we know that we have the text, substantially, as it came from apostolic hands.

Yet in the few instances where the choice lies between words of different meaning or between the omission and retention of a passage, we desire, if possible, to find among these conflicting authorities the *ipsissima verba* of the apostolic autographs. And our effort will be to find the true text—not in the oldest manuscripts to the exclusion of those more recent; not in any one family or group of manuscripts to the exclusion of every other; not by the rigid application of any arbitrary and dogmatic rules of criticism, but, by a careful investigation and judicial weighing of the testimony of manuscripts, versions and fathers. Bringing to our aid the results of the study of the scholarship of the past and present, our aim will be to give to each witness the place and the weight to which he is entitled. From a comparison of all these testimonies we shall try to choose that reading that came direct from apostolic hands.

We believe, with Bentley, that “the real text of the sacred writers does not now (since the originals have been so long lost), lie in any manuscript, but is dispersed in them all. It is competently exact, indeed, in the worst manuscript now extant, nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost, choose as awkwardly as you will. Make your many thousand various readings as many more—all the better to a knowing and a serious reader who is, thereby, more richly furnished to select what is genuine. But even put them into the hands of a knave or a fool, and yet, with the most sinister and absurd choice, he shall not extinguish the light of any one chapter, nor so disguise Christianity but that every feature of it will still be the same.”

IV.

The most important of all questions connected with the study of the book is the subject matter of its teaching, or the truth which it contains. It is the story of the Christ who died for our sins according to the Scriptures—who was buried and rose again according to the Scriptures. It is the study of a history whose divinity is attested by prophecy. It embraces in its scope, the ages past and the ages yet to come. It is the inspired statement of the doctrines which constitute the Christian faith. It is the inspired record of the precepts which regulate the Christian life.

The revelation of God, the salvation of men, the constitution of the church, the ethics of social life, the gospel which rescues from death, the power which exalts to eternal life, the divine message which tells of heaven, the divine King who opens the door and proclaims the invitation and leads the way thither, the spirit which fits men for entrance there and the rules which guide them in the way, the promise of the kingdom and the expectation of the coming King;—all these are presented as themes for thought and study in the pages of this book. It is the quarry from which the tenets of theology are digged.

It belongs to another department to take these living stones of eternal truth and build them together in a compact and well proportioned edifice, fitting them one to another in a well constructed system, showing at once their beauty and their harmony.

It will be the province of this department to show that each separate truth of that grand system which, when taken together, constitutes the expression of the church's faith, is indeed the utterance of the Spirit of God, taught, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.

It is here that theology must find its ultimate verification. It is here that every principle in morals must find its final authority. Here social ethics must submit their theories and be judged by the letter and spirit of the book. And here, too, the issues of human history, and the outcome of the world's hope must find their final result—not in a fancied perfection of humanity developed from the basis of a wrecked manhood, but in the outgrowth of a life sent down from heaven; a life to be made manifest in its fullness in the day when the Lord shall raise his ransomed from the dead and crown them with his glory.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

BY

REV. HERRICK JOHNSON, D. D., LL. D.

THE NECESSITY AND GLORY OF UTTERANCE IN OBEYING THE GREAT COMMISSION.

*Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Board of Directors of
the Theological Seminary of the Northwest:*

Man is the animal that talks. The human tongue is a little member, but it is capable of doing some mighty things. Talking is the trade of the race. To talk well is to have power. To talk supremely well is to be at the summit of power. The clatter of empty mental cock-lofts and the noise of men manufacturing sentences and airing rhetoric, have brought talking somewhat into disrepute. There has been such a din of "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal," it is no wonder many have gotten sick of words. The feeling has taken form in the proverb, "Silence is golden." It has found expression in the oft repeated cry, "Show me a man of deeds, not of words." But if the proverb is true, we should all turn mutes. And in that blank and universal silence, we would soon have no "man of deeds" to show! Mind is like soil. Seeds planted will come to no fruitage save as they are played upon by sunshine and rain. The glory and pathos of speech are the sunshine and rain of the world of mind, stirring the seed-thoughts with thrill of new life and giving that life "immortality" by transmuting the thoughts into immortal deeds.

Certainly, speech is the great instrument of power with man. In another than the scriptural sense, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Carlyle flamed out against this in his vehement fashion. He disparaged the tongue and lauded the press; decried speech and glorified literature. His idea is, laws

are not made by Parliament, but by the pen. "The true university," he says, "is a collection of books."

But the world's great seats of learning still keep their lecture-ships, Carlyle to the contrary notwithstanding. A library has some unquestionable elements of inspiration. But the mind of an author is more than his works. The nameless and potent charm of intense personality cannot all go down into a dead book. Soldiers will lock their jaws with firm clench of duty under a written order from their beloved chief; but to see his face and hear his voice will thrill them through and through with high hope and sense of invincibility. Peter the Hermit, by the torch of his burning speech, fired all Europe with crusadic ardor. Luther's words, with Luther behind them, are thunderbolts. Gladstone's speeches make him primate of all England. No political party in this country dare risk defeat at a presidential election by leaving the field to the orators of the opposition. Truth is mighty; but truth in personality is mightier. There is power in the Word. But all the power of the infinite God is in "The Word made flesh."

The decadence of the pulpit because of a competing press, is, therefore, impossible. If the pulpit gets smitten with impotency, it will not be by this rival claimant. Concede ubiquity and universal knowledge and seizure of every favoring wind of circumstance to the press, and it can never be a substitute for public speech. While men are men, a living man before living men will always be more than white paper and black ink; and therein will forevermore lie the supremest possibilities of power.

My theme is "*The necessity and glory of utterance in obeying the great commission.*"

I. *The Necessity.* Whether we will or not, we are chiefly shut up to this agency of utterance in making men know Jesus Christ. Speech is the norm in gospel evangelization. So long as there is a Word to preach there must be its public proclamation. The Founder of Christianity selected living men to propagate it. He told them what to do in its propagation: "Go and preach." Their names are indices of office. They are "heralds" to deliver a message. They are "ambassadors," to speak for their King. "As though God did beseech you by us," is Paul's word. They are to "rebuke," "exhort," "instruct," "beseech,"

“reprove,” “entreat”—not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, yet nevertheless in words.

Preaching, therefore, is wrapped up in Christianity. The warrant for it, not only, but the obligation to it, is in the Christian Scriptures. Indeed, it is a remarkable fact, as emphasized by Prof. Phelps in his *Theory of Preaching*, “that the religion of Nature, isolated from the Scriptures, has never been preached on any large scale. Sporadic cases are of no account. Natural religion creates philosophers and founds academies; it produces priests and builds temples; it pictures and carves itself in symbols and ceremonies; but it has no churches, no pulpits, no preachers, * * * It creates the temple, the symbol, the priest, the ritual, the choir; * * * but it does not create the desire to be taught, reasoned with, persuaded, preached to, on religious themes.” Christianity, on the other hand, has both given birth to preaching, and perpetuated it through the centuries. Its deepest truth is in personality, and through personality it best passes out and down into men. Christianity is indeed embodied in an infallible Book; but that is not preaching. Men seek to set it forth by crosses and crucifixes, altars and altar lights, priestly vestments and incense, liturgy and mass; but that is not preaching according to New Testament meaning and injunction. Nay, its transmutation in character so that it is lifted up to the sight and heart of men in a holy life—that is not preaching in the official sense of ambassadorship and in full obedience to the great commission.

Preaching does indeed need character as a background in which it shall be set; as a base for its projectiles. Speech has something mighty behind it when it has character behind it. Nor would I deny to symbol and sacrament their silent witness for God. Music and architecture may have their uplifting uses. And surely the Bible without note or comment has brought Christ to many a soul. But when Christ said, “Go, preach my gospel,” he did not mean print Bibles, or wear vestments, or build altars, or bow before crucifixes, or even engage in solemn chant and litany. He did not mean symbol and ritual and pomp of service; but public proclamation by a living man to living men of gospel truth. Truths of God unfolded, illustrated, amplified for enlightenment and persuasion, intensified by profound personal conviction, fused in the fires of a man’s

own soul, and poured from lips touched with God's altar fire upon waiting ears and hearts, accompanied by every possible attendant of effective posture and gesture and voice—that is preaching. Liturgical repetitions, however packed with Scripture and however redolent of devotion, can never take its place. The disuse of the pulpit marks a retrograding church. Crowd out Scripture exposition and enforcement, and you crowd out Scripture. You may retain the letter of the Word, but it will be the letter only. Christianity is not a religion of the altar. Judaism was that. The New Testament is a message. Preaching is nothing if not speech.

Hence the necessity of utterance in obeying the great commission.

II. *The Glory.* I make bold to say, fearless of successful challenge, there is no glory of speech comparable with it in the whole round of possible expression among men. Neither bar, nor bench, nor legislative hall, nor lyceum, nor academician's chair can match the pulpit in inherent and surrounding conditions of honorable, exalted and mighty address. One utterance differeth from another utterance in glory, but the utterances involved in obeying the great gospel commission excel them all. And this whether we look at the themes treated, the powers employed, the materials marshaled, or the end aimed at.

1. *The themes treated*—what are they? Let us but once attempt to grasp them in any comprehensive way, and how they sweep on beyond us, shaming and mocking our poor attainment. We climb their heights only to find the heights unscalable. We press to their supposed summits only to find peaks on peaks higher up, and angels from the presence signaling from those farther altitudes, and beckoning us to the illimitable glory still beyond. We turn to their depths only to find them as fathomless as the heights are scaleless. The downward plunge of God's love in redemption—who has told us, who can tell us the measure of that? The depths that are even beyond that Love's reach, whose plummet has sounded the anguish there?

In these transcendent themes are found alike the warrant and the easy explanation of all Scripture paradoxes: paradoxes like these—that things can be known, and yet are unknowable; that things can be thought, and yet are unthinkable; that there is perfect liberty in absolute certainty; that weakness is

almightiness, and sorrow is joy, and folly is wisdom, and defeat is victory, and the want of all things is the possession of all things. Going through the Scriptures we find how the doctrines and the duties, the principles and the precepts, taken at their face, are crowded thick with these contradictions. But we explore the reaches of their infinities, the sweep of their immensities, and we know that in their surrounding and super-abounding fullness, the contradictions are true. It takes infinite backgrounds to make such reconciliations.

Mark now the limitless adaptations of the themes of the pulpit. What want is there, felt by man, they do not meet? What truth is there, needed by man, they do not tell? What hope is there, of life beyond, they do not kindle? What strait is there, a soul can get into, which some truth of God cannot get that soul out of?

See, too, the wealth they bring to want, the marvelous prodigality with which all the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ are laid at the feet of service to give them wings. See how they tie the sublimest motive to the smallest duty and the most infinite comfort to the least trouble, as if in the vastness of God's love and grace there is nothing mean or small of earth.

Such themes, meeting illimitable need with illimitable sufficiency, as high as heaven, as deep as hell, as wide as eternity, touching every interest and hallowing every relationship of life, glorifying baseness, lifting to spiritual altitudes, thrilling with prophecies and promises, shaming the past, transforming the present, irradiating the future — what themes can match them? Out of what fields will you gather them? Out of the field of natural ethics? No. Of philosophy? No. Of science? No. Of law, of medicine, of literature, of finance, of political economies? Out of none of these. These all have furnished themes of grand purpose and import. In many of them God's high thoughts are written. But not until we get busy with the themes of God's own story of redemption, do we cry from the deeps of our hearts, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out."

2. But the glory of utterance as connected with the Christian pulpit appears not only in the themes treated, but in *the powers employed*: The best there is in a man is here put to its best.

These mighty themes give full play to every faculty of the intellect and every feeling of the heart. They tax all powers and tax them to the utmost. A mental loiterer in this field is a monstrous anomaly. He who dreams there is not room here for the highest and mightiest powers and for their fullest development, is yet to learn the very alphabet of pulpit requirement and possibility.

Take the average miscellaneous Sabbath audience, remember its inevitable variety of age, of native gifts, of discipline, of educational advantage, of intellectual development. There is no such conglomerate school in the world. Now upon that mass of varied mind and character the pulpit is to be an educational, uplifting force. It is to make the deep thoughts of God's Word intelligible to all those orders of minds. Beyond a doubt pulpit speech is marked by the ascendancy of persuasion over every other purpose. But to persuade we must convince. To stimulate we must educate. Any rational emotion must have its ground and cause in some clearly apprehended truth. To accomplish this the utterance of the pulpit must be marked by processes of logic, by exact divisions, by clear definitions, by profound grasp of great doctrines, by discriminating judgment as to the relation of truth to emotion and of different truths to different emotions. It must "divide, discriminate, define, sharpen, clarify, doctrine by doctrine, duty by duty, fact by fact, till the whole map of Christian faith is outlined and clear." Hortatory appeal is beating the air, till this precedent work is wrought. It is a Christian *faith* we preach; but a faith that stands on its reasons; a faith whose human parentage is intelligent conviction and whose immortal child is character. And to produce that succession in whole classes and grades of intellect, and to go on doing it, until a miscellaneous audience is lifted to a high level of spiritual knowledge and force, is a transcendent work of mind, and an intellectual glory that crowns no other public speech.

Then what play pulpit utterance gives to that regal mental faculty—the imagination. I do not mean the imagination of fiction and fancy that revels in its own creations, but the power that grasps things invisible—the tremendous dynamics of the world to come—and makes them visible to men; that illuminates the black ink of the letter of the Scriptures until every

word is vivid and real with the presence and glory of God's great thoughts. Gladstone's "Budget" speech in the House of Commons was a marvelous display of this faculty, where mere figures were made to warm with life, and a statement of revenue and expenditure kept dull ears on the stretch whole hours. But how immeasurably above this utterance of Parliament is the utterance of the pulpit, in the possibilities it furnishes for the exercise of that coronal gift of mind by which things unseen are so commanded that it is as if men saw them while they listened.

There are other powers, also, besides the intellectual, employed in pulpit utterances. Conscience is put to some high behests. The will is shot into this speech with wonderful tenacity of purpose. And yet there is no battery in the intellect, or the conscience, or the will, that can account for the electric effects of impassioned oratory. The aroma of speech, the glory of speech, the divine of speech, is from the heart, where God lays the beams of his chambers. And all the heart powers get oftenest and deepest stir in the mighty utterance of the gospel.

And another power still works in and through and by this utterance, transcending all these, secret, invisible, supreme. Nor bench, nor bar, nor political arena knows its secret or feels its breath. But we cannot reason it out, doubt it out, or sneer it out, of the mighty utterance of the pulpit. It wings and arms and smites and wins. It whispers and thunders. It raises the dead. It is the power of the Spirit of the living God.

3. And now, if we look to *the materials marshaled* for this gospel utterance, we find they, too, give it an excelling glory. They are gathered from the Scriptures, first and chief. From this land of fatness, this garden of spices, this miracle of exhaustless wealth of gold and frankincense and myrrh, the hero of a heavenly commission comes laden with his richest spoil. He obeys the divine command, "Bow down thine ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge." And he realizes the divine promise, "For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee: they shall withal be fitted in thy lips." Yes, O speaker of God, "they shall be fitted in thy lips."

And these sacred resources are not all. The gold of idolatrous shrines is sought and found, and by spiritual alchemy

is transmuted into a purer ore for the house of the Lord. Reaping is done in the fields of classical learning, but instead of putting the sheaves to earthly uses, they are garnered for God. Incursions are made into every province of research, only to bring back knowledge with which to enrich and adorn the gospel speech. Flowers are gathered from the world's rarest gardens, but only that they may fringe the stream of utterance and "their fragrance exhale toward heaven." Events of providence, also, "that mighty wheel whose circumference is so high that it is dreadful with the glory of the God of Israel upon it"—events of providence are made to lend their emphasis. From history, from poetry, from painting, from music, from philosophy, from every field of earth and sky and sea, from past and present and future, from heaven and from hell, the materials may be marshaled.

4. But the glory of the speech of a herald of God gets its crown and culmination in *the end aimed at*. Art aims at pleasure; science at instruction; legislation at civil weal; politics at a vote; law at a verdict; the pulpit at character. And not character simply after the pattern of this world, but of a divine sort, attained only when the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ is attained. The utterance of the pulpit, therefore, "means men, first and last and all the while;" and men at the innermost seat of their moral determinations, working from there outward—a regeneration and a sanctification—until the spirit of Glory and of God breathes in them and shines out of them, and they are made so absolutely "pure in heart" that they come to know what it is, without the least flaw of vision, to "see God."

It has been well said that "if there is one thing in the world more worthy of being worked than another, it is the human soul." To work it for divine uses, to work it into godlike mould, to present it faultless before the throne, and so to save it from everlasting death, is the constant and urgent aim of all pulpit utterance that has any seal of God upon it, or any divine right of hearing. And this end aimed at, no less than the themes treated and the powers employed and the materials marshaled, make it impossible that there should be any glory of utterance to surpass it or equal it in the whole wide world of eloquent and majestic speech.

Who is sufficient for it? What rude and unseemly ram's horns we are for voicing these mighty things!

"With what cracked pitchers go we to deep wells
In this world."

The first sense we have in the blaze of these truths is a sense of awful unfitness. How it should blast the lips that go sporting here, as if this were a field for the airy exploits of a pulpit rhetor, instead of the tender and solemn beseechings of a Christian ambassador.

A second sense we have is of God's sufficiency. The harp may be poor. But He is the harper, and His is the music. We may take the words of Gregory and, prostrate at the feet of the King, say, "Lord, I am an instrument for thee to play upon."

"The coarsest reed that trembles on the marsh,
If heaven select it for its instrument,
May shed celestial music."

And another sense is on us in the presence of the glory of this mighty utterance; a sense that gets new deepening to me as I this night take solemn official obligation to be true to the trust of Sacred Rhetoric in the Theological Seminary of the Northwest; a sense of the need of preparation for this mighty utterance.

God can use in his sovereignty any instrument. But he is not always at war with the nature of things. To choose and use means fitted to ends, is his common way. And the thing to be "fitted" for here, is utterance. "Go, preach," is the great commission. Preachers are what we want; men that can take these high thoughts of God and give them structural form in speech and make them throb with their great secrets of love or wrath as they win and burn and thunder their way to men's hearts.

Theology, History, Greek and Hebrew: these are not Rhetoric. In these do not lie the hidings of effective speech. You have not made a soldier when you have given him powder and shot and musket. You have not made a painter when you have furnished him with pencils and pigments and canvas. No more have you made a preacher when you have systematized theology for him, and stuffed his brain-pockets with Greek and Hebrew roots, and the facts and philosophy of church history.

I do not disparage the other departments. Can an army fight with tactics? Can an artist paint with moonshine? No. Let us keep to our base of supplies, and give it the best brain possible for further research and ampler store. But let us forevermore remember that materials for preaching do not tell us one secret of the art of forceful and effective speech; that the man in the pulpit who attains to a mighty utterance, is the man who is most likely to move on to victory. Be it our consecrated and constant purpose here in this seminary to make such men.

