

# Historical Address

delivered at the

## INAUGURATION *of* HERBERT McCOMB MOORE

as President *of*

Lake Forest University

November 4, 1921



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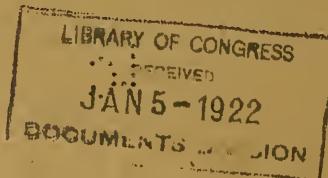
By JAMES G. K. McCLURE  
*President of McCormick Theological Seminary*

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DELEGATES IN ATTENDANCE AT THE INAUGURATION NOVEMBER 5, 1921

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Over one of the gateways of Harvard University is a tablet on which are inscribed the reasons why Harvard was originated. One of the reasons is that a godly ministry of the Gospel might be perpetuated. That reason had come across the Atlantic from the beginnings of Oxford and Cambridge Universities in England. It was later to appear in the hearts of those who started Yale. Still later, as the star of empire wended its way to the west, it was to appear in Illinois. About the year 1853, earnest Presbyterians in Chicago felt that there should be a theological seminary of their denominational type somewhere in the vicinity of the city. The Northwest was developing rapidly. Other needs, commercial and social, were receiving attention. Religious needs should not be slighted. Efforts to plant a Seminary at Galena did not appeal to Chicago men. In 1855, an offer by a man of Cincinnati to give \$40,000 to endow a Presbyterian college near Chicago stimulated thought into active effort. Accordingly investigation was made for a site. South, west and north the land was examined. Lake Forest, beautiful, with its woods, ravines and bluff, sufficiently near and sufficiently far, was chosen. Then, Feb. 28, 1856, the articles of incorporation of the Lake Forest Association were drawn up. Their preamble read: "Encouraged by the offer of a benevolent individual to make a large donation for the purpose of founding an institution of learning of a high order, to be located somewhere between the city of Chicago and Waukegan, on the shore of Lake Michigan," the subscribers agreed to aid in such enterprise by providing necessary amounts for the institution of learning and for other institutions to be associated with it on the same general basis.

The original project was to purchase at Lake Forest 1300 acres from those who had small holdings, "50 being set apart for the institutions of learning, 30 for the college, 10 for the academy and 10 for a female seminary," the remainder to be sold for the benefit of the association or to be assigned for park purposes. In order to obtain the desired 1300 acres, it became necessary to buy adjoining lots. 2300 acres all told were thus bought, the price generally

being \$25 an acre, though in some cases \$100 an acre was paid.

Then landscape gardeners, animated by the ambition to make Lake Forest a place of rare attractiveness, laid out Lake Forest's winding streets. Soon bridges began to appear, and homes to be erected. All was shaping for the institutions of learning. The last wild deer was seen along its principal street in 1859, though prairie chickens continued on the edges of Lake Forest until toward 1878.

But, propitious as the future seemed, delay ensued. The benevolent individual with his \$40,000 offer, turned out to be a whiskey distiller, who had made the offer in a spirit of penance, and who found himself unable to carry out his offer. The high-minded Presbyterians were somewhat disgusted with the whole transaction, and enthusiasm waned. However, Sylvester Lind, a Chicago Scotchman, came forward and offered \$100,000 for theological and other education, on condition that the Association raise \$100,000 for building and improvements. Thereupon a charter was secured from the State Legislature, incorporating "The Lind University," Feb. 13, 1857.

The prospect was most cheering. The affairs of the Association were in admirable condition. Lands were being sold and all sorts of developing plans were in mind. But the financial panic of 1858 came. It crippled Mr. Lind, so that he could not carry out his promise, nor were others in Chicago able to provide generous gifts, and still in 1858 the Academy started, and in 1869 Ferry Hall, and in 1876 the College, the Rev. Robert W. Patterson, Aug. 10, 1875, becoming the President of "Lake Forest University," as the title had been changed to be, Feb. 16, 1865. Since that time over 4,000 students have matriculated in the Academy, over 4200 in Ferry Hall, and over 2500 in the College.

The origin of Lake Forest University as a general anticipation and as a definite fact was religious. The whole project was born in hearts devoted to the will of God. The procedures of forming the Lake Forest Association were held in the Second Presbyterian Church, Chicago, and were attended by earnest prayer. The appeal to the subscribers was largely on the religious ground. The persons who came here to plant homes were outstandingly religious.

When the product of the Association appeared, the Academy was the headquarters of the religious life of the community until, years later, a church building was erected. Ferry Hall, named from the Rev. Wm. M. Ferry, of Fairhaven, Michigan, whose bequest established Ferry Hall was intended to crown intellectual training with spiritual grace. The College started with high purposes of contributing to the religious welfare of the Northwest, its bell summoning the entire Lake Forest community to Sunday worship until 1887. The *raison d'être* of this institution is religious.

Lake Forest has had in its administrative and teaching forces many characters of outstanding worth. Coming as I did into connection with Lake Forest in 1881, and entering immediately into close relationship to all its life, I have known and had touch with every one of the heads of the Academy, of Ferry Hall and of the College, and not only the heads have I known but I have also known the men and women who as friends and supporters have carried the responsibility of this institution from the very beginning. That responsibility has required much skill, devotion and patience. Starting as it did, when the financial affairs of Chicago and of the nation were seriously embarrassed, it started without the provision of a sufficient endowment. Two groups — they might be called parties so distinct and opposed were they — existed at the outset, and continued to exist for many years; one group believed that nothing should be done in initiating the college movement until an endowment was secured adequate to the necessary expense account. The other group believed that the College should be set in operation in the expectation that its annual needs would be provided, and that little by little an endowment would be built up. Each group had its own view of trusting God in the matter; what was trust to one was presumption to the other. The opinions of the second group prevailed. If the attitude of the first group had dominated, it is very doubtful if the college would have been born. Suffice it to say that, though collegiate education requires much money to make it answer to its ends, sufficient money has been obtained to meet the annual expenditures, and besides an endowment has been gradually acquired of so worthy an

amount as to place Lake Forest on a foundation that is sure and potential. This endowment has some distinguishing provisions, as for instance the Bross Fund, a Fund which is broad, large and stimulating, and which is bound as time goes on to make contributions to scholarship that will command the attention of the leading minds and the leading institutions of the world.

Inasmuch as I have been so intimately associated with the life of the University in its different departments for so many years, serving as Trustee since 1889, acquainted with scores of the teachers and their work, knowing intimately hundreds of the students and their homes, it would be natural for me today, were I to allow myself to do so, to speak the names of many of those, teachers and students alike, whose memory is a benediction, but time does not permit me to do so. However, I cannot forbear the assertion that the faithfulness, the dutifulness and the generosity of those who have through the years constituted the Boards of Trust of this institution have been to me one of the greatest inspirations of my life. They have carried details, contributed time and poured out gifts in a splendidly helpful way. They have answered to the leadership of the University with sustained fidelity and bountifulness. Again and again they have not been able to see far into the years; it appeared almost as though they faced a blind alley. But they have held in their hearts the assurance that the institution would eventually have a large and beneficent future, and they have believed that successors to themselves would be raised up who would continue and would develop its life.

There is one name, however, that should be mentioned if any attempt is made to state in few words the history of this institution — the name of Mrs. Charles B. Farwell. She is indeed the mother of the College, and the foster mother of the Academy and Ferry Hall. It was she who, herself an educated New England woman, craved liberal education for the youth of the Northwest. She desired that women as well as men should have the privileges of such education. As yet, in 1875, college co-education was almost untried in the United States. She inspired the starting of the College; she saw that co-education became one of its features; she

watched over the Academy, and Ferry Hall, and she set in movement the methods and the means whereby the institution as a whole was operated and its expenses met. The University as such would not have been begun without her compulsion, nor would it have continued without her support, and the support she obtained in her home and elsewhere for it. Her name should be held in everlasting remembrance in the annals of Lake Forest University.

Nor can I omit to speak of the sacrifice and the sacrifices that have entered into the labors incident to the life of this institution. It has been my high privilege to know the motives that in so many instances have lain back in the hearts of those charged with the administration of the Academy, Ferry Hall and the College—pure, noble, disinterested motives. To know, too, the ideals that have filled the spirit of the teaching staffs—ideals of consecration, hopefulness and devotion; to know also the cost at which these motives and these ideals have been sustained. One of the memories I love to cherish is the memory of the life-blood that has been put into the mortar that holds the stones of this University together—life-blood indeed costly to the individual, that was precious in the sight of God, and that speaks better things than any amount of silver or gold could speak of the purpose and the worth of these departments.

And the result has been that during these years there has been capable instruction given here—instruction adapted to the individual and to his place and age in world-history. The men and women today laboring in every part of the United States and in every foreign land are a product of which we all may be sacredly proud. They are worthwhile men and women; they are contributors to the advance of humanity, and they are what they are largely by reason of the spirit that was wrought into them while they were here.

The influence exerted by this institution on the immediate community has been markedly beneficial. At the beginning the community life centered largely in these educational interests. With the increase of the population of the community and with the increase of all sorts of physical relaxations, social amenities and material luxuries, these

educational interests have not relatively held so prominent a position; but through all the years and today the presence of these schools has been a steady, balancing, sobering power. It has been a summons from intoxicating pleasure to thoughtfulness. Here are these young people, the hope of the world, being prepared for real life! What a responsibility their presence involves! Here are these teachers, with limited salaries, but with rich culture and lofty characters. Immediately material wealth is seen to be not the all nor the best of existence; nor is gaiety the end of being, nor is social recognition the supreme reward. Plain living and high thinking have helped to stabilize this place, and have counteracted the tendencies to dizziness and disaster, which always imperil the upper altitudes of social and financial success. These institutions have paid back more to this community than they have received from it, and paid back in better coin. They have been the conservators of money, not its dissipators. Not one family has lost by the benefactions it has made, but the rather has enriched itself through these gifts. These educational institutions gave rise to the existence of this place; they are the sources of all its attractiveness for residence. In a word they are the "mother" of every safe and beautiful feature, and to such a mother recognition and gratitude and appreciation well become each and every person who dwells here.

The present status of this institution is admirable. It is to be congratulated on its Board of Trust, most vigorously constituted; on its Alumni constituency from each Department, with their loyal allegiance; on the record of its scholarly work, so extensively recognized; on the spirit and purpose of its newly-elected President; and on the general feeling of safety and promise that fills this hour.

We dare to look forward to the future courageously. Some lessons, I trust, have been well learned. One is that *high-spirited teaching*, by instructors of reverential personal integrity, is an essential to the holding of students and to the developing of the departments. In comparatively small confines such as these are, the spirit as well as the work of every instructor is speedily recognized. Beyond being possessors of effective force and of intelligent ap-

prehension, the men and women of the Faculties must be splendidly good. Character and ability, each and both, are requisite to constructive and permanent effort.

Another lesson is *safe financing*. Many a man can manage the business affairs of his own particular industry, who cannot manage the business affairs of a complex educational institution. More wit is requisite in creating expenses and providing for them in an institution such as this than in a factory or in a commercial house because of the difficulty of figuring out and providing for the returns on outlay. But wise financing is an absolute requisite in this special community in order to secure and preserve the material cooperation of the community. Such safe financing is a possibility; besides, as a necessity it is wonderfully stirring, stimulating and healthy. Given six successive years of such financing and gifts will begin to pour in upon this Institution, and will continue to flow to it.

Then, there is a third requisite, namely, *wise administration*. The most remarkable feature in the life of this institution, in my judgment, has been the response of the Trustees to leadership. In all the years of its history, it has been its leadership that has determined its condition. The one person for whom special prayer should be offered today and always is the President of this institution. He is the man who must find the way, educationally and financially alike, must find the best way, the safe way, the advancing way, and must guide and lead his Trustees and his teachers into that way. There may be institutions where presidents are mere figure heads, mannikins, worked by Trustees and faculties, but this is not one of such. The welfare of this College lies preëminently on its President, and I rejoice to say that the new President knows and accepts this fact. As goes the President, so goes Lake Forest.

One additional feature is requisite — the *religious atmosphere*. It seems odd to call a religious atmosphere a business asset, but such it is here; it is dollars and cents, it is a balance-sheet to the credit. That atmosphere need not be exclusive. It may and should recognize every expression of religious life whatever its name, so long as it tends to produce Christlikeness. Nor need it be an incubus; it may and should be like the coming in of light, like wings to the

bird, like a song of inspiration and cheer. It should be as natural as walking and eating, as teaching and playing; but it should be present. Teachers should fill their lungs and hearts and minds with it. Pupils should test their lives and the hopes of the world by it. It is the most beautiful and helpful and joyous of all possible experiences, and every one should be given opportunity to delight himself in it. Perpetuate such an atmosphere, and you perpetuate Lake Forest. Perpetuate such an atmosphere and the centuries will find Lake Forest a fountain head of blessings for all God's earth.