

DISCOURSES

AT

THE INAUGURATION

OF THE

REV. ALEXANDER T. M'GILL, D.D.,

AS

PROFESSOR OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY, CHURCH GOVERNMENT,  
AND THE COMPOSITION AND DELIVERY OF SERMONS.

IN THE

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT PRINCETON, N.J.

DELIVERED AT PRINCETON, SEPTEMBER 12, 1854, BEFORE  
THE DIRECTORS OF THE SEMINARY.

I.

THE MINISTRY WE NEED.

BY THE REV. NICHOLAS MURRAY, D.D., OF ELIZABETHTOWN, N. J.

II.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER T. M'GILL, D.D.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

PHILADELPHIA:

C. SHERMAN, PRINTER.

1854.

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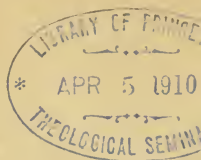
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Discourses at the  
inauguration of the Rev.

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THE MINISTRY WE NEED:

A DISCOURSE

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## DISCOURSE.

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REVEREND DIRECTORS OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,  
AND RESPECTED FRIENDS OF THIS VENERABLE INSTI-  
TUTION :

WE are here assembled for the performance of a most solemn and important duty. To the chair which Dr. Alexander filled with such distinguished ability for about forty years, and which was left vacant by his universally lamented death, the last General Assembly elected the Reverend Alexander T. M'Gill, D.D., and he having signified his acceptance of the appointment, we are here assembled for his inauguration. And by my brethren, who are the agents of the Assembly in the direction of this Institution, it is made my duty to deliver the Charge to the newly-elected Professor on the present occasion.

It is expected that the hour devoted to this service should be occupied with those reflections suited to the occasion ; to the character we sustain ; and to the

relations of our Theological Seminary to the world, which is to be restored to its allegiance to God, mainly, through the labours of the ministry. And the topics to which we now invite your attention are THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ABLE MINISTER OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, and THE WORLD'S GREAT NEED OF SUCH MINISTERS.

The word "minister" means a servant; and "ministry" means service. The word usually translated minister, *Διάκονος*, is the name given in the ancient church to those who collected alms for the poor, and distributed them; but, when connected with the words *Χριστου, Θεου, Ευαγγελιου*, and the like, it means religious instructors, or preachers of the gospel. Yet the leading character of a minister is that of a servant, and the ministry is a service of a special kind. Every Christian is a servant of Christ, but every Christian is not a minister of the gospel. Every deacon is a servant, as the word implies; but his service respects temporal things, and the office was instituted that the ministry of the word might fully devote itself to the high duty of spiritual instruction.

As to the ministry, there are obviously two extremes in the Church; one among ministers, the other among the people. That among ministers, is an abuse of their office, so as to make it a stepping-stone to power, and to the exercise of undue dominion over their brethren. That among the people, arises from the

idea that, because ministers are servants, therefore they are their masters. The one extreme has given rise to hierarchies, which, in their most modified forms, have been a calamity to the Church and the world;—and the other has given rise to insubordination, springing from the assumption that ministers, as such, were accountable to the people, and not to Jesus Christ. These extremes exist and are producing one another; as in the state, anarchy produces despotism, and despotism anarchy. Whilst the people owe obedience to scriptural officers, exercising due authority in the Lord, ministers should ever regard the precept of their Master, “He that will be great, let him be the servant of all,” and the example of their Master, who said, “I have been among you as one that serveth.” They should aim to be, in every respect, “able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.” But what are the characteristics of an able minister of the New Testament? We would place among these:—

1. Decided piety.—Piety is a firm and right apprehension of the being, perfections, and providence of God, with suitable affections to him, resemblance to his moral perfections, and a constant obedience to his will. To be an able minister and faithful, this must be decidedly possessed. Otherwise, the great spring of ministerial life is wanting, or defective. No gifts

however splendid or attractive can compensate for the lack of piety. It requires but a small degree of this for a young man to go through our required course of training for the ministry, and to sustain a respectable character. Its trial commences with the active duties of the ministry. There is difficulty in finding a field of labour, and division attending his settlement, his salary is inadequate, his labours are exhausting, his people are lukewarm, he is opposed in his labours, the world murmurs, his preaching is not successful, his talents are depreciated, and he is apparently neglected by his brethren. Now comes the trial of faith, piety, and principles, which soon makes apparent the real state of a minister's heart. And unless his heart is deeply imbued with the Spirit of Christ, he fails to accomplish many of the great ends for which the ministry was instituted.

The lack of that Spirit also manifests itself in efforts to become what the world calls a popular preacher. One is truly popular by the force of his talents and the fervour of his piety; another, because he makes it his main object. Between these there is a great difference. One is simple and solemn; the other, magniloquent and self-complacent. The one impresses by his thoughts; the other, by his language. The one collects his flowers from Calvary; the other, from Parnassus. The one wins converts to Christ; the other, makes admirers of himself. The one mois-



tens the eye with a tear; the other, curls the lip with a smile of admiration. The one preaches strongly and boldly the doctrines of the cross; the other, withholds them, lest they should offend, and blunts his arrows lest they should penetrate;—emulous of the reputation of a popular preacher. These nice and pretty preachers are too rapidly multiplying; and they will continue to increase or diminish in the proportion of the degree of serious piety in the ministry. Such are not ambassadors for Christ; they are but Sabbath-day performers before fashionable audiences, that seek amusement alternately at the church, the opera, and the theatre!

How sadly the Jewish Church suffered from false prophets and priests! How soon the early Church was rent and torn by ungodly ministers! For how many ages, not excepting our own, the boasted successors of the Apostles were the vilest of men! How even, at the present day, in some countries nominally Protestant, the lowest infidelity is decked in the robes of the ministry; and how, in communions regarded as evangelical, an unsanctified clergy are prostituting the order and ordinances of God's house, to the supplanting of a spiritual by a formal and ritual religion! And, when we examine the history of the Church, we find that true piety was the great element of the success of those who have most blest it by their ministry. It was the piety of Paul that sustained

him amid his manifold trials, and persecutions, and untiring labours. We owe the glorious Reformation far more to the piety, than to the policy or talents of the reformers. What but the piety of our Presbyterian fathers sustained and animated them amid the glens, and the rocks, and the mountains of Scotland, when the bloody trooper was sent out for their murder by those who worshipped in cathedrals. And if we look into the character of such men as Baxter, Doddridge, Edwards, Dickinson, Davies, Tennent, or to come down to some of our own Alumni, whose names are as fragrant ointment among us, we find that decided, warm-hearted piety was the great element of their success.

2. To be an able minister requires due qualification for the work. In the magnitude of its objects the preaching of the gospel far surpasses every other employment in which man can engage. There is scarcely any intellectual culture, civil liberty, or social order, but through its influence. And it is alike God's appointed instrument for the salvation of men, and for the moral illumination of our world. To the scheme of redemption all objects and events in our world are subordinate and subservient. This is the point where all the attributes of God converge into a blaze of glory. And the means appointed to make known the redemption which is in Christ Jesus to our world, is the preaching of the gospel. If angels, without being

satisfied, are prying into its wonders; if Paul, the eloquent and aged, could say, "Who is sufficient for these things,"—then a pious, uninspired man, should seek the highest possible qualifications for the ministry.

The distinguishing mark of a faithful minister is this, "he shall feed his people with knowledge and understanding." Unless he possesses these, how can he mete them out to his people? What, but sound, can an empty vessel send forth? Regarding an uneducated ministry as unfit to instruct the people, as unfitted to obtain for the gospel the attention and the respect of the thoughtful, and as very liable to become the dupes of error, and the promoters of fanaticism and folly, our Church, from its origin, has insisted on an educated ministry. Hence, it has ever been the patron of the school, the academy, the college, and of schools for the instruction of her rising prophets. Hence, the erection of this Seminary, and of its sister institutions, that the future pastors of the churches may have the benefit of a thorough training for their high duties. Mere piety will exert an influence; but it requires an alliance with talent and education to arrest the attention of the vicious, and to reform public morals. It required all the talent and education of Paul, to cross the Rubicon of Jewish prejudice; to confute the Pharisee and Sadducee in the Synagogue; the sophist in the school of Tyrannus, and the subtle heathen in all the courts of the Gen-

tiles. It required all the talent and education of Luther and Melancthon to breast the storm of papal wrath that fell upon them; and, like the towering cliff, to bear unmoved and uninjured, the tempest, the thunder, and the lightning, that played around them. And wherever the gospel has made signal and permanent conquests, in changing the face of society, in moulding civil and moral institutions, in correcting the opinions and reforming the lives of the intelligent and influential, it has been always preached by men of high mental endowment, and of great and varied acquisition.

The living historian of the Reformation tells us, that "the Reformers always connected deep study with the laborious ministry; the ministry was the end, study was but the means." And this we might learn from their works. And here we have revealed one of the great elements of their success. The great defect of the ministry of our day is a neglect of study; and this is induced by causes which we cannot now stop to state. They are known of all men. A young man of fine promise concludes his course of study and becomes a pastor, exciting high hopes of eminence and usefulness. Amid the calls and rewards of active life, books and studies are neglected. Applauded by those who praise without stint, because without sense, he soon learns to lean upon his unassisted genius and natural sagacity. He soon discovers a way to repu-

tation other and shorter than the dull and beaten one of industry. He soon cuts the knot that he cannot untie, and jumps the difficulty that he cannot remove, and depends less upon patience of investigation than upon his intuition to comprehend causes, and subjects, and methods of argumentation. And soon his mind, naturally fertile and productive, becomes a barren. Now his sermons are alike, whatever may be the text. All have something old, but nothing new. His people complain; but habits are now formed which cannot be mended. His people cry for meat, and he gives them milk. Unprofited by his labours, they seek a dismissal; and he must retire from a field where diligent habits of study would make him an honoured and useful man until the almond blossoms flourished upon his head. He began a man; he ends a boy. As a rule, the minister should make everything give way to a due and full preparation for the pulpit. The pulpit is the place from which to instruct the people. There, pre-eminently, he is to prove himself an able minister of the New Testament. He should ever feel that the image of God is not to be re-in-stamped upon our world by those who are talkers, and exhorters, and storytellers, instead of preachers and teachers; and whose best prepared nutriment is but milk for babes.

3. To be an able minister of the New Testament requires the full presentation of its great doctrines. It is

by the preaching of the gospel, that God has ordained to save men. Everything else, so far as saving men is concerned, is but giving scorpions for eggs, and serpents for fish. The grand object of the Saviour during his incarnation, was to prove that he was the promised Messiah, by the miracles which he wrought, and by showing that in himself all the lines of history and prophecy met and blended. His life he closed upon the cross agreeably to the Scriptures; being made a sin offering for his people, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. And with the cup of sorrow in his hand, and with the agonies of Gethsemane and Calvary in full view, he uttered this memorable sentiment, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." This refers, primarily, to his crucifixion, but in a secondary and important sense to the preaching of the doctrines of the cross. And, hence, after the resurrection had completed the circle of testimony to his Messiahship, and the Spirit had been granted, the work of the Apostles was to preach a crucified Christ as God's great remedy for the moral diseases of man. This was the theme of Peter amid the gatherings at the feast of Pentecost—and of Paul amid all the cities of the Gentiles. Their grand theme was "repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." And, hence, their ministry was mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. And such is the course which must be pursued by all their

successors in office who desire to approve themselves as able ministers of the New Testament.

When we look into the ages of conflict between truth and error, we find that those have been always the victors who presented the doctrines of the cross most simply and purely. And in every branch of the Church that ministry has been most successful which has been thus characterized. The preaching of Christ and him crucified, produced the Reformation, and has sustained it. If any doubt this, let them read D'Aubigné, and Luther on the Galatians, and the Life of John Knox, and Howe's Living Temple, and his nine sermons on Friendship with God, and Flavel's forty-two sermons on the character of Christ, and his thirty-four on the method of Grace, and Owen on the Spirit, and on the Person and Glory of Christ. A Christ crucified for the sins of sinners, as their substitute, and in their law place, is the great central truth of our religion. And to the directing of the eyes of all men to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, an able minister of the New Testament will make everything subservient. The Alumni of this Seminary will all testify that thus we have been emphatically taught by the venerated Professor in whose vacated chair we place to-day a successor. And our heartfelt supplication will ascend to the God of all grace, that in this, as in all other respects, the mantle of Elijah may fall upon Elisha.



And is there not need for warning upon this subject, when so many are turning away from the simplicity of Christ, spoiling the gospel, "through philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of this world?" Instead of preaching Christ, and simply expounding His word, how many are seeking, above all things, to make adherents to their own peculiarities! One has his theory of moral suasion,—another, of inspiration,—another, as to original sin,—another, as to regeneration,—the atonement; another, as to interpretation,—another, as to the efficacy of sacraments and ceremonies,—another, of moral and social reform. In many portions of the Church there is a raging controversy as to the mint, anise, and cummin, amid which the lifting up of the Son of Man is sadly neglected. It is the preaching of the cross that gives power to the ministry; and when that is neglected for anything else, we cut off the lock of our strength. The truth as it is in Jesus is the only successful weapon of the ministry; and the history of the Church is pregnant with the most important lessons upon this subject. As the truth died out from the ancient Church, fancy, and credulity, and corruption had a freer play; the tokens of departing glory and of a coming night fearfully multiplied. Shade thickened after shade. Each succeeding age came wrapped in a deeper gloom, until the sun which rose over Judea set at Rome,—until the flood of light which it poured



upon the world had to retreat before that long, long night, called the "Dark Ages," which seemed to roll on as if it were never to end!

And what, in some quarters, has been made the reproach of our beloved Institution, is its true glory; and is the great cause of the rejoicing of all its friends, and of its influence in all sections of our country, and in all branches of the Church, that amid the currents and counter currents of erroneous doctrine; amid the conflicts of philosophy falsely so called; amid the storms which have blown over the Church, and which have made some of its men of might to bow; amid the reproaches of lukewarmness and time-serving by its friends, and of bigoted attachment to antiquated formularies, and of blind submission to authority by its enemies; it has continued steadfast and immovable in the faith once delivered to the saints. So may it ever continue. And the prayer of all of us will ascend to the God of all grace that the beloved brother placed among its professors by the election of the Church, may strengthen every cord that tends to bind it, in immovable anchorage under the shelter of the Rock of Ages.

4. An able minister must be impressive. If true, as the notable reviewer of Milton affirms, that "as civilization advances poetry necessarily declines," it is equally true, and for the same reasons, that in the proportion people are enlightened, is it difficult to im-

press them! In the age of Moses the Jews were more easily impressed than in that of Isaiah; and as the unsanctified mind becomes accustomed to the light of science and religion, does it lose its susceptibility of impression from the public exhibitions of divine truth! And hence the inelegant but descriptive phrase, "a gospel-hardened sinner," to describe a person who, under the influence of light, has lost, measurably, that susceptibility. We state the principle, not as an argument for the blessedness of ignorance, but for an impressive ministry. It is by the preaching of the gospel that men are to be saved instrumentally; and no effort should be left untried to raise up a ministry prepared to preach, so as to impress men with a sense of its eternal importance. And especially should this be the case in our country, where, more than in any other, the public mind is swayed by popular addresses; where the current to worldliness is so proverbially strong, and where, perhaps, more than in any other, the difficulty may be greater of arresting attention, and turning away the heart from the pursuit of vanity. Ours, beyond all others, is the country for a Whitefield, a Summerfield, a Larned, a John Breckinridge; men peculiarly adapted to sway the masses, and whose dispensation was public impression. Such men may leave no monuments to their learning; but they give out impulses which may be absorbed by other minds,

and plans of action, and thus pass away from view, but never die.

May it not be that to this point too little attention is directed in our seminaries; and by our young brethren who resort to them for instruction? Their chairs of theology, and of history, and of criticism, are filled with the best, and best furnished minds in the Church; but in many of them there is no adequate provision made for instruction in the art of preaching. In the field which is the world, the power of impression is the main thing; is it not regarded as too secondary in our theological schools? Is it not even sometimes the subject of the sneer of the dull scholastic? Notwithstanding the positive and accumulated evidence upon the subject, there is a way of talking about popular talent as if it were necessarily disconnected with profound thought; and also a way of talking about mere scholarship, and the power of accumulation, as if they could accomplish everything. And the whole machinery of our preparation for the ministry, is calculated thus to impress our candidates for the pulpit. Hence, many of our young ministers can read their Hebrew Bibles fluently, who cannot in public read a chapter of the English version, without stumbling and mispronouncing from the beginning to the end. Many can read Homer and Horace, with accuracy and fluency, who cannot read a hymn of Watts or Newton, with the emphasis or elegance of a

young lady from some of our best boarding schools. Many can write a sermon according to rule, and of power both as to truth and argument; but when they come to preach it, so dull and slovenly is their manner, and so drawling and holy is their tone, that to their hearers it has neither sense, point, truth, or force. As spiritual fishermen they cast the net so clumsily as to drive off, instead of drawing up the fishes. And so little skill in adapting themselves to circumstances have many of our best educated licentiates, that they wander through our vacancies for years, without meeting with a congregation willing to extend a call to their educated dulness. We are far from believing that too much is done to secure the full education of our ministry; we would rather increase than diminish the time for preparation, and the course of study; but the conviction is deep and heartfelt, that far too little is done to give it power and impressiveness in public. We may differ as to the cause, but the fact is obvious, that our ministry, to a lamentable degree fails to impress the masses.

The necessary ingredients to impressiveness in the preacher are, good writing, good speaking, and a manner at once solemn and earnest. When these are accompanied with a character for consistent piety, they cannot fail to attract and to impress. And hence they should be sedulously cultivated in order to usefulness. To be sure, education cannot supply everything where

nature has been parsimonious of her gifts. But it can do much; and what we plead for, is, that far more attention should be given to that side of the education of our ministry which fits it for impressively preaching the gospel, so as to reach the great masses that are out in ways of wandering from God.

When we add to these characteristics of an able minister of the New Testament, that of entire consecration to the work of the ministry, our picture is complete. The injunction of our Lord is, "pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers unto his harvest." The Lord's harvest requires labourers, not idlers. Those who enter the field in answer to this prayer, enter it, not to seek the lordship of it, nor yet to fatten on the labours of others, but to work in it during the whole day of their lives, whether it be long or short.

It is not sufficient for a true minister to feel a general desire to be useful; he must be possessed by a desire for the salvation of men, which will give him no rest but as he seeks to gratify it. Souls are his hire; and many waters cannot quench the love which inflames his heart to obtain them. It is this one great, absorbing feeling, which takes him to his study, to his closet, to the chamber of sickness, to the pulpit. It inspires every sermon he writes, gives energy to every address he makes, and fervency to every prayer he utters, and marks all his intercourse with all men.

He is seeking a place among those who, by turning many to righteousness, will shine as the stars forever, and forever. A church with such a ministry is a growing and glorious church.

But will any say, this is a fancy sketch, unattainable by ordinary men? But is not Christ the pattern for our imitation? And his meat and drink was, to do the will of his Father. But will any say he was divine? Then look at Paul; from the hour the scales fell from his eyes, until the hour he went up to receive his crown from his exalted Saviour, he lived but for one object: to save men by the preaching of the truth. But will any say, he was inspired? Then look at Whitefield and Wesley. "When you see them dividing their lives between the pulpit and the closet; sacrificing every comfort, crossing the ocean many times, moving populous cities, often rising from the bed of sickness to preach to multitudes, and under circumstances which rendered it not improbable that they might exchange the pulpit for the tomb;" when you look at the lives and labour of these, and such men as Heywood, and Baxter, and Chalmers, and others among the dead and the living, you will see that we have drawn no fancy sketch. When it was announced to the dying Backus, whose ministry was greatly protracted and useful, that he could not survive an hour, "then," said he, "place me on my knees, that I may offer up another prayer for the Church of God before

I die." He was placed upon his knees; and upon his knees, praying for the Church of God, he died.

Such being what we consider the characteristics of an able minister of the New Testament, we proceed briefly to state:—

#### THE WORLD'S GREAT NEED OF SUCH MINISTERS.

Our country is incomparably the most inviting field for Christian exertion which the world contains. Its territory is vast, its soil productive, its wealth beyond computation,—its mind, intelligent and active; its institutions free. We possess the broadest liberty, and the most perfect security. And as free as is the air to the electric fluid, so free is our country to the exchange of thought, and open to manly discussion on all kinds of subjects.

It is also the point towards which almost all the streams of emigration rising in the old world are flowing. The strangers weekly landed on our shores, under the genial influence of our institutions, are soon moulded into fellow-citizens. And a minister must possess the gift of tongues who can in their own language preach to the few hundred inhabitants of any of our rising villages on the banks of the Ohio, or on the shores of our lakes. As a nation, our physical power is vigorous, and it is all driven as by steam. The most enterprising people of Europe in comparison



with our own, are but as the sluggish Rhine as it flows through Holland, to our Niagara. Indeed we possess all the great elements of power, with room to grow, and nurture to sustain. But these elements are not yet fully combined; and a few generations are to determine whether we will be governed by infidelity and Popery, or by morality and religion. Unless the gospel gains the ascendancy in this nation, the astonishment excited by our unexampled progress to greatness, will give way to the greater astonishment of our sudden fall. And whether or not the gospel shall obtain the ascendancy depends, under God, upon the fact whether or not it is supplied with an able ministry. And what but a ministry earnest as was that of Paul and Whitefield, truthful as was that of Davies and Brainard, self-sacrificing as was that of our Scottish and Irish ancestry, can scatter the salt from the Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the east across the Great River, through Texas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, and California, in such quantities as to preserve their rapidly growing communities from moral putrefaction? Let but a tittle of the enterprise which reigns in the world around us, glow in the bosom of the ministry of our land, and soon the Rocky Mountains will cry to the Alleghanies, and the Sacramento to the Hudson, and the Columbia to the Ohio: "O, magnify the Lord with me, let us exalt his name together."

Nor when we look at the state of the world, is the



kingdom of heaven as near as many would imagine. This age does not answer the description of that which is to precede the setting up of the kingdom of our Lord. Before Jesus Christ becomes the king of nations, there will be a conflict which will make the earth to tremble. The signs of the times are already portentous in the old world. Popery is yet what it was in the days of its Gregories, Clements, and Johns. The lion is caged, but his natural ferocity and tusks remain. And Mahometanism is yet what it was in the days of its Alis and Omars. It is civilly weak; it has lost its bold spirit of enterprise and imposture; but its heart is the same. Nor has heathenism lost any of its stupid and sullen resistance to the truth. "The prince of the powers of the air," yet rules the heathen world with a strong hand. Nor will these powers always look quietly on, and without resistance, see their territories won over to the Prince of Peace. There is yet a battle to be fought, when, as seen in vision by the prophet, the blood may come up to the horse's bridles. True, the result is not doubtful. Victory will eventually perch upon the banner under which are ranged the people and saints of the Most High. But an able ministry is needed to prepare the Church for the conflict; to lead on the hosts of the elect, and to guide them in the coming struggle.

And the present state of the visible Church loudly calls for such a ministry. A wasting and multiform

fanaticism, claiming almost prophetic revelations, is deluding multitudes. A religion of forms, and sacraments, and priestly interferences, is deluding multitudes more. Prelacy, for reasons baseless as the fabric of a vision, is urging its exclusive claims to be the true church; and in some quarters, with a narrowness and bigotry better suited to the dotage of the "Latin sister." Popery, too, is lifting up its wounded head, and is stretching its aged limbs, and is urging its gray hairs and furrowed brow, its decrepitude, its wounds, and its weakness, to make unto itself friends. And amid our evangelical churches, old heresies are rising under new names, and old errors are returning in a new dress, distracting the councils of the wise and the good, and arraying brethren against one another, who should stand shoulder to shoulder in the conflict with the common enemy. In any of our villages of one thousand inhabitants we meet with the rationalism of Germany, the infidelity of France, the apostacy of Oxford, and the stupid Popery of Ireland. And everywhere is human nature in ruins, and the carnal heart with its errors and prejudices. To silence these adversaries; to repel their assaults upon the truth, and to save men from their snares, we need minds trained, sanctified, and active, that can pour forth light like the sun. A feeble opposition to these is worse than none, as they measure their strength, not by the volume of their own muscle, but by the dexterity

with which they cause a weak opponent, like a silk worm, to wind himself up in the web of his own weaving.

In our age and country, mind is unshackled,—and with the chains of superstition it has thrown aside reverence for orders, office, station. We make the statement only to record an historical fact. Nothing is now received without investigation, but error and nonsense. The attachments of clans, parties, sects, descending from one generation to another, are here unknown. The fact that a man is a minister obtains no notes for his opinions; and in many portions of the land, secures many against them. The most catholic principles are here discussed, as if but just stated; and creeds and confessions, sealed by the blood of martyrs, and which have received the sanction of ages, are searched and sifted as if but just published. Amid such an array of opposition, the advocacy of truth requires the ablest minds that God has created. Efficacy as to the success of the truth is from God, but the instrumentality is with man; and the more able our ministry, the surer the hopes of its speedy triumphs. As we cannot expect every lawyer to be a Blackstone, nor every judge to be a Marshall, nor every physician to be a Rush, nor every soldier to be a Washington, nor every philosopher to be a Newton, so neither can we expect every minister to be a Paul, a Chalmers, a Miller, or an Alexander. There are various departments and fields of labour in the Church to occupy every

variety of talent in the ministry ; and every man sustaining that relation to the world should occupy their every talent to the full ; and, like the stars in heaven, should fill up the orbit in which they move with their light. A minister in our age and country, where so much is to be done, and yet finding nothing to do ! Out upon such ministers ! Had they lived in the days of Noah, they would have found themselves in lack of water when the waves of the deluge were rising around them.

Such, my brother, is the ministry needed in our day by the Church and the world. It was for the education of such a ministry that our fathers founded the Theological Seminary located in this town ; and that through the years of its history, it has been fostered and cherished by the General Assembly. And it is to aid to the utmost of your ability, in the education of such a ministry, that you have been called by the Church from a sister Seminary to be a professor in this Institution. No higher mark of their confidence could the Directors of this Seminary give you than their unanimous nomination of you to the Assembly which has transferred you here ; and we feel assured that that confidence will be justified, by a life consecrated to the high interests which we cheerfully commit to your trust.

The department, my brother, over which you are especially to preside embraces subjects and topics, the most important in their bearings upon all the in-

terests of the Church. To you is committed instruction in the sacraments of the Church, as to their authority, history, administration, and meaning. I need not say to you, who have spent so many of your years in laborious study, and successful instruction, that it is through the door of the sacraments the most fearful and desolating errors have entered the Church of God. There is scarcely a shade of error from their denial as positive institutions, up to the giving to them the power which the Holy Ghost alone exercises, which has not existed in reference to them, and which do not now exist. It will be for you to clear these rites from the clouds and mists with which the fanaticism of a Fox, and the superstition of Papists and Puseyites have cast around them, and to hold them up before our rising ministry in their true scriptural simplicity and meaning.

To you is also committed the work of instruction in Church government; and at a time when Popery, Prelacy, and Independency are urging their claims with quenchless zeal, and great power. Whilst as a people we have ever insisted less upon the external organization of the Church, than upon its system of doctrines, and its inner life, yet our entire history proves that we have not been indifferent to it. Where has purity of doctrine long survived the introduction of grades into the ministry? And where now is the truth, the life, the holy zeal of the Church to be found, save where the purity of the ministry, and the radical prin-

ciples of Presbyterianism, are maintained? Our fathers were not contending for airy speculations, or for unmeaning peculiarities, when they refused to bow to a bishop's sceptre—when they surrendered life rather than the principles of Presbytery—when they preferred to be hunted like wild beasts through the glens and over the mountains of Scotland, by troopers set on by those who worshipped in cathedrals, rather than surrender their simple faith as to the polity of the Church. They have transmitted to us a church organized upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, with its three orders of Ministers, Elders, and Deacons; and so organized as to secure promptness and efficiency without tyranny,—the free action of the people, without confusion or anarchy;—and the oversight and government of each member without interfering with the freedom of any. And the maintainance of these principles, endeared to us because taught us in the New Testament, and purchased by the blood and treasures of our fathers, we regard as essential to the maintainance of the civil rights of man and the sacred liberties of the Church. Your own early training, your vows and your services as a minister, and your antecedents as a professor, lead us with entire confidence to commit this department of instruction to your care. We want not our young brethren to be bigots; but we charge you to make them thorough Presbyterians.

To you also is committed the work of preparing our

young brethren here, for the duties of the pastor, and of the preacher of the gospel. The brethren associated with you teach them theology, and the history of the Church, and the literature of the Bible; and then pass them over to you, to be prepared by you for actual service in the field. If others furnish the weapons of warfare, it will be for you to teach their use. Here is the point of greatest deficiency in the present mode of educating our ministry. In everything pertaining to scholastic education, we have made a great advance beyond the systems of our fathers, nor do we admit that our existing ministry, as some would assert, is inferior in pastoral or pulpit ability to any generation of their predecessors; but we have not made advance in the practical, proportional to that made in the scholastic, departments of education. And unless we mistake, it is the strong desire of the Directors of this Seminary, and of the Church, that the department of instruction committed to you should assume, at once, its due importance. The churches need sympathizing pastors, and skilful, who are fully instructed as to the duties of good shepherds, and who will faithfully discharge them. The good pastor should be as the good physician who watches the rise and progress of diseases—who seeks to know the diseases of his patients—who wisely prescribes for them—and who visits them to see the effect of his remedies. They need also preachers; not merely men who can write good



sermons—who can analyze a text—who can deliver a discourse with a correct coldness which chills the hearer; but men who feel that the object of preaching the gospel is to stir the hearts of others by the great truths which fill their own,—that the preaching of the gospel is an ordinance upon whose improvement or neglect the life or the death of men hangs suspended. The Church needs preachers of sermons, not readers of essays,—men who prefer the walks about the Sea of Galilee, and in the garden of Gethsemane, and over Calvary, to the dreamy regions of transcendentalism,—who would as soon quote Paul as Coleridge, or Carlyle,—who prefer the obscurity to which the resolve “to know nothing but Christ and him crucified” may consign them, to the notoriety obtained by converting the pulpit into a stage from which all kinds of lectures are delivered, upon all kinds of subjects, and before all kinds of people. It cannot be denied that “Young America,” in many parts of the country, is seeking its way into the pulpit. It prophesies smooth things. It prefers the word in fashion, for the “word in season;” pleasing generalities, to the doctrines “piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit;” unoffending truisms, or shallow sophisms, to unpalatable truths. It courts popularity by every art. It exchanges old creeds for new ones; and is evermore seeking new ways of reforming men, to the neglect of holding forth the doctrines of the cross, the only ade-



quate means of reinstamping on our world the image of its Creator. The Church, the world, needs a ministry penetrated with the belief that the salvation of the world is suspended on the cross of Christ;—not the cross as wrought on the banners of armies—nor as borne by crusaders—nor as glittering from the steeples of churches—nor as worked on the slipper of a pope—nor as braided on the back of a priest—nor as dangling on the bosom of a young miss, or a vain bishop; but the cross, preached in the fulness of its doctrines, as the power of God to the salvation of all who believe them. It was for the purpose of raising up such a ministry that this beloved Institution was founded, and it is to aid in the training of such a ministry that you, my brother, are this day inaugurated as professor. And, in the name of my brethren, I charge you, to the utmost of your ability, to see to it that these ends are attained.

It is with no cold or faltering words we welcome you to this oldest seat of theological instruction in our Church. We hesitate not to pledge to you the kind and fraternal co-operation of the existing Faculty, who adorn the chairs they occupy not less by their amiable virtues, than by their profound learning. And whilst we pledge to you the support and affectionate sympathy of our Directors, we would implore that the mantle of the sainted Alexander and Miller may rest upon you;—that, like them, you may live, bless-

ing the Church, to a good old age—that like them you may die, wearing the robes of your office—and that your sun, like theirs, may set without a cloud, leaving behind it an undying radiance.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY:

AN INAUGURAL DISCOURSE

BY THE

REV. ALEXANDER T. M'GILL, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY, CHURCH GOVERNMENT, AND THE COM-  
POSITION AND DELIVERY OF SERMONS, IN THE PRINCETON  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

## INAUGURAL DISCOURSE.

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FATHERS AND BRETHREN :

It is a result, worthy of the wisdom which has ever directed this great school of theology, that, on the demise of the fathers, who reared it from the beginning, there should be assigned to their successors, a distribution of labour, so distinct and complete, in every department. Fragmentary, as may appear to some, the tradition of its several parts, the Chair, to which I am now inducted, is as perfectly unique and definite as any other. It is *practical* Theology, as distinguished from *theoretical*. It is the complement of that perfect cycle, in which exegetic, systematic, and historic theology, are primary and main departments, in theological training. It is necessary to these, as art is to science, as speech is to thought, as action is to life and vigour : sharing with them, also, difficult investigations, which demand the highest culture and discipline of mind. A more perfect separation to itself of what logically pertains to this department, was never

made, in any age or country, than is indicated in the title you have given it, with the sanction of our General Assembly. That master mind, in Scottish education, Dr. Campbell of Aberdeen, sketches the four departments of a complete divinity course, precisely as they are now arranged in this Institution; making systematic and polemic theology to be appropriately one, and the whole province of "instructing and governing" to be another department, distinct from any other, and properly denominated practical.

A sixfold division of subjects, may be fairly detailed, under the threefold denomination bestowed.

I. Pastoral Theology, strictly considered; embracing the theory of the pastor's office, its origin, its end, its importance, its qualifications, its care of souls, and discernment of their diversities, its rights and relations, trials, encouragements, and rewards. The warrant for a standing ministry, the nature and degree of its separation from the body of the faithful; what constitutes a call to the ministry, what maintains the evidence of such vocation, and cultivates the pre-eminent holiness which must characterize the office,—these are some of the topics that belong to this division, and involve many questions of great importance and difficulty, which are distinct from didactic theology; and yet need the teacher, as much as any other study, in the work of preparation.

II. Homiletics; the whole range of sacred rhetoric;

comprehending as much instruction, as renowned academies in ancient times were instituted to impart, with those great peculiarities engrafted, which a sabbath, a sanctuary, a divine word, and a witnessing omnipotence impress on the eloquence of man. It proposes to fit the orator for the noblest achievements of human speech; for all that ancient eloquence ever accomplished, and immeasurably more; a miracle, which man's eloquence never dreamed of achieving,—the creation, instrumentally, of a new nature, instinct with regenerate emotions, to which its appeals may be ever effectively directed.

Combined with the composition and delivery of sermons, will be the cultivation of criticism and review; in circumstances the most favourable for imbuing the critic with candour, kindness, and fraternal magnanimity.

The faithfulness and delicacy, the unwearied attention, patient labour, and careful discrimination of individual varieties of taste and talent, which this department demands, have led the founders of separate theological seminaries in some European states, to limit the number of students admitted, to one-fourth of the attendance customary in these halls. There, however, it may be seen, that too great a reduction to one standard of public preaching, has resulted already, from the minuteness and artificial exactness of homiletic discipline. Better than limitation of number for such an object,

will be wakeful concern, to promote a fair development of each candidate's own native talent and sectional taste; which the minuteness of artificial criticism would tend to repress, while it chastens. We would have the bold and ready exhorter, the quick and cogent debater, the smooth and elegant writer, all trained together; with free and right propulsion on the part of the teacher, and by the interaction of their own diversified genius; under the conditions of a vigilant oversight, and firm retrenchment of whatever the sensibilities of true Christian refinement would anywhere condemn in the pulpit.

III. A third division may be denominated Catechetics; embracing the whole variety of means, for the instruction of youth and ignorance, other than public preaching. These were never so many and important, as at the present day. We live in the great era of means. And it requires even painful discrimination, to guard the rights of the pulpit, amid the bustle of platforms, which would jostle and disparage it, in the hurry to do good. We would train our ministers to superlative regard for "the foolishness of preaching," as an instrumentality in the salvation of men; and to confide in the wisdom of other instrumentalities, only so far as they conduce to the honour and success of preaching, by the living minister.

Hence there is need for careful indoctrination, on the subject of subsidiary means; their relative importance;

and how far they should be controlled by the Church, in her appropriate organization, or left to the management of voluntary combinations.

The relation of the Church and her ministers to the great work of general education—the pedagogics, which a preacher may properly connect with his holy office,—and that entire capacity of Christian ministers, which seems to have been set off distinctly, in primitive times, and times of Scottish reformation, under the denomination of *teachers*, should be studied here.

So, also, the missionary field, as far as the work of imparting elementary instruction, dealing with the superstitions of the heathen, and managing the education of their children, constitute the errand of missionaries.

Here belong lessons for the guidance of young ministers in times of revival; when the visitations of power from on high call them to multiplied exertions and peculiar toils: casuistry, also, for all times and seasons of pastoral life, with its difficult problems, and balancing principles.

Many a prelection of great value may be given, under this humble head, on sabbath schools, Bible classes, parochial visits, and diets of examination; provinces of ministerial work and skill, which cannot be valued too highly; and which are all underlaid with principles, that must be studied, and must anticipate experience, if the ardour of youth would enter on its career safely,



and turn its own experience to wisdom and efficiency, without the loss of time and labour.

A normal school for teachers, whose main calling must ever give them paramount influence in educating the world—may we call this particular branch of practical theology; in which we would make them know, how they ought to behave themselves, in the school, the convention, the author's study, the editor's chair, the secretary's desk, the agent's itinerancy, and the colporteur's broadcast of dissemination—all of which may appertain to "the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

IV. Liturgics, may be called a fourth division; though we reluctantly abide by the title. It will embrace the sabbath, and those ordinances of religion, which are distinctively worship, and formal solemnity. Puritanical protest will, itself, require a careful study of rites and ceremonies—to know what they are, by the sanction of God's word, what the authority of the Church, in relation to them, and what the proprieties of their actual administration.

With the ordinance of prayer, must be studied the question of liturgical forms; and many important counsels and directions. With that of singing praises, questions which separate branches of the Presbyterian family; as well as many a minor topic of interest, within our own denomination. With reading the word,

that emphasis, which interprets without comment, and that emotion, which becomes the words, that are, themselves, "spirit and life."

Baptism and the Lord's Supper afford a rich domain, after ceding much to theoretic theology, on every side. Fasting and thanksgiving will connect asceticism for investigation; and lead us to distinguish the mortification, which our Saviour, and his Apostles, and all men, exercised unto godliness, in every age, have practised, from that mere bodily exercise, and voluntary humility, and austere virginity, with which the Catholic Church revolted from the liberty of the gospel, and sunk to bondage, terror, and death.

The ordinance of "making collections for the poor, and other pious purposes," which, it might be thought, any deacon would understand, without elaborate teaching, is one that a Chalmers deemed worthy of his head and heart and pen, without finding its problems easily solved, with all his gigantic power: one which my predecessor in pastoral theology, loved to investigate and teach, with the dint of his massive intellect, and the deep earnest of his capacious heart: one too, which our own General Assembly has just devolved on theological professors, with strong recommendation; under the title of "Systematic Benevolence."

V. A fifth division is the Church, and her proper visibility; the true theory of her constitution, membership, and government. This itself is a great theme; compli-

cated with the most important discussions of the age ; and presenting, perhaps, the only subject, that has not yet been fairly settled in the suffrages and literature of evangelical Christendom.

Opposite extremes of error, in the true Church of God, have probably but one battle more, in which to perish ; and the golden moderation of the gospel may triumph in millennial joy. That battle is to be here. The last thing for the Church, in her militancy, to know conclusively, is her own self. And, it would be strange anomaly, indeed, if the result of this ultimate struggle, be the attainment of a mere abnegation ; and the triumph of true moderation consist, in restoring the moderatism of a feeble and supine indifference to any particular form.

We cannot believe it ; and, therefore, determine to stand on the watchtower, of a proper *jus divinum* for the parity of ministers, the existence of ruling elders, and church courts, original and appellate.

We seek to place on higher ground than man's expedience; a polity like this ; which gives the germ of civil and political freedom to the nations, and conserves, with the force of a great psychological bond, which history has ever illustrated, the soundness of redeeming truth, in the belief and practice of men. Though not honoured with instruction from the lips of Dr. Miller, his type of Presbyterianism was impressed upon my youth by his writings ; and the researches of

years in the study of Church Government have only confirmed that early tuition.

In refuting the figment of apostolic succession on the one hand, and no succession at all upon the other—the continuance of priesthood, in a particular class, on the one hand, and priesthood in the people, which repudiates the authority of office, on the other—a depository of power in the hands of individuals, apart from assemblies, on the one hand, and engrossment of power in the masses, without representation, on the other,—we have some of the appropriate exercises of this department; in which we shall seek to find and hold “the present truth.”

VI. The sixth division may be designated, Ecclesiastical Law and Discipline; the diacritical power and practice of the Church. It is not Canon Law, the offspring of church and state united, which rivalled Civil and Common Law, for centuries, as a pathway to fame and influence; but that declarative legislation and execution of law in the Church herself, which is far more a profound and profitable study.

The statute book of our own particular denomination, containing so many wise enactments, and valuable interpretations of the constitution, and important regulations of that vast machinery, for doing good, which employs the alms and prayers and abilities of more than 2000 ministers, and 200,000 members, ought now to be taught with diligence to the rising

ministry. And still more, the principles and book of Discipline, which embody so much of Christian ethics, as well as forms of justice, that symbolize the doctrines of human right.

To construe offences fairly, to conduct the process righteously, to graduate the conviction justly, to inflict the censure faithfully, and restore the penitent offender seasonably, require a cultivation which must be one of liberal study, as well as sound judgment and careful experience. Judges of both law and fact, whose decisions involve the honour and safety of the Saviour's Kingdom, and depend so much upon their manifest propriety, for any force and credit among men, must be learned in the law; and qualified to uphold the judiciary of our spiritual courts, in comparison with that of secular courts; or, in a great nation like ours, of jurists and jurymen, the law of Christ will be disparaged, if not entirely despised.

Such is an outline, of the department proper, to my apprehension. The singularly excellent usage, in this Institution, of making the Bible a textbook, to be studied exegetically, in every department, with reference to the subjects belonging to each, respectively, will be followed, with delight; and interesting portions, historical and epistolary, may fall to this practical chair, for critical and thorough examination.

Other studies, which are ancillary, will not be neglected; such as lead to the knowledge of human

nature—spiritual anthropology—man as debased or developed in every age, by the religious sentiment, as it has been called, under its various manifestations.

Practical Theology must ever attempt to explain the contact and confluence of religion with civilization. And, though many questions, greatly agitated elsewhere, respecting the relation of civil magistracy to sacred things, are of little interest to this country, they are of much importance to our missionaries ; and many yet remain, along this line, ever important to ourselves, which can not be understood by superficial thought or observation.

It was only by the most learned of our ministers, and not without help from this hall of theological education, that the true doctrine of “the higher law,” came to be fairly understood, on a late memorable occasion of national disturbance. And it will require yet a laborious culture, in the seats of sacred science, to qualify the ministers of reconciliation, for a judicious exercise of their ability and influence, on the heaving masses, which may be tempted, in the day of passion, to tear in pieces, the most beautiful result of modern civilization,—the constitution of this great republic. Questions of vital concernment to the welfare of our nation, continually press upon such a department as this ; and it is not, perhaps, extravagant to say, that a single question of discipline, in our own church, if it had been settled, as other churches have settled it, or left it un-

settled, would have already severed the cords of this American Union.

Great conflicts are coming; if not in relation to social and domestic institutions, certainly, in relation to a vast political system, which is ecclesiastical, in its history and claims; and must be countervailed on the arena of ecclesiastical discussion; and there is not one division of this study, which may not be made an armoury, for the preparation of champions in the contest with Popery. When we teach, that the pastor is not a priest, but a minister of Jesus—that preaching truth from the oracles of God, in the language of the people, is to be his principal function—that the Bible, in some vernacular tongue, should be, first and last, at home and at school, the handbook of all catechumens—that forms of worship, which have no warrant in the word of God, for their use, are to be discarded, as the mere commandments of men—that all gradation of rank in the ministry of Christ, is unscriptural and unjust—that the true administration of discipline, must aim to make the church visible and invisible entirely coincident—we touch the whole circle of Practical Theology, and subvert the whole fabric of Papal idolatry.

But, far within this margin of our holy religion, the department of which we speak, deals with central interest, and claims a memorial of peculiar renown. The “applied science” of theological study, it governs all the resources, which any other department can



furnish, with adaptation to the end of the whole, the glory of God, in the salvation of men; and must have therefore, all the value, which this proximity to such an end confers upon means. Think, of marshalling the educated energies of scores, in the ardor of youth, and vigor of high discipline, on the verge of such a field, as this wonder-working age is opening daily to "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God!" Think, of but one lesson, the first and most obvious, which this function must impress on such instrumentalities—that of true consecration, the call of God, the crucifixion of self, the value of souls, the glory of Christ, and that holiness of heart and life, without which this ministry were usurpation, and the whole acquirements of theoretic theology a perversion, of deadly bane to the Church and the world!

From the earliest germ of revealed religion, we may scan a seminal importance in this branch of sanctified learning. Primeval divinity was almost entirely comprehended here. Catechetics and Liturgies were the cyclopædia of sacred science, from Adam to Christ. And where is the Christian minister, who does not repair to the orators, and bards, and historians, of regular and irregular attendance on the schools of the prophets during that long period of time, for the richest illustrations of doctrine and duty, with which to adorn the pulpit now?

The Great Teacher himself, within his college of

disciples, dwelt mostly on themes of Pastoral Theology and Church Government; on a call to the ministry, and its qualifications, its cross, and its crown; on the nature of his kingdom, its separation from the state, its parity of ministers, its bench of elders, and even its method of process for the exercise of discipline; not omitting, by any means, important hints in his own example and precept, for the composition and delivery of sermons. His valedictory charge on a mountain of Galilee, where all the disciples were present, and five hundred besides, was arranged with so much care, and delivered in so significant a manner, that the great commission fell upon the bosom of the Church, as well as the shoulders of particular men; to bar the roots of religious pedigree, and provide for emergencies of reformation, while the world endures.

The Apostles followed the example of their Master; all of them abounding in lessons of practical theology. Whole epistles were written for textbooks in this department; and their author, the great polemic of that primitive and sainted school, has mingled on every page of his other epistles, ecclesiastical and pastoral lessons, with his profound elucidation of doctrines.

Passing the Apostolic Fathers, whose scanty literature is nearly all in this department only; the first theological seminary of the Christian Church began at Alexandria as a catechetical school; and was probably

conducted altogether within the range of practical theology, in its exercise and studies.

In the palmy age of Patristic Theology, when systematic divinity had not yet shapen a creed, and church history was only beginning its annals, and polemics were little more than Catholic anathema on heresy, the noblest ministers, whether Greek or Latin, vied in the advanced cultivation of this study. Augustine, Chrysostom, and Cyril, furnished manuals, which may yet be studied with profit; not to mention the labours of Jerome and others, in the department of church government and discipline.

The darkness and torpor of succeeding ages could pall the life of Christianity everywhere but here. Pulsations of power might always be felt in the *hands* of this religion. Asceticism, with its ceaseless activity of change, images, investitures, offices, patronage, pilgrimage, councils, and crusades, — everything that tumultuated in the life of Mediæval Christendom, belonged, in some way, to this practical domain; and shows how vastly important it must be, to guide such irrepressible vitality with careful and true enlightenment.

When that great revival of Christianity, the Reformation, awakened men to the light of the Bible, Exegesis, Didactics, Polemics, and History, were suddenly restored to their usefulness and rights; but the imperfections of men could not escape the weakness of ex-

treme reaction. The greatest fault of Luther and Calvin's age, was the disparagement of practical theology; arising from the fact, that such theology, in its perversion, had been everything of religion, under the darkness and tyranny from which they had just revolted. But for such a tacit disparagement, Luther would not have left his Church, burdened with ceremonies, benighted on the doctrine of a sacrament, and deformed with the most diversified accidents of polity and discipline. And, but for the same disparagement, though less, incomparably, Calvin would not have left his, a mixture of form and opinion, so mottled, that presbytery and prelacy, charity, bigotry, and latitudinarianism, could have claimed, with any colour of right, the same denomination.

The reaction of Popery punished the former; the troubles of Puritans punished the latter. And it was in the next century, an age of giants, the seventeenth and greatest, in the chronicles of modern time, that practical theology regained its just consideration, and took its high place in the literature and schools of our holy reformed religion. Baxter and Owen, and Henderson and Baillie, and Rutherford and Gillespie, and Selden and Lightfoot, and Claude and Grotius, and a host of others, bestowed their energies on this department with peculiar fondness; and full three-fourths of the time employed by the Westminster divines to prepare the greatest monument of unin-

spired talent which the world has seen, our Confession of Faith and its Catechism, were engrossed with the subjects of this study; for which, indeed, that venerable body was primarily convened. Worthy of the most favoured Church, that ever adopted the Westminster Confession, and worthy of the most favoured land that ever obtained from its divinely sanctioned scheme of polity, the model of well-regulated liberty, is the discretion, with which, for the first time in Presbyterian history, you have made it completely one, and given it a separate chair.

Many an illustration, from the decline of Presbytery in England, its trials in Scotland, its extinction in France, its transplantation to America, and vigorous growth on our shores, might be adduced to show the importance of our study, and enhance the greatness of its memorial. History, to which my labours have been much devoted heretofore, and in which, as a great framework, every important part of human knowledge may be set and included, will come to my aid, as peculiarly and indispensably subservient.

That such a province of sacred learning should be left to the mere observation and experience of pupils, or to a discipleship with men of practical efficiency and success, without other qualifications for teaching, must be regarded as a grave mistake, if we have not wholly mistaken the nature and scope of this office. Rather say, that imitation is better than science, in

teaching the elements of any liberal art; that empiricism is better than study, in teaching the work of any other profession, than that the line of any one pastor's experience is better than great principles, embodied by careful induction from many experiences, in teaching the lessons of practical theology. Could a city pastor, merely from his own particular life, however long and favoured in the pastoral care, teach the student how to behave himself in a country charge, or at a missionary station? "The care of souls," says Vinet, a great name in pastoral theology, "will not be the same in city and country, in a farming and a manufacturing district, in the bosom of a population of simple manners, and with refined and effeminate people."

Besides, the man of right conduct for himself, is not always the man to explain even his own conduct, for the benefit of others. In daily intercourse, we often find an incapacity of practical men to give intelligible reasons for the success with which they direct their own business, and meet the changes and emergencies of life; and in the most elevated spheres of magisterial vocation, the same ineptitude has been frequent and striking. It was said of a renowned executive, in our own country, that no man ever ruled with more unerring direction in the right way, and no man ever blundered with more entire confusion, in

giving reasons for his conduct, as a ruler. So, we apprehend, the discreet and successful pastor may be found, who seldom fails to turn the exigencies of his great vocation to the very best account, in the tact of his own administration, and yet is disqualified, by the cast of his mind, and the habitudes of office, as he fills it, dealing so much in the concrete, for that quick analysis and broad rationale, which must furnish the learner with principles that govern the office, and fit him to meet, with versatile application, stations of life and duties, with which his teacher has never been conversant. All education were stagnant, if the tuition of great principles be not a pioneer to particular experience.

While, therefore, we bow to the practical pastor, as the noblest of human characters, and eagerly seek, at all times, to learn from his lips, the art of caring for souls, there may be an extravagant estimate of practice alone, as a qualification for teaching the rising ministry, to the disadvantage of any department; and especially those great theoretic departments, which demand the studies of a lifetime, intensely given, to furnish a proper defence of the gospel, against the erudite and subtle enemies, which now "come in like a flood." Yet, in this particular Chair, though its themes might well demand illimitable stores of erudition, and cannot be handled by merely empirical tact,



experience is indispensable; experience of the world, the pastor's office, and the teacher's art. Without having had a fair and full experiment of pastoral life, and surpassing fondness for its duties, along with previous training of many, a kind in common life, including the brief pursuit of another profession, which brings a man most fully into contact with human nature, as well as fits him somewhat for the last two branches here detailed, my own consent to adventure on this high office could not have been obtained.

And yet, the first idea, in premeditating an address for this occasion, was to make apology for being here, and venturing to touch a responsibility, which was shared by Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller, both, in part. Assuredly, it is not done, without a diffidence, which trembles to despondency at times. But, we owe it to those illustrious men themselves, not to speak of the Church they loved better than themselves, that the generation they instructed and left behind them, should not allow the greatness of their names to injure the work of their hands, or cause an Institution, for which they laboured and prayed through forty years, to be declined and forsaken, because there is no one to sustain the position as they did. There must be a sacrifice, just here. And is it not worth the martyrdom of half a score of men, so far as reputation is concerned, to fill a breach like this; and

carry on God's work in this venerable seat, through all disparagement; perpetuating, in some way, a monument so precious, of their toil and consecration?

Exchanging, at what seemed to be a wish of the Church at large, as well as peculiar indications of my Master's will, the pride of remaining in a place built up for myself in one sense, where the demands of the position and my own qualifications were supposed to be commensurate, for the peril of this new responsibility, of standing in a place already built by others—and more than built—adorned, with living talent, which enlightened Christendom confesses, and with festooned memories, which might well oppress the spirit of any successor, who is not led by a simple sense of duty, I come to relinquish self on the altar of this service; knowing, that, even my preference of this Chair to any other, imposes a more aggravated obligation.

Indulge me then, Fathers and Brethren, with kind extenuation. We are not always most successful in the duties which we fancy most; and in the very scheming, which I make at this inauguration, a field of overpowering magnitude spreads itself before me. God only, with his own rich grace and abounding mercy, can make me equal to the work.

And whatever be the results of this accession, or any other, from this time, one thing is obvious, that,

we may not expect the same superiority of numbers, as in times that are past. It is, manifestly, the will of our Church, that her sons be distributed among many theological nurseries; and that the usefulness of this original Seminary be maintained, in the high standard and faithful care of its instruction, rather than a throng of students in attendance. Nor has this ordination been made against your own will, either as guardians or benefactors of this Institution. "The rivalship of numbers," it has been well said, by one of yourselves, "is unworthy of these seats of sacred science. Numbers may ruin us." Your own best patrons have aided, with munificent help, as I can attest with gratitude, even the nearest competition for students, until it is at length, completely established, and claims a common interest in almost every part of our field. The reduction of numbers, then, we consent to, as no evil or decline, when it redounds to the prosperity of sister institutions, and does not indicate a loss at large to the work of "the harvest."

And, for the goodwill, with which the friends of this Seminary have aided others in their efforts to become similar centres of attraction; for the unrivalled benefactions, that she has shed over all this land and other lands; for the honour of that peerless unity, which binds our beloved Church together in

conspicuous harmony; and, above all, for the glory of that Blessed One, whose we are, and whom we serve, compactly in the common salvation, may we not hope, that the loan of love will be repaid; and that these halls will ever be prospered with the best wishes and constant prayers of all the churches that have been gladdened with streams from this fountain, and all the seminaries that have been profited, by its issues of living ministers and lasting literature? Cheered by this hope, so reasonable, yet, confiding only in God, the God of our fathers, we give ourselves wholly to do what our hands find to do; prepared, alike, to suffer and rejoice, as He may mete the evil and the good, which are mingled in any allotment of life.

“But, this I say, brethren, the time is short.” Death, which made a desolation here, by removing the patriarchs to their seats in “the general assembly and church of the firstborn” in heaven, reverses with amazing persistency, the roll of ministers; and the young, or the mature at the meridian of usefulness are called away, with a frequency, which is without parallel, in the memory of this generation. How soon may we, also, that labour to recruit those wasting bands, on the high places of the field, fall at the quiet fountain; where, indeed, from the venerable Matthews to the lamented Sampson, almost every year is laying some Professor in the dust. Honoured Directors yet

live, whose hands have managed this ancient Institution from its origin, and whose vigour in this high trust is not yet abated. Long may they linger to counsel and befriend us. But the burden of their years and the frailty of their juniors admonish us, that the sequel of our history here will be one of quicker challenge, in the progress of mortality. God grant us all, "mercy to be faithful,"—"faithful unto death," that we may obtain "a crown of life."

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

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FACULTY.

REV. CHARLES HODGE, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF EXEGETICAL, DIDACTIC, AND POLEMIC THEOLOGY.

REV. JOSEPH ADDISON ALEXANDER, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

REV. WILLIAM HENRY GREEN, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF ORIENTAL AND BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

REV. ALEXANDER T. M'GILL, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY, CHURCH GOVERNMENT, AND THE  
COMPOSITION AND DELIVERY OF SERMONS.

## SUMMARY OF STUDIES.

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### FIRST YEAR.

Hebrew Language.	Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures.
Exegetical Study of the Scriptures.	Mental and Moral Science.
Biblical Criticism.	Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion.
Biblical Antiquities and Sacred Chronology.	Sacred Rhetoric.

### SECOND YEAR.

Exegetical Study of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures (continued).	Ecclesiastical History.
Didactic Theology.	Pastoral Theology and Missionary Instruction.

### THIRD YEAR.

Exegetical Study of the Scriptures (continued).	Church Government.
Didactic Theology (continued).	Homiletics, Composition and Delivery of Sermons.
Polemic Theology.	

The students of the Seminary are required to deliver orations; and to exhibit compositions as often as is judged expedient by the Professors.

The Resident Graduates have the privilege of attending on the lectures of all the classes.

## TERMS OF ADMISSION.

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EVERY person applying for admission into the Seminary must produce satisfactory written testimonials that he possesses good natural talents, and is of a prudent and discreet deportment; that he is in full communion with some regular church; and that he has passed through a regular course of Academic study; or, wanting this, he must submit himself to an examination on the branches of literature usually taught in such a course.

When a student has been received under the care of a Presbytery, and has passed his examination on the studies usually pursued in College with approbation, a certificate from the Presbytery declaring this fact, is received as sufficient to answer every requisition in regard to testimonials.

When a student who has been connected with any Theological Seminary, seeks admission into this, he must produce testimonials of his good standing, and regular dismissal, before he can be received.

The proper time for entering the Seminary is at the commencement of the Seminary year, which begins on the first Thursday of September. It is important that students should be present at the opening of the session.

The students, in addition to the use of libraries attached to the Seminary, have access to that of the College, and on application to the several Professors of that Institution, can have the privilege of attending lectures on Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, and Natural History.

Gentlemen well qualified to teach the German and French languages are resident here, and will give instruction in those branches to such students as desire it at their own expense.

There is no charge made either for Tuition or Room rent; but each student pays \$10 per annum to the "General Expense Fund," the object of which is to defray the contingent expenses of the Institution; and \$1 per annum for the use of the library. Students who



may prefer rooming out of the Seminary building, can be accommodated in the village and vicinity, in which case they pay but \$5 to the "Expense Fund."

Indigent students are aided either by the General Assembly's "Board of Education," or the funds of the Seminary.

The expense of board in the Refectory varies from \$1 45 to \$1 75 per week. Board may be obtained in private families at from \$1 50 to \$2 50 per week. Expenses for fuel, from \$6 to \$10 per annum. Washing, \$8.

There is but one vacation in the year, which commences the second Thursday in May, and terminates on the first Thursday in September.



Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



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