

INAUGURAL ADDRESSES

AT THE OPENING

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

OF THE

✓
NORTH WEST,

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.



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S. J. Halsey

Professor of Historical and Pastoral Theology

Published by Joseph M. Wilson 2^d Mill South 10th St. Philad.

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BY

LEROY J. HALSEY, D. D.,

PROFESSOR OF HISTORICAL AND PASTORAL THEOLOGY, AND CHURCH
GOVERNMENT.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF L. J. HALSEY.

It is with no ordinary feelings of misgiving and embarrassment that I stand here to-day, to take part with my brethren in these inaugural services. Until within the last few days, I have not, for more than twelve months, ventured to address a public assembly. After eighteen years of unremitting labour in the preaching of the gospel, I was compelled by loss of voice to resign the pastoral office, and to desist entirely from all its public functions. Under these circumstances I must crave the greater indulgence for such remarks as I may be able to make on the present occasion. But called by the voice of God's providence, and the General Assembly of our Church, to bear a share with my respected colleagues, in the inauguration of the Theological Seminary of the North West, and having so far obeyed the summons, as to set aside all opposing engagements, and to appear here at the time and place appointed for our work, I feel, that though it be with a trembling heart and a faltering tongue, some public utterance, however brief and inadequate, is due to an occasion so solemn and important.

To be called by the Church to aid in laying the foundations of a new Theological Seminary in this queen city of the Lakes,

or to be called any where, to the highly important work of training the sons of Zion for the holy ministry, is a position, which twelve months ago I had as little thought of occupying, as I had of being sent out by the Church on one of her great foreign missions. That I find myself in such a position now, and that, too, in a condition of bodily health only partially recovered from the wasting cares of other fields of labour, is to me an event, which I can reconcile to myself, or hope to justify to others, only on the ground, that the calls of God and his Church have seemed to demand it. For the great work here to be done, I feel that I have no special preparation or qualification, above others of my ministerial brethren all over the Church. And I should be utterly appalled at the difficulties and the responsibilities of such a work, were it not that I come into it with hands already inured to the toils of the pastoral office, with a sincere desire to learn and obey the truth, and with a heart ready to serve the Master in any thing he may appoint, while humbly relying upon his grace for assistance.

For what is true of this work is true of the ministry itself. We are all unworthy of it, even at our best estate. And it becomes us all to say, What are we, and what our father's house, that we should be taken from following a few sheep in the wilderness, and exalted to responsibilities so solemn and sacred, as that of ministering in God's great name! No one in the Church can be more sensible than I am of my own unworthiness to be either a preacher of God's gospel or a teacher of God's ministers. But I would desire, so far as I can, to adopt the sentiment of George Gillespie, when called to stand up for the truth, before the learned Colemans, Seldens, and Lightfoots of the Westminster Assembly. "Let no man, who is called of God to any work, be it never so great and difficult, distrust God for assistance, as I clearly found at that great Assembly at Westminster. If I were to live a long time in the world, I would not desire a more noble life, than a life of

pure and single dependence on God; for," said he, "though I may have a claim to some learning and parts, yet I ever found more advantage by single looking to God for assistance, than by all the parts and gifts that I ever could pretend to at that time!"

Theology, the great subject matter of all our instructions here, is in its essence the knowledge or doctrine of God. As a science, it is, both in the order of nature and of importance, the first of all the sciences. To know God as the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent, as the only Mediator is eternal life. As this is the central truth of all truth, so the knowledge of it is the central science of all the sciences man can know.

Its basis of truth is the testimony of God in his written word; precisely as the foundation of all natural science or philosophy is in the works of God, or, as they are called, the works of Nature. The Scripture, therefore, the sure testimony of God in his revealed word, is the great text book of Theological Science; just as material and physical nature, like another scripture of a lower order, is the text book of all the other sciences. In a certain sense God has revealed himself everywhere in the great book of nature; as the apostle says, The invisible things of him from the creation of the world being clearly seen, even his eternal power and Godhead. But we needed the light of another book. And accordingly, in a much higher sense, and with infinitely clearer light, God has revealed in the Bible all we need to know of him, while in this mortal state.

But while the knowledge of God himself is the essence of Theology, it includes, at the same time, all that God has revealed in his word, on all other subjects. Strictly speaking, therefore, Theology embraces all that knowledge of which God is the author in the Bible. It is, therefore, the knowledge of all the truth respecting God, all the truth respecting man, and all the truth respecting salvation.* For these are the three

* Breckinridge's Knowledge of God. Vol. ii. book iv.

grand subjects of all revelation, the burden of all the prophets, the story of all the evangelists, the never absent themes of every page of Scripture; God the Creator and the Sovereign; man the creature and the sinner; salvation, the remedy, and the only possible method of restoration. And hence in all and above all, Jesus Christ, the Mediator, Jesus Christ, the Saviour. For it is in Christ Jesus alone that these three great subjects of all revelation—God, man, and salvation—are harmonized. We behold God in him; we behold man in him; we behold salvation in him. And therefore as combining the three in one, he becomes to us the sum of all revelation, the substance of all Theology.

Hence it is in Theology, as it was in the history of Redemption. Every thing stands related to Christ as the central object. All the rays of revelation centre upon him. All the blessed beams of Divine light emanate from him. He is the sun of the system. For four thousand years every thing pointed to his coming, and prepared the way for it. For eighteen centuries and a half, everything has either pointed back to what he did and suffered on Calvary, or else is pointing forward and preparing the way for his second coming. And so in like manner, our Theology—our instructions and our studies—must all point to him.

There may be many departments in Theology, many methods of teaching it, many professorships; but there can be but one true Theology, even as, with all its diversities, there is but one Bible. At whatever point, therefore, we begin our investigations in the broad fields of theological science, be it the text of the sacred word, or the doctrines of revealed truth, or the facts of the wondrous story, or the ordinances of Divine worship, or the Church's progress across the ages, we must seek to find Christ there:—"Him first, him last, him midst, and without end."

But while all theological science is thus one grand whole, a perfect body of divinity whose head is Christ, the experience of the Church has proved, that it can best be taught, es-

pecially where several teachers are engaged in giving instructions simultaneously, by arranging it into separate and convenient departments, to be assigned, each to its own teacher, and all to be carried on abreast. Such divisions are, of course, always somewhat arbitrary; and they vary somewhat in our different seminaries. At present, they are for the most part four, each distinct enough for a separate department, and all together covering the whole field of instruction. The most natural and scientific classification which perhaps the subject admits of, would be the following:

First, Exegetical Theology: that is, the Theology of Hermeneutics or Interpretation, including all Biblical antiquities, and the original tongues of the sacred word, so as to ascertain clearly the mind of the Spirit in the word as the basis of our science.

Secondly, Systematic Theology: that is, the Theology of doctrine, or as it is commonly called Didactic Theology, including also the defence of the same, or Polemic Theology: but Systematic, as containing the whole system of Divine truth drawn from the written word.

Thirdly, Historical Theology: that is, the History of the Church of God, both in the Bible and out of it, both in the administration of its affairs, and in the development of its doctrines, as exhibited in all past ages.

Fourthly, Practical and Executive Theology: that is, the doctrine of the Church, as an organized kingdom in the world, with all the functions and duties of its ministry and office bearers—including all pastoral care and all christian experience.

This is not the precise arrangement as yet adopted in any of our existing seminaries. Nevertheless they all agree in comprehending all of these departments in some part of the course. But the plan prescribed by the General Assembly for us, in this new Seminary of the North West, accords very nearly with that which I have just marked out. The chief difference, and that is not material, is that the department of Interpretation or Exegesis, would come first in the order;

whereas in the curriculum of our Seminary it is last. The mere order, of course, is nothing; seeing that all the departments are to be carried on simultaneously and abreast. And this is well: for while the student gets all the advantage of a division of labour and a diversity of gifts, he is compelled at every step to feel, that Theology is still a grand whole.

The department of study, which, according to the plan of our Seminary, is assigned to my special direction, is that of Historical and Pastoral Theology, and Church Government. In entering upon it, it is exceedingly important that we should get a distinct and definite idea of the field which we have to investigate. In getting knowledge, we do well to follow the example of the agriculturist, who, before he begins to plant, or even to plough, surveys his whole ground, and lays it off into well defined and convenient compartments, ready for the labourers. Otherwise we might plough at random, and plant to little purpose. It seems to be the order of Providence, that as we add furrow to furrow in the fields, so we must add fact to fact, and truth to truth, one at a time, here a little and there a little, in the acquisition of knowledge. We can no more expect to get knowledge in the lump, than we can to reap the harvest or plough the fields in the mass. It become us, therefore, to go to work systematically and patiently, as knowing what we are about.

This department is wide in its range, and it is of the utmost importance in all its practical bearings both upon the character of the ministry and upon the Church itself. It embraces all the varied topics of the pastoral care: the nature, design, and functions of the ministry; Homiletics, or the composition and delivery of sermons; the whole constitution, polity, worship, and mission of the Church of God as a visible organization in the world; together with a historical survey of the different theories and opinions, both true and false, on all these points as they have been developed during all past ages, and as they

have been attested or condemned in the fierce fires of so many great conflicts.

Until very recently these affiliated branches of study were usually divided off, and distributed among the other leading departments of the course, in all our Theological Seminaries. Now they are for the most part assigned to a separate chair, as their close affinity and great practical importance demand. At first sight, Historical and Pastoral Theology, Homiletics, and Church Government may look somewhat disconnected. But it will be found on examination that there is one central idea on which they all meet, as the primal and fundamental truth of the science. That is the true theory of the Church. This underlies our whole department, and gives it unity and character as a distinct branch of Theology. We must ascertain what the Church is; what is its true nature, object, and end, as a Divine institute. For, manifestly, there can be no wise and consistent action in the administration of Church affairs, or in the discharge of ministerial duties: that is, no right pastoral Theology, and no right practical Theology, except that which is grounded upon the right theory of the Church; just as theory is essential to practice in every thing else.

But at the same time all mere theory is worthless, unless it develops itself in a wholesome experience. And therefore inasmuch as the grand object of training men for the ministry in any Theological Seminary is that, as master workmen for Christ, they may be able to carry the Divine theory of the Church into all the daily duties of preaching the gospel and watching for souls, this chair of Ecclesiastical Polity becomes, of necessity and by pre-eminence, the chair of Practice. All departments of Theology are indeed, or ought to be practical; inasmuch as the object of all of them is to point the sinner and the saint to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. But this above all others is practical. Its office is to meet the student as he comes forth from the armory of the other chairs, fully furnished, as he is presumed to be, with the

accumulated resources of Exegetical, Didactic, Polemic, and Narrative Theology, and to teach him how he may best wield these weapons of truth, for the salvation of sinners, the edification of saints, and the glory of God. It corresponds somewhat to that which, in the curriculum of our Medical schools, is known as the chair of Theory and Practice. It embraces the theoretical knowledge and the practical administration of all those great remedial agencies and institutes, which the Physician of souls has prescribed in his word, and committed to his Church for the healing of our dying race.

This department, however, owing to its wide range of subjects, has not yet attained, at least in our text-books, that systematic and symmetrical form which belongs to the others, and which it is, no doubt, capable of receiving. It has hitherto been treated too much as a mere outline of isolated rules and duties, more the result of individual experiment, than of great fundamental principles, grounded in the very constitution of the Church, and the essential nature of the Gospel as a revelation from God. We see no reason why all that God has revealed in the Bible touching the functions of his Church, and the duties of her ministry and other officers, may not be as readily classified and arranged in systematic order as any other truths of revelation; and consequently none, why the department of Theory and Practice in Theology should be less scientifically treated than the corresponding chair in Medicine. On the contrary, the difference is all the other way; for while Medicine in its practical application to the maladies of the human body is at best but a human science, and confessedly one of the most uncertain of all the sciences, Theology, in its practical application to the maladies of the human soul, as in all its other aspects, is a Divine science, and is as certain and positive as the infallible oracles of God can make it. As however, the questions pertaining to this whole field of inquiry have now become the leading and most vital questions of the age in

which we live, the whole department will doubtless receive a profounder and more scientific treatment hereafter.

At present the best scientific term which we have for it, as being at once the briefest and the most comprehensive, is to call it *Ecclesiology*, that is, the doctrine or science of the Church. Regarding it thus as a great system of closely affiliated truths, whose central idea is the Church of Christ, or Christ in the Church, it naturally includes all the functions and duties of the ministry in the whole field of Homiletics and the Pastoral care; because the ministry is but one of the great gifts which Christ bestowed upon his Church, when he left the world. So that to know what God has revealed touching his Church on earth, is to know all that he has revealed about the ministry; even as the whole includes the parts. And so on the other hand a full *Ecclesiology* would also necessarily include all the opinions, theories, and practices, relating to the Church, as they have been developed under all dispensations through all past ages; thus opening to our view the immense field of Historical Theology, both in the Bible and out of it. *Ecclesiology*, to be complete, must take in, on one side, the whole practical working of the church, with all its officers of government, and its ordinances of worship, as an existing kingdom of God in the world; and on the other, the whole past progress and development, through which this kingdom has come to be what we now behold it.

Hence it is manifest, that our true scientific starting point in this whole department, and, so to speak, the base-line of all our subsequent movements, must be the Church of Christ, as his Spirit has revealed it in the Scriptures, as his providence and grace have developed it in all human history. For let us not forget, that the true Church of the present is the true Church of history, and that the true Church of history is the true Church of the Bible. The Church which the Son of God purchased with his own blood, and over which through all the Scriptures, he is the exalted Head, is the same Church over

which he has been reigning through all subsequent history, and over which he now reigns and rules on his mediatorial throne in heaven. The Church in the Bible, the Church in history, the Church in actual operation before our eyes, and Jesus Christ in all and over all, as Head, King, and God, blessed for ever: this is the primal conception of the department which is here assigned to me.

Such is the wide domain of Ecclesiology, regarded as the science of the Church of God. You will readily perceive, from what has been said, that it may be viewed in a threefold aspect, answering somewhat to the three different branches of study, embraced in this one professorship: namely, Church Government, Pastoral Theology, and Historical Theology. First, as a survey of the Church, abstractly and objectively considered, in her whole constitution, polity, order, officers, discipline, worship, design, and destiny, as a Divine Institute, or visible kingdom among men, that is, Theoretical Ecclesiology.

Secondly, as a survey of the Church, concretely and practically considered, that is, as a Divine Institute in actual operation among men, through all her holy ordinances and her sacred office bearers, manifesting her inward life and power, and fulfilling her grand mission in the work of preaching the gospel, saving sinners, edifying the saints, and glorifying God; that is Executive and Pastoral, or Practical and Experimental Ecclesiology.

And thirdly, as a survey of the Church in her onward progress across the ages, her trials and conflicts, her successes and disasters, her fulfillment or neglect of duty, as a Divine Institute ordained for the defence and diffusion of the truth of God, the very pillar and ground of the truth; that is Historical Ecclesiology. First, Ecclesiology in its theory; then, Ecclesiology in its practical working; and last, Ecclesiology in its historical development.

Now as a full course in our Seminary contemplates three years' study, we may find it most convenient to follow out this

order. devoting one year of the three in succession to each of the three great divisions of our subject. At the same time we do not deem it best to pursue any one of them exclusively, even in its own separate year, to the neglect of the others. For just as it is proposed to carry on the studies of the four professorships, simultaneously and abreast, so, to some extent at least, we may carry on abreast, through each year of our course, these three branches of the department. That is to say, while discussing the theory and polity of the Church in the first year, we may have an eye also to its present practice under that theory, and to its historical development in past ages. And while discussing the varied duties of the Church and the ministry in the second year, and giving a fuller attention to the historical development in the third year, we need not forget the great essential principles of that Divine Institute out of which they all grow, as discussed in our first year.

And as all Theology is a unit, a grand circle of truth, of which Christ crucified is the centre, and the revelation of God the circumference, and as in every other department of Theology we are to find Christ everywhere, shining with full orb'd glory from the centre to the circumference, so here also we must find and exalt Christ in the Church. There is no true Church now in the world, none in history, none in the Bible, where Christ is not exalted and adored above every thing that is named in heaven and earth. As in Didactic and Polemic Theology, it is Christ the centre of the whole system of doctrine; as in Biblical and Exegetical Theology, it is Christ the burden of all the Scriptures; as in Ecclesiastical and Narrative Theology, it is Christ the sum of all history, God of providence and grace; so here in Pastoral and Practical Theology, it is the same Christ, pervading all, filling all, governing all, blessing all, according to his promise: Lo! I am with you always even unto the end of the world.

Nor shall he ever cease to be supreme in that Church which

he hath purchased with his blood. Let him reign then for ever on the highest throne of our affections, for he alone is worthy. Let him reign supreme and without a rival, in all our Theology and over all our schools, as he does in his own inspired word, and in that heaven to which he has gone.

We need not wander from the truth, nor ever surrender one jot or tittle of the faith once delivered to the saints, while Christ holds the place of supremacy in our hearts. However wide the seas of error around us, however dark the night of human speculation, and however fiercely all the winds of false doctrine may blow, there is no danger to our vessel while Christ is at the helm. Let him direct all our studies, let him answer all our inquiries, and himself be the crowning object of all our affections, and we cannot miss the clear pathway of truth, and the blest haven of life. We may have to sail over treacherous seas, and encounter adverse winds; but this pole star of truth never ceases to shine; and by its light we may take our reckoning, and tell our latitude and longitude on the widest and the wildest ocean of human error.

Such is a brief and imperfect outline of the field of study to which I have been specially appointed in this institution. Without enlarging any further upon it at present, it may be more in accordance with the design for which we are met to-day, to advert now briefly to a few of the many and striking considerations, which press upon us all alike, as we survey the whole joint labour which lies before us in the Seminary.

In every possible view we may take of such a work as this, the building up of another School of the Prophets, and the training of young men to preach the everlasting gospel, it is confessedly a great and good work. In all the work that is done beneath the sun, there is certainly nothing more important, more difficult, and more blessed. While of ourselves we might well shrink from it, appalled by its magnitude and grandeur, and crying, Who is sufficient for these things? yet with God's blessing, there is everything to stimulate and encourage

us to its faithful performance. Its whole nature, relations, and influences, both for time and eternity, are such as to inspire every pious heart with the highest enthusiasm, and nerve every arm that can work for Christ to the greatest exertion. Not only those of us who are called to give instruction as Professors, and the young men who may be committed to our care as pupils, but all, it seems to me, who feel an interest in the prosperity of Zion, the directors, friends, and patrons of the Seminary, the community in whose bosom it is located, and the whole body of the Church, to whose fostering care it is committed, should ponder well the important character and bearing of the work here taken in hand.

Let us look for a moment, then, at our undertaking here, as a work intimately connected with all the great interests of truth, the growth of the Church, and the glory of God among men. It is not more certain that there is a Bible in the world the veritable word of God, than that there is a visible Church or kingdom of God amongst men, to which he has committed the oracles of truth, and by and through which he has, in all ages, manifested his glory. This Church is the house of God, the kingdom of Jesus Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth, and has been perpetuated with increasing power and glory, in every age and every land, from its first organization to the present hour. It consists of all those, together with their children, who hold the essential saving faith of the gospel, love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and worship God in the Spirit according to his word. This Church is to be perpetuated to the end of time and fill the world with its glory; for in terms as emphatic as were ever used by the Son of God, he has told us that it is founded upon the rock of ages, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Nay, it has a destiny and relations infinitely higher and more glorious than any which refer to the present world. For we are told that "God created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent, that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places

might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." But even as it regards this world alone, there are three things that have been indissolubly bound together from the beginning: namely, the truth of God, the Church of God, and the glory of God. The Church as the instrument, the truth as the means, and the glory as the end of all.

Now it is the fashion in our day to think slightly of all these great things, or rather to ignore their existence altogether. But the infidelity which under the guise of Christianity, can admit the Bible, and deny the existence of the Church of God, is not a particle more entitled to respect, either for its logic or its piety, than that which repudiates the Divine authority of the Bible out and out. Because there is nothing to which the whole word of God gives a more decisive and abundant testimony than to this Church or kingdom of Jesus Christ. Nor is it any more clearly settled that the Church herself exists by Divine appointment, than it is that her adorable Head and King hath ordained the ministry of reconciliation, to be perpetuated in her bosom till the end of time. There is a species of baptized infidelity, current everywhere in the world, and in the Church too, the infidelity of our most approved popular literature, rejoicing in the boast of liberal opinions, which affects to ignore or despise the ministry as a thing having no more claims to a Divine mission than any other order of men. But why not reject Christianity and the gospel itself along with the Church and the ministry? The gospel is no more of God than the ministry appointed to preach it. Christianity is not a particle more Divine than the Church which its great Founder purchased with his own blood. And neither of them has any other warrant than that Divine book which tells us with absolute certainty, that they all alike are ordained of God. Most assuredly, if there is any Divine institution in the world, it is the ministry of reconciliation, appointed and ordained for the defence of the truth, the proclamation of the gospel, and the glory of God in the salvation of

men. It is Divine in its origin, Divine in its authority, Divine in its work, and Divine in its influences for time and eternity, because it is in all accompanied and supported by the mighty power of God. "After that in the wisdom of men, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "Now then we are³ ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

These things are all bound together by indissolubleties, the Church, the ministry, the truth, the glory of God, the salvation of men. And there is no demonstration clearer than that all the greatest blessings of God to our race, both temporal and spiritual, for time and eternity, flow through these channels. The greatest good any of us can do in this world, and the greatest good we can receive, is in immediate connection with this whole divinely appointed instrumentality of the Church.

Now it is to perpetuate and to multiply these agencies, to qualify and to equip the young servants of Jesus Christ, for the work of the ministry, the work of proclaiming salvation to our dying race, of extending the triumphs of the Redeemer's kingdom over all the earth, and of promoting the glory of God in the highest, confessedly the greatest work that is done, or can be done, for God or man, beneath the sun, it is for this that the Church, whose servants we all are, by her highest and most solemn action, has here established a new Theological Seminary. She has located it here, beyond the utmost bounds of all her older Seminaries, here at the haven of these great waters of the North West, and at the place of concourse of all these mighty multitudes of people, under the conviction that such an institution was demanded here by all her highest interests, the spread of the gospel, the salvation⁴ of sinners, the defence of the truth, and the glory of God.

And what a field is this in which, and for which we are called to labour! Consider our work here in its more immedi-

ate bearings upon this great North Western section of our common country. Whatever good God may enable any of us to do here, now or in time to come, in the way of building up this institution and preparing men to preach the gospel, is good done not only for his Church, but for our common country and for the world. The Church of God has a great mission to perform for our country and for the world. It is hers to save sinners, to train the rising generation, to instruct the people in truth, and righteousness, and virtue. And thus, in God's name it is hers to bless the country, to bless the world.

Since our ascending Saviour commissioned his Apostles to go forth into all the world and preach this gospel to every creature, there surely never was a more important and inviting field for ministerial labour, than this vast region of the North West, stretching away with its swelling millions from these great inland seas, the gates of its commerce, to the unmeasured regions of the farthest West, the tributaries of its coming wealth and power. If we look over this wonderful field, so new, so immense, so diversified in its populations, as yet so destitute of religious privileges and the means of grace, and still so potential for good or evil on the character and destiny of our common country, we cannot fail to see that the one great want of it every where, paramount to every other want, is a ministry of able and faithful men to preach the gospel. Shall we say that a hundred such ministers might this day find employment in it, in our branch of the Church alone? Perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say a thousand. Does a young man of talents and piety wish to make the most of life, to serve God in his generation by doing the greatest possible good for his Church, for his country, and for the souls of his dying fellow men? Does he wish to consecrate time, talent, soul, body, all he has and is, to the cause of the Master who hath bought him with his blood? Here is the work for him; here is the field for him; and now is the time for him, in preaching the gospel of the blessed God to the myriads of

this great North West. Now is the time to stem the torrent of its incoming errors, and vices, and false doctrines. Now is the time to lay the foundations of virtue, morality, social order, and political prosperity, deep and broad in the hearts of the rising generation. Now is the time in all these new States, and in ten thousand rising towns, cities, and villages, to build up churches, schools, colleges, all civil, religious, and charitable institutions, which shall stand to do good, when the hands that built them shall cease to labour, and the eloquent tongues that pleaded for them shall be silent in the grave. It is blessed and glorious to work for such a Master in any country under any circumstances. How glorious and blessed is it to work at such a time, and in such a field as this! It would be enough to work for such a country as it now is. But to work now, is to work for it as it will be fifty or a hundred years hence, when, if our work is well done, thousands yet unborn shall rise up and call us blessed.

Now it is to occupy such a field as this, to bless such a country in all time to come, by supplying it with faithful and fully furnished ministers of the word, that the General Assembly has located a Theological Seminary at Chicago.

If we take a map of the United States, and draw a straight line from the south-western corner of the State of New York to the nearest point of Texas, we shall have an axis which geographically divides the present settled portions of the United States into two very nearly equal parts. At present the preponderance of population is in the portion lying to the south-east of this line. But the ratio is changing every day, and there can be little question that in a few years the majority of our people will be living on the north-west side. Of this north-west portion, Chicago is nearer the geographical centre than any other great city now existing or likely to exist. Its position, at the extreme south-western head of this great chain of inland seas, is such that it is not likely ever to lose this advantage of being the great central city of the North

West. Now, of the six Seminaries of our Church, five are located on the south-east side of this line ; and the only one in the whole vast region to the north-west of it, is that which we are here to-day to inaugurate. This single fact is all we need both to illustrate the magnitude of our field, and to vindicate the wisdom of the Assembly in founding this Institution.

But we cannot stay to develop these thoughts now. The work is great. The time is short ; the business is urgent ; and what our hands find to do, let us do with all our might. Our sufficiency is of God, and through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things. The day in which we live, and the place where we stand, the time past, the time to come, and the signs of the present time, all conspire to encourage and cheer us on to renewed exertion in the work of the Lord.

It is wonderful to think what God has done for our Zion, and to see what he is doing all over the earth. The soul of the greatest of all the Apostles, could he return to the earth, might well be moved within him, to see what our eyes have seen, to hear what we hear of God's wonderful works among men. Look where we stand to-day, on the map of the world and on the chart of human history. The gospel which we preach, and for the defence of which this new Seminary is now opened, is the gospel which began at Jerusalem. And here we are, almost at the centre of a continent, which when it began, was unknown even to human conjecture. Here we stand in the midst of the freest people and the brightest civilization that ever existed on the globe ; a civilization and a people that seem destined to endure till they usher in the latter day glory and the second coming of the Son of Man. Here we stand midway between the Polar regions and the Southern Gulf, almost midway between the Atlantic and the Pacific, and on the very verge of those great inland seas which together form the Mediterranean of our Continent, a great highway of commerce, which may yet play as important a part in our future history, as the Mediterranean has done in

the history of the Old World. Here we stand upon the border of what was, a little more than a quarter of a century ago, a vast untrodden wild; on one hand the wide expanse of deep blue waters stretching away to the east, uncheered by a sail, on the other the boundless prairies, stretching away like another ocean, towards the setting sun, untenanted by civilized man; but now the busy abode of a hundred thousand souls, and the commercial centre of an empire of mighty States; here we stand in the good providence of God, solemnly and hopefully to inaugurate another of those institutions of learning, which are at once the highest known to the Church of God, and the most important, if not indeed the most ancient, known to human civilization. As from such a point of vision, and such a stage of our progress, we survey the wonders of Providence, we may indeed say, Lo! what hath God wrought!