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DISCOURSES

AT THE

INAUGURATION

OF THE

REV. JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D.D.

AS PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY AND CHURCH
GOVERNMENT IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
AT PRINCETON.

DELIVERED AT PRINCETON, NOVEMBER 20. 1849.

BEFORE THE DIRECTORS OF THE SEMINARY.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

NEW-YORK:
ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS, 285 BROADWAY.
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I.

THE SERMON;

BY THE REVEREND WILLIAM S. PLUMER, D. D., OF BALTIMORE.

II.

THE CHARGE;

BY THE REV. WILLIAM W. PHILLIPS, D. D., OF NEW-YORK.

III.

THE INAUGURAL DISCOURSE.

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The Efficiency of the Church.

A SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE INAUGURATION OF

JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D. D.,

AS PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY AND CHURCH
GOVERNMENT IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
AT PRINCETON,

NOVEMBER 20, 1849.

BY THE

REV. WM. S. PLUMER, D. D.,
PASTOR OF THE FRANKLIN-ST. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN BALTIMORE.

S E R M O N .

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

SOME may regard the present as a fit occasion for sketching, or reviewing the history of the institution, whose interests have called us together. Such forget that several persons, whose names are inseparably connected with its rise and growth, are still living, and that many important events, deeply affecting its character, are so recent and so well known, that an account of them would hardly awaken interest, or might wound the modesty of those who love to do good in secret. He who shall preach the sermon before the Board in the year 1912, when a century shall have rolled by, or even in the year 1862, when half a century shall have passed away after its founding, will probably find these difficulties very much removed. Such a discourse at the right time will be full of interest. The materials are constantly accumulating in the records of the institution, in the labours of its professors, and in the character of its

alumni. "The heraldry of colleges is their sons." Already some burning and shining lights have gone forth from this school, and been consumed by the intensity of their own heat. The number of such is constantly increasing. Besides, very marvellous have been God's dealings with this seminary. Every year is marked with new displays of kindness to it. It has been emphatically the child of Providence. Let us record God's goodness, that generations, which come after us, may praise the Lord.

The particular professorship, whose incumbent is this day to be inducted into office, would suggest a discourse respecting the department of instruction, which he is to fill. But without predicting the exercises of this evening, it may be presumed that the inaugural address will sufficiently treat of church history, the right use of it, and the best methods of studying it.

Moreover, every professorship in our seminary has vast *general* bearings on the state of the church at large. It sends forth a thousand influences through the pulpit and the press. By precept, by example, by hints and suggestions, no less than by set instructions, it shapes the destinies and moulds the characters of thousands. Any subject, therefore, relating to the church, the ministry, the spread of the Gospel, or the means of doing good to the souls of men, cannot be altogether inappropriate to the business, which has called us together. The text is found in

Acts xii. 21.

BUT THE WORD OF GOD GREW AND MULTIPLIED.

The subject plainly brought to view in these words is the Efficiency of the Church of Christ. The text relates to a period ten or eleven years after the ascension of our Saviour. It is but one of many passages in the same book, recording in few words the wonderful progress of truth. Elsewhere we read: "The same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls;" "And the Lord added daily to the church such as should be saved." Acts ii. 41, 47. "Many of them, which heard the word, believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand." Acts iv. 4. These are a few specimens of the inspired record concerning the Christian Church, the first few years of its existence. The chief instruments of this success were the apostles, the seventy, and their converts. Under the guidance and blessing of God these men laboured so efficiently that twenty-eight years after Christ's ascension the Jewish converts were spoken of as "many myriads." Acts xxi. 20. Our translators render the word, "thousands;" but the original is not as in Acts ii. 41, and iv. 4, *χιλιάδες*, but *μυριάδες*, myriads, which word, used definitely, means ten thousands, but is often taken for a great and countless throng. In Hebrews xii. 22, it is rendered "innumerable," "an innumerable company of angels." It often has this sense.

The same year Paul, writing to the Romans, applies to the preachers of the Gospel the words which the Psalmist used in regard to the works of creation, every where declaring God's glory: "Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Rom. x. 18.

So famous was one of the early churches even then, that Paul says: "Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." Rom. i. 8. Almost every historical chapter, relating to events subsequent to Christ's ascension, contains proofs of the triumphs of truth, of which the like can seldom be found in modern times. For centuries the growth of the church was amazing. About the end of the second or the beginning of the third century, Tertullian thus addresses the cruel persecutors of the Christians: "We could also make a terrible war upon you without arms or fighting at all, by being so passively revengeful, as only to leave you; for if so numerous a host of Christians should but retire from the empire into some remote region of the world, the loss of so many men of all ranks and conditions would leave a hideous gap and a shameful scar upon the government; and the very evacuation would be abundant revenge. You would stand aghast at your desolation, and be struck dumb at the general silence and horror of nature, as if the whole world had departed. You would be at a loss for men to govern."* In the beginning of the

* "Tertull. Apol. contra Gent." cap. 37.

seventh century, there were in many places thirty Christians to one pagan, so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

It would be unwise to compare our own with other branches of the church equally or more feeble, lukewarm, and inefficient. We are foolishly prone to make comparisons, which shall flatter our vanity and excuse our want of zeal. Pride, sloth, and carnal security, the worst vices of a church, will thus be nourished. If we compare ourselves with others, let us take the best models furnished us. The best of mere men have never been so holy, so humble, so useful, as the word of God demanded. Let us then look at our own and the primitive church in respect to efficiency. The facts concerning the latter have been briefly alluded to. They are generally known. The last ten years of our history perhaps afford as favourable a specimen of our efficiency as any other equal period.

In the year ending May 1839, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, embraced 17 synods, 96 presbyteries, 192 licentiates, 1243 ministers, 1823 churches, and 128,043 communicants. The same year it contributed to various specified religious purposes 123,436 dollars, less than one dollar for each communicant.

In the year ending May 1849, we had 23 synods, 122 presbyteries, 252 licentiates, 1860 ministers, 2512 churches, and 200,830 communicants. During the same time we gave, for the same objects as stated

above, 217,327 dollars, a little more than one dollar for each member. The miscellaneous collections for both years are omitted. The average annual increase for ten years has been 61 ministers, 68 churches, and 7271 communicants. Take from the sum of money given all that was actually derived from non-communicants, and it is certain that the average contributions of communicants have been below one dollar. During each or any one of the ten years, the additions to our churches, on examination, have not averaged five to each ordained minister, leaving out licentiates altogether. Many years it has been considerably less.

From this brief review, it clearly appears that we are not utterly forsaken. There are amongst us some tokens for good. God has not pronounced the curse of utter barrenness upon us. Every good man must feel that in proportion to the zeal of the church, the reward has been great, and calls for songs of praise.

But the things which remain, need to be greatly strengthened. Our church is far below the primitive church in efficiency. Allowing each apostle and each of the seventy to have been the means of converting five souls annually, at the end of one year their converts would have been only four hundred and ten; whereas in one day there "were added about three thousand souls." That, indeed, was a wonderful day, even for those times; but when were three thousand souls added in one day under all our ministers? There is

need of a great change amongst us. Our church is far from being what she ought to be; far from doing what she ought to do. No wise man will be offended by such a statement. You should never forget:

1. That God alone can make a church efficient. This honour he claims in all the Scriptures. If the disciples multiplied, it was because "the Lord added daily" to their number. He "gave the increase." A church is never efficient by her "own power or holiness," but by the grace and Spirit of God, who "divideth to every man severally as he will." God is a sovereign. His counsel shall stand. Nothing is too hard for him. Any thing is too hard for us, until we be "endued with power from on high." Our weapons are indeed mighty to the pulling down of strongholds, but then they are mighty "through God" alone.

2. Nor is it true that the church or the ministry is responsible for success. Such doctrine can never be proved by Scripture. It condemns several of the prophets and Christ himself. Those who maintain it, are so far fanatical; and, if really good men, must often fall under invincible discouragement.

3. Yet it is our duty to desire success, to seek it earnestly, never to rest satisfied without it, and deeply to lament the want of it. He who cares not whether men are saved or lost, is hard-hearted and cruel. He, upon whom horror hath not taken hold because of the wicked, is not like the saints of the Bible. Nor can

it be denied that ordinarily, in his own time, God grants success in some way and measure to pious, judicious and hearty efforts, so that want of success is good ground of heart-searching and humiliation. The Lord is a God of mercy. He loves Zion and the souls of men. We do surely concur with his known plans when we make known the Gospel to all nations for the obedience of faith.

The efficiency of a church may be considered as affected by the private members, by church officers, and by benevolent institutions. This view presents a wide range, but as hints only will be offered, the general subject will not be lost sight of.

I. What then is essential to the efficiency of the great body of private members ?

All will agree that any extended and permanent usefulness in the church has its seat in the piety of her members. When a people have long had the Gospel, and cannot present a body of truly pious persons as the fruit, the necessary inference is that they have never truly believed and obeyed God's word. If souls are not saved from sin, neither are they from wrath ; and if they are not saved from sin and wrath, they have received "the grace of God in vain." All the humanizing, civilizing, refining effects of the Gospel, however pleasant to behold, and desirable for this life, are no more its end, than chaff is the great end sought in sowing precious grain. Decency without devotion, gentility without godliness, forms without

spiritual life, are miserable things. To make a church efficient, piety is important, as a demonstration of the efficacy of the Gospel, as constituting a mass of evidence which infidelity cannot argue away, as a basis of appeal to the consciences of unbelievers, as one of the most practical modes of giving instruction, and as the very life of a church. It is the main spring of nearly every good enterprise, humane, social, intellectual or religious. A church may have all else, but without this she is dead. A body without a spirit is not more powerless, than a church without love to God and love to man. Every work, promising much good, demands faith in a Providence unseen, in promises not yet fulfilled, in a covenant whose administrator is invisible. It demands self-denial in something which flesh and blood worships. It requires hope against many appearances to the contrary. It requires a wisdom far above the most cunning craftiness ; a firmness which delays cannot shake ; a humility which measures not its own abasement ; a zeal which, like the fire on the altar of old, burns day and night ; a fear of God which casts out the fear of man ; and a love that never counts the cost. Yet these things are but other names for piety. Not a virtue in the catalogue but it strengthens all other virtues and gives power to the saints. Luther could never have faced the world as he did, but for his deep penitence before God. The martyrdom of Stephen chiefly differed from that of some heathen men in this, that he fervently prayed for

his murderers. The Christian comes forth from devout meditation and humble confession like a giant refreshed with wine. Even trials and temptations, causing terrific conflicts, give strength and courage. Luther truly said: "A Christian well tempted is worth a thousand." Piety then is essential to the efficiency of a church. Other things being equal, the more pious a community, the greater and more benign will be its power. It cannot be believed that a church, abounding with eminently pious members, would not be more mighty for good than ours has ever been.

As a consequence of eminent piety, the members of a church will and should abound in prayer, in all prayer, secret, social and public. The mercies of the day of Pentecost, the wonders of love at Shotts in Scotland, at Enfield in Connecticut, and at many other times and places, as we learn from credible sources, were all preceded by much and earnest prayer. Perhaps in nothing are we as a church more deficient, than in supplications with tears and strong cryings to God. After all our times of special observance, how little prayer, like that of patriarchs, prophets and apostles, is made unto God! Yet it is only such prayer that is likely to avail much. Such prayer was never more necessary or more efficacious than in our day.

A readiness to every good work is also necessary in the private members of a church. Some dream of doing good, but never do it. "Hypocrisy delights in

the most sublime speculations; for never intending to go beyond speculation, it costs nothing to have it magnificent." How does a dread of failure press down many, as if every exertion of duty was not attended with some hazard. What means this strange reluctance to encounter opposition and obloquy? Who ever did much for his generation unless he was willing to be esteemed by fools a candidate for contempt? As surely as Nehemiah will rebuild Jerusalem, so surely will Tobiah say: "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall." Too often the church takes counsel of her foes and her fears, rather than of her King and her God. Sloth in Christ's cause consumes many. How few lay out all their energies in promoting the glory of God! Is not covetousness eating the very vitals of piety in ten thousand cases? The voice of divine warning cries: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon:" "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." Yet how few are made the wiser thereby! If good men every where firmly believed that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and could catch the spirit of those good men, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, what a new face things would every where put on! Then "the Lord God would cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations;" then "a

little one should become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation :” then “ the Lord would comfort Zion, He would comfort all her waste places, and make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord ; joy and gladness should be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.”

II. What sort of officers are necessary to the efficiency of a church ? There are three classes of officers, deacons, elders and ministers. Concerning the first and second of these, time forbids much to be said. But they should be eminently devoted and humble men, mighty in the Scriptures, wise as serpents, lovers of good men, full of zeal, hating covetousness, pursuing peace, cultivating a high public spirit, always magnifying their office, ready to every good work, men of blameless lives, of great self-control, and fond of their proper work.

Concerning ministers, the occasion demands more extended remarks. They must, then, be truly and eminently pious. Unless *truly* pious, their every sermon will be a verdict against their own souls, every duty of their office a dull ceremony, and every prayer a prelude to the wailings of despair. An unconverted ministry is one of the sorest plagues ever sent on men. It can at best lead its followers, where it goes itself, to the prison of eternal justice. Surely “ boxes that contain sweet perfumes ought themselves to be sweet.” And unless ministers be *eminently* pious, how can they go before the people, and beckon them on to new and

high achievements? Will not ministerial duties be tasks, and ministerial fruit and comfort be small, where piety is languid, and faith weak? We must also have a learned ministry, and for many reasons: *first*, the very words of the Holy Ghost are in dead languages; *secondly*, they who are set for the defence of the Gospel will meet with subtle and learned adversaries, who will delight to overwhelm truth with reproach, unless their folly be made manifest; and *thirdly*, it takes no small amount of learning to make plain to most minds the great things of God. An ignorant ministry may do as much harm as an ungodly ministry. "Lay hands suddenly on no man." But lay hands *never* on

"Skulls that cannot teach, and will not learn."

"Give thyself to reading." "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all," is still the rule for a minister's studies. "The priest's lips shall keep knowledge." He who feeds not the people with knowledge has the instruments of a "foolish shepherd." Truth in its purity, in its simplicity, in its harmonies, is the staple of pulpit instruction. Nor can fluency, eloquence, zeal, piety, age, or activity, ever be admitted as substitutes for solid learning. If an ignorant ministry can save our country, it is already sufficiently numerous without our swelling its list. To relax the rigour of our rules

on this subject would be fatal to our prospects as a Church. One of the questions formerly asked of the elder concerning his pastor before the Scottish presbyteries was: "Does he minde his booke?" "The head of my College," says Knox, "procured me a curacy in a small country town. Thither I went, not without my collection of books, the use of which I would not have foregone for a mitre." Paul, when an old man, and a prisoner, sent across the sea more than five hundred miles for his books and parchments. Of one who had the leprosy in his head, the law said: "The priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; the plague is in his head." Lev. xiii. 44. An unconverted minister, who preaches truth, has often been compared to a sign-post, which directs others, but stirs not itself. But if he be ignorant also, he is like an unlettered post, which neither goes itself, nor tells others the road. "If it be said, God has no need of our learning, it is sufficient to reply, neither has he of our ignorance."* If any say it is God's plan to save men by the foolishness of preaching, the answer is, that he has never said he will save men by foolish preaching.

An efficient ministry must also be active and energetic. God seems to have no patience with men of a contrary character. Hear him: "His watchmen are all blind; they are ignorant; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to

* South.

slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough." Isa. lvi. 10, 11. This language of divine derision could hardly be more terrible. "Better is it to be awaked with rudeness, or even by a false alarm, than to be allowed to sleep on in the midst of danger. Who would muzzle the mouth of the wakeful animal, that guards the house against thieves, because the inhabitants are frequently disturbed by his nocturnal vociferations, or substitute in his place a 'dumb dog that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber ?'"*

Cotton Mather tells us, that on occasion of a great meeting in Amyclæ, a cry of fire was heard, and the assembly broken up in confusion. The apprehensions thus excited were found to be groundless, and the wise men determined that hereafter any one giving a false alarm should be subjected to pains and penalties. Thereafter when men saw an unusual smoke or blaze they did not dare to express their fears, lest it should be only the burning of a chimney. At last the fire gained such power, that when the cry was heard, it could not be extinguished : and so it came to pass, that the town of Amyclæ was destroyed by silence. Many a soul has been ruined by silence. We need wakeful and stirring men every where. That was a good saying of Augustine : "Episcopatus non est artificium transigendæ vitæ."

* McCrie's Life of Knox, p. 297.

The passage just quoted from Isaiah puts dumb dogs and greedy dogs together, and so we often see sloth and covetousness united. To be greedy of filthy lucre is a scriptural disqualification for the sacred office. It has long been said by the wits of England that every thing suffers by translation except a bishop. Is there no cause for saying the same in this land? It is not true that there are no temptations to this sin in the American churches. But a covetous ministry was never efficient.

An humble ministry is greatly needed. Those who lord it over God's heritage have no right in the house of God. He who minds high things, who condescends not to men of low estate, who will not profit by a just reproof, and who is too wise to learn, may please himself, but cannot please Christ. Blessed is he, who can say with a great professor of theology of another age and country, "Though pride prevails much in my heart, yet I think I would trample it so far under my feet, as that I would be glad to see all my students, and not only them, but all the faithful ministers of Jesus, bringing hundreds or thousands of souls with them into heaven, though I should have but five or six."* It is even more strikingly true of ministers than of others, that "when pride cometh, then cometh shame," and that "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Prov. xi. 2,

* John Brown, of Haddington.

and xvi. 18. "Scrutator majestatis absorbetur a gloria," was among the best of patristical maxims. Had it always been heeded, how many heresies and schisms would have been avoided !

We also need a ministry free from that love of admiration, which is a universal sin. "Let us not be desirous of vainglory." Gal. v. 26. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory ; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Phil. ii. 3.

Nor is freedom from ambition less necessary. How insidious and troublesome this sin is, may be judged from the fact that it bred contentions in the family of Christ, while he was yet on earth. Almost every page of history, even of ecclesiastical history, tells how dangerous it is.

An efficient ministry must reject the arts of luxury and effeminacy, and "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." "He that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things ;" a lover of good eating and drinking, a clerical fop, or dandy, are without honour in the ministry. Paul admits that Timothy had often infirmities, yet he says, "Till I come give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." 1 Tim. iv. 13. Every Moses has his Jethro, who says, "Thou wilt wear thyself away." And what if one should spend and be spent in the work, will there not be rest enough in the grave and in heaven ?

An efficient ministry must have a large measure of

magnanimity and public spirit; must sympathize with the most generous sentiments of the age; must not stand higgling about trifles; and must exhibit that nobility, which Divine grace and enlarged culture can surely give. A prodigious mind with no heart makes a monster or a devil.

The preaching, which is likely to prove efficient, must take for its matter the word of God. Woe to him who keeps back any part of the counsel of God through fear of unpopularity. The man of God must unfold doctrines, and enforce duties; he must present promises, and denounce threatenings; he must hold forth encouragements without concealing responsibilities; he must preach the law and the Gospel *distinctly*, and not a mixture of both; yet he must not forget that mercy triumphs over judgment, and that where sin abounds, grace does much more abound. As a physician of the soul, he must know and declare the extent of the malady, no less than the perfection of the remedy. As men are poor, let him open and display the riches of Divine grace; as they are perishing, let him tell of One, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. He who will do his whole duty in these respects, will find neither time nor heart to preach heathen morals, the poetry of religion, a vain philosophy, or any other dream. The stern command is, "Preach the preaching that I bid thee." "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faith-

fully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord."

All good preaching is solemn, not gloomy, nor filled with whining cant, but free from levity and vanity. He who speaks of God, eternity, sin, salvation, death, judgment, heaven and hell, in a frivolous manner, is a contemptible trifler. With a buffoon for a preacher, no place is as the house of God, or the gate of heaven. The Bible is not a jest-book, heaven is not a fiction, hell is not a dream, damnation is not a chimera; it is a solemn thing to die, it is also a solemn thing to live, and especially to preach or hear the Gospel. He who "woos a smile" when he should "win a soul" is a charlatan, not an ambassador for God.

The word of God must be preached plainly, not in allusions and doubtful terms, not in innuendos and learned phrases, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, not with the refinements of the schools, but so that the women and children may understand. Richard Baxter said, that if ministers had sinned in Latin, he would have written his Reformed Pastor in Latin; but as they had sinned in plain English, he must write in plain English also. Orton says: "I believe many ministers over-polish their sermons." He adds: "The words of God are those that must reach the heart and do the work." Brown of Haddington says: "So far as I have observed God's dealings with my soul, the

flights of preachers have entertained me ; but it was Scripture expressions that did penetrate my soul, and that in a manner peculiar to themselves." Thomas Watson says of the Baptist : " John did not preach so much to please as to profit. He chose rather to show men's sins than his own eloquence. That is the best looking-glass, not which is most gilded, but which shows the truest face."

The Gospel must be preached boldly. " When vice is bold, it is sad that virtue should be sneaking." A tame or timid proclamation of God's laws or mercies, is miserable drivelling. Whenever the Jews were filled with envy, and contradicted and blasphemed, " Paul and Barnabas waxed bold." Paul says : " Wherein any is bold, I am bold also." How much afraid he was of coming short in this respect, may be judged from the fact that he besought the Ephesians to pray that utterance might be given unto him, that he might open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel, and that he might speak boldly, as he ought to speak." Eph. vi. 19, 20.

Yet the word of God must be spoken affectionately. A harsh, dogmatical, censorious or objurgatory herald of truth is little like him who said : " Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly." A sinner saved by grace, should live under the power of the law of kindness. Almost as well not speak the truth at all, as not speak it in love. One says that it was fit that Bartimeus should tell all the blind of the power and

kindness of Jesus, but it would have been very unseemly for him to have taken a club and beaten all who would not come to him. "Love and say what you please," is an old maxim in preaching.

Boldness and love are elements of earnestness. The Gospel is to be preached with great earnestness, as if men really believed it. The truth is, heaven is open just before us, hell is yawning just beneath us, the avenger of blood is just behind us, the axe is laid at the root of the tree, God invites us, mercy opens all her storehouses, the Judge standeth before the door, the battle between the powers of light and of darkness rages, heaven, earth and hell are moved on the subject of man's eternal destiny; and shall we, can we faintly tell of the great dangers of men, or of the great salvation of God? What a shame that upon history, politics, patriotism, or a Greek verb, men should be earnest, and yet upon redemption there should be a lifeless languor!

The Gospel must be preached diligently and laboriously, in season and out of season, publicly and from house to house, by day and by night. In his short public life, Whitefield preached more than eighteen thousand times. His influence will be felt on earth until the millennium. Alas for most of us, "life is half spent before we know what it is!"

We must preach faithfully. Ministers are not sent to prophesy smooth things. The human heart and Satan will lull men's souls into security. Our

work is not to justify men but God, not to take sides with rebels, but with their sovereign. No discretion is left us in this matter. We may never yield to the wicked prejudices, errors and clamors of men. We cannot maintain God's cause by stealth. To stand faithful among the faithless, to make open and fearless war on wickedness, to vindicate the right and the true at all hazards, is the covenanted work of every messenger of God.

All preaching must be enforced by example. Though a man may do some, yet he is not likely to do much good by words, which sanctify not his own heart. "Like priest, like people," is still the common rule the world over. With good reason, therefore, did Paul say to Timothy: "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1 Tim. iv. 12.

III. A few observations respecting benevolent institutions shall close this discussion. These are of two kinds, such as invite the co-operation of all the friends of the Redeemer, and such as embrace the proper business of a denomination. The church that stands aloof from organizations which spread light and happiness among men, justly falls under suspicion. None but a hard heart can fail to find delight in any truly benevolent work. What a shame and curse would it be to us as a church, to grow cold to the Bible Society, and many other noble institutions in our land! The organizations which belong to us as a

denomination, are none the less benevolent because they are under ecclesiastical control. Of both classes of such institutions it may be said, that their origin, in most cases, is to be traced to some pressing necessity, that their beginnings were small, that their founders seldom anticipated even their present enlargement, that their labours are eminently the works of faith, and that to have refused to form them would have been faithlessness. "When bad men combine, the good must associate." "Union is strength." In nothing have we a more beautiful illustration of the great principle of political economy, the utility of a division of labour, than in the united efforts of good men to subdue the world to knowledge and to Christ. In the management of all these institutions, it is of great importance that they be kept out of the hands of cliques, that they be conducted on the broad bases on which they were founded, that their officers be men of accurate knowledge and enlarged views, that none of them settle down upon their lees, that a rousing vigour constantly animate them, and that rash changes be not permitted to impair public confidence in them. To all of them we may apply the sayings of a great statesman in regard to politics: "It is a poor service that you gain from responsibility." "It is of the utmost moment not to make mistakes in strong measures." "Sufficient appearances will never be wanting to those who have a mind to deceive themselves." "A modification is the constant resource of

weak undeciding minds :” “ A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper and confined views :” “ Refined policy has ever been the parent of confusion ; and ever will be so long as the world endures.” When an American inquired of a Secretary of the London Missionary Society concerning its policy, he received this noble reply : “ We have no policy. Our simple business is to send the Gospel to the heathen.” Could our Church obtain any more than her just influence over institutions belonging to every denomination of God’s people, it would be a calamity to them, and a shame to us. And could any section of the Church control institutions which belong to the whole denomination, the loss would be tremendous. Of all men we have least need of those who plot, and scheme, and lay traps for the confiding. Candour and fair dealing are the glory of a man, the glory of a church.

Towards all such institutions, therefore, we should be vigilant but not suspicious ; we should give a cordial support to those who bear the burden of conducting their operations ; we should heartily pray for them and rejoice in their success ; we should be frank in giving our advice and suggestions, and not be offended if our opinions prevail not ; and we should aid them with funds according to our ability and their necessities. Should our Church this year give five hundred thousand dollars to the Bible Society, who doubts that it would be the signal for the gushing forth of

streams of plenty to our own institutions? But niggardliness is the great sin of this day. Who does not grieve at the crippled state of every scheme of usefulness which the Church has approved? Is it not a shame to the denomination that our oldest seminary should have a library of but about seven thousand volumes, and many of them small and of little value? Ten thousand dollars' worth of books should be put there this year, and provision should be made for a yearly accession.

I close by remarking :

1. That our Church would be far more efficient, if she put a just estimate upon the blessing of being made the instrument of great good to men. We have orthodoxy, learning, peace, order, wealth, and the noblest theatre of action on this globe. But where is our efficiency? The wicked are wasting millions of money, are wearing out giant intellects, are sacrificing innumerable lives, and destroying many precious souls for that which is naught; but are we not satisfied with doing almost nothing for him who bought us with his blood? John Newton well says: "He is the best fisherman, not who has the best fishing-tackle, but who catches the most fish." Rules are good, but results are better. In a season of bodily illness, when his mind was full of missions, Andrew Fuller received a letter from a Scottish Baptist, saying much of order. In his sick room he sketched this parable: "In one of the new Italian republics, two independent companies

are formed for the defence of the country. Call the one A and the other B. In forming themselves, and learning their exercise, they profess to follow the mode of discipline used by the ancient Romans. Their officers, uniforms, and evolutions are after all somewhat different from each other. Hence disputes arise, and B refuses to march against the enemy with A, as being disorderly. A gives his reasons why he thinks himself orderly; but they are far from satisfying B, who not only treats him as deviating from rule, but as almost knowing himself to do so, and wilfully persisting in it. A, tired of jarring, marches against the enemy by himself. B sits at home busily studying order and discipline. 'If your form and rules,' says A, 'are so preferable to ours, why do you not make use of them? Discipline is a means, not an end. Be not always boasting of your order, and reproaching others for the want of it; let us see the use of it.'" The interpretation of the parable is easy. It is time to march against the enemy. It is high time to be on the battle-field. Every man should be at his post clad in the panoply of God. It was a terrible rebuke of a presbyter to his diocesan: "Bishop, bishop, charity is above rubrics." It is better to be like Jonathan and his armour-bearer in the garrison of the Philistines, than, like Saul, to be asleep within the trench, his spear stuck in the ground by his bolster, and three thousand men sleeping around him. Let us be up and doing. Let us earnestly court

the best gifts, the hardest labours, and the most perilous undertakings, provided only we have the approval of God. He, who is satisfied with little usefulness, will have less. He, who would be a blessing to thousands, will probably reach ten thousands.

2. In the business of this day, it is a happy circumstance that we are not met to consummate an arrangement, which the Church does not approve. In several respects the present might be a time of congratulation. But the awfully solemn responsibilities of a professor, the trying nature of his duties, the perils of the times in which we live, the loud call for hosts of able men, and the low state of piety in most places, may well silence congratulations, and bring us to our knees. The services of this day have an intimate connection with the honour of religion, the glory of Christ, and the decisions of the last day. It was no small part of the work of Christ on earth to prepare twelve men to preach the Gospel. What meekness, what fidelity, what zeal, what perseverance he displayed! No man can avoid eternal shame in so difficult a work, but by taking hold of God's strength, and ceasing from man. If any one has a right to ask God's people never to forget him in their prayers, it is a professor in such an institution. "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven." But divine mercy has made, and divine faithfulness will fulfil the promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This is enough.

If one, who is less than the least of all God's mercies, might say a few words to his brother, who is this day to be inaugurated, they would be such as these: God has given you a high place, see that you adorn it. Remember that life is short, and improve each day. Never forget that your example, your words, your spirit, will mould the characters of others. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Be not easily discouraged. Hope on, hope ever. Remember that Christ and his people have intrusted to you the most precious jewels. Never forget that your students have sorrows demanding your tenderest sympathies. Be an elder brother among them. Though they are young and have many crude opinions, yet Milton and Homer once learned their alphabet, and the apostles were once illiterate and ignorant men. One has well said: "Of many students, not more than one can be hoped to advance far towards perfection."* This is as true of theological as of other students; yet if one very able man can be raised up for each synod in our connection, what a blessing will follow! And now cannot all of us mingle benediction and supplication over this brother, and say: "THE LORD BLESS THEE AND KEEP THEE: THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON THEE, AND BE GRACIOUS UNTO THEE: THE LORD LIFT UP HIS COUNTENANCE UPON THEE AND GIVE THEE PEACE: THE LORD HEAR THEE

* Dr. Johnson.

IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE: THE NAME OF THE GOD OF JACOB DEFEND THEE, SEND THEE HELP FROM THE SANCTUARY, AND STRENGTHEN THEE OUT OF ZION; REMEMBER ALL THY OFFERINGS, FULFIL ALL THY COUNSEL, AND GRANT ALL THY PETITIONS."