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ADDRESSES

AT THE

INAUGURATION

OF

REV. ARCHIBALD ALEX. HODGE, D.D., LL.D.,

AS

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF DIDACTIC  
AND POLEMIC THEOLOGY,

IN THE

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT PRINCETON, N. J.,

NOVEMBER 8, 1877.

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I. THE CHARGE.

By REV. WILLIAM M. PAXTON, D.D.

II. THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

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## Inauguration Exercises.

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REV. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER HODGE, D.D., LL.D., was unanimously elected Associate Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology in Princeton Theological Seminary by the Board of Directors, at their annual meeting in April last, and this election was confirmed by the following General Assembly. The inauguration took place by appointment on Thursday, November 8th, at 11 o'clock, in the First Presbyterian Church. The Order of Exercises upon the occasion was as follows:

PRAYER, by Rev. Dr. MUSGRAVE.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES, by Rev. Dr. CRAVEN.

HYMN.

SIGNING THE PRESCRIBED PLEDGE, by the new Professor.

THE CHARGE, by Rev. Dr. PAXTON.

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS, by Rev. Dr. A. A. HODGE.

PRAYER, by Rev. Dr. BACKUS.

The Charge and the Inaugural Address are published at the request of the Board of Directors.

# The Charge,

BY

REV. WILLIAM M. PAXTON, D.D.,

OF NEW YORK CITY.

## THE MINISTRY FOR THIS AGE.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

If a corporal were commanded to teach a general how to marshal an army, he would, no doubt, attempt to perform the duty—not because the general needed to be taught, nor because the corporal felt competent to instruct, but simply because in the army every soldier is expected to obey orders. Upon the same principle, I undertake to charge you as to the duties of your high office, not because you need instruction, nor because I am competent to impart it, but simply because this Board has so ordered, and I have no alternative but to obey.

It is a sublime thought, my brother, that God has spoken; that He has spoken to man; that He has spoken to man by men, and in the forms of human speech. If this be so, then to expound God's words, to explain His meaning, to arrange and systematize the diversified expressions of His thought, to embody it in the forms of human logic, and to exhibit it so as to enlighten, impress, and win the souls of others, is at once a sublime work, and an august responsibility.

To this momentous work you are called at a period when the circumstances of the times, and the tendencies of thought and feeling which give character to the age, render its performance peculiarly difficult.

In theology, as in every other department of instruc-

tion, the teaching must be adapted to the times. The matter of your teaching, the Word of God, never changes. Like its author, it is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." What God said in the days of Paul, Augustine, and Calvin, is just what God says now. This book with its chapters and verses is the sum total of all that God has ever uttered; and, as if to stay the hand of him who would evolve from this book more than God means, all the woes that are written in it are denounced against him who "adds thereto;" and, as if to strike with awe the man who would diminish its truths, deny its doctrines, or explain away or belittle its teachings, the warning is given that "if any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life."

But whilst the truth itself never changes, the method of teaching, the mould in which it is to be cast, and the manner in which it is to be exhibited, must change with the progress of the age, and to suit the ever-changing conditions of the human mind. The long, prolix, syllogistic statements of the schoolmen are surely not adapted to an age of telegrams. The mental conditions of a people who travel in a stage-coach at the rate of five miles an hour, must differ greatly from those of a people who travel in a railroad car at a speed of forty miles. In an age when mind is intensely active, and all other ideas come to men on the wing, it will not do for the truth of God to crawl like a snail, or slumber like a crow. It must fly with the celerity of a carrier pigeon to bring its messages to men in the thick of life's battle, or it must mount like an eagle to command attention and to carry its glad tidings upon swift wing to every corner of the earth.

Your lot as a teacher is cast in an age which differs materially from that of either of your predecessors. Dr. Alexander lived in one age—a formative age—in which

the foundations had to be laid deep and strong. Your Father's teaching was in another age—an age of change and controversy—requiring distinct lines of demarcation and clear cut statements of truth. But you, my Brother, stand as a teacher in the midst of an age in which (as I shall afterwards show) the conditions of your work are greatly changed.

Your venerated predecessors were both men who were wise to discern the time and to adapt themselves to it. They were not weak men to bend to the times, but strong men to resist the times, or to reform the times, if need be, or to guide and direct the spirit of the times into better and higher channels. In the same manner it devolves upon you to look out and study the age in which you live, and then placing yourself in intense sympathy with its spirit to look in upon your work and to ask yourself, How can I teach Theology so as to qualify these young men so to handle the truth, as to leave the image and superscription of God upon the age in which they live. This question, my dear Brother, I cannot answer for you. The response must be found in the depths of your own soul, under the teaching of God's Spirit. The best that I can do is to utter a few suggestions in the direction of that line of thought.

It is plain to me that an inefficient church is a curse to the world, an inefficient ministry is a curse to the church, and the seeds of this efficiency or inefficiency lie in the Theological Seminary.

There stands that venerable institution. What does it mean? What is the idea which it expresses, to the farmer who passes in his wagon, to the student who enters its halls, and to the Professors who occupy its chairs? Is it a place where young men get a profession by which they are to make their living? Is it a school in which a company of educated young men are gathered to grind out

Theology, to dig Hebrew roots, to read Patristic Literature, to become proficient in Ecclesiastical Dialectics, to master the misty technics of the school men, and to debate about fate, free-will, and the divine decrees? If this be its purpose or its chief purpose, then bring the torch and burn it; take the young men and place each one upon a horse, with the Bible in one side of the saddle bags and Cruden's Concordance in the other, and send them out to tell, without a Professor, without a lecture, out of the simple Bible, that Jesus Christ has died to save the souls of men. We do not in any way depreciate a learned ministry. We must have learning. The age demands it; but, whenever, in a Theological Seminary, learning takes the precedence, it covers as with an icicle the very truths which God designed to warm and melt the hearts of men.

No, no, this is not the meaning of a Theological Seminary. Nor is this the idea which the history and influence of this Seminary is calculated to give. It is a school of learning, but it is also a cradle of piety. I remember well that when I was a student, no young man could pass through his first year without being constrained to re-examine his personal hope and motives for seeking the sacred office. The founders of this institution were men of faith. Its Professors and friends now are godly men. To their eye of faith the Cross of Christ gleams above it, and from that Cross they hear the mandate "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." This then is the idea which this Seminary is designed to express. It is a place where educated young men are imbued with the doctrine of the Cross, and with this truth as a burning power in their hearts, they go out into the world to kindle and fire the hearts of others.

The question then with you, my Brother, and with every Professor in this institution is, How to teach and

how to influence these young men so as to realize this idea. They are put into your hands to do this thing, and anything short of it is failure.

The world trains its young men for its specific purposes, and why should not the church? Let me illustrate. There, in the sight of the windows of the Seminary runs the railroad train. You step aboard and you find that the world has trained men, with that acute sagacity which the love of gain imparts, to hitch its thousand interests to that rapid locomotive. The merchant has hitched his goods, the editor his papers, the publisher his books, the jobber his wares, and the farmer his produce. Now, why may we not train men with equal sagacity to hitch the Gospel to every locomotive, nay, to attach it to all the world's machinery, that it may mingle with every industry and sanctify every enterprise.

In yonder harbor lies a ship. It is an enemy's man-of-war. We have men in our navy so trained that they know precisely how to go and attach a torpedo to the bottom of that vessel and blow it to atoms. And why may we not train men of equal daring to know how to blow the enemies' guns out of water, or how to attach the Gospel to every sail that is unfurled, that it may mingle its blessed influence with every cargo that is loaded, and carry its glad message to every port into which commerce carries its banner. This is the end to be accomplished. The Gospel must be brought into close contact with every department of the world's work. As long as religion is confined to *Sundays*, the world will lie in wickedness. It must be made to interpenetrate *every day* and *every thing*. As long as the Gospel is confined to Gothic churches, it is in bonds; it must be loosed and let go out everywhere.

Now the purpose of a Theological Seminary is to train men to accomplish this end. But to this you reply, "that

is not my department, my work is simply to teach Doctrinal Theology." Ah, *there, there*, my Brother, we have just hit the secret of weakness. One says, "This does not belong to my department." Another says, "It does not belong to mine," and thus the sense of responsibility is shifted, and the Professor settles down to his work with the idea that when he has communicated a certain quantum of information upon a given subject, his responsibility is discharged. No, no, let me tell you that whenever the teaching in a Theological Seminary sinks to this perfunctory level, the guilt and curse of an inefficient ministry lies at its door. It is not simply instruction, it is the whole work of training and inspiring men to save souls that belongs to your department. I stand here to-day to say this to you and to every member of this faculty, "*This is your department.*" Can it be that your work is done when you have demonstrated a truth or deposited an intellectual dogma in the memory of a student? No, no, your responsibility continues until you have sent that truth as a lighted torch into his soul to kindle there its light and to warm his whole being as with fire.

To bring this matter closer, let me ask, When a Professor sits down to prepare his lecture, what is his aim? This point was put to me once by an aged minister with such power that it meets me every time I enter my study. He said, "When you prepare a sermon, *what are you in favor of?*" I asked him what he meant. He replied, "Some ministers are in favor of *preparing a discourse*, some of *discussing a subject before the public*, and some of *saving souls*, what are you in favor of?" We all know too well the difference between a minister who aims at preaching a discourse, and one who aims at saving souls. Precisely the same is true of a Professor. Should he be content simply to give a clear exposition and truth of a doctrine? or, over and beyond this, should he not aim, by the

help of the Divine Spirit, to lodge that truth as a living power in the soul of the student?

It is just at this point that the question of the future efficiency or inefficiency of the minister is determined. If, in his first study of a truth, he is made to feel its quickening influence in his own experience, it will abide with him as one of the forces of his life. He will never think of it again without being warmed by it, and it will be his pleasure to talk of it to others. The measure of every minister's power is just the number of these truths which he has received as living forces into his own soul. Upon the other hand, if a divine truth is simply studied and mastered by the intellect, it is laid away upon the shelf as a dead, inoperative thing, of little more value to him than a theorem in conic sections. He cannot seize and wield it with effect, for he is ignorant of its value. It has never been a light in his own soul, and he cannot make it shine. He has never felt its kindling power himself, and therefore he cannot shoot it as a flaming arrow into the hearts of others. It follows therefore that the aim of each Professor should be to produce a vitalizing impression upon the student. Give them Theology, give them orthodoxy, give them exposition, proof, demonstration, give them learning, but give it to them *warm*.

This quickening power must come from the presence of the Divine Spirit. I know well that a sermon that is not conceived in the Spirit, and delivered in the Spirit, is of little value. So a lecture upon Theology must be conceived by the help of the Holy Ghost, delivered under his melting influence, and received by the student under his blessed illumination. Hence the Professor's study must be a Bethel in direct communication with Heaven; and a Theological Seminary must be a Bochim, from which strong cries for help are constantly going up. A ministry trained to realize this idea will be a power in the world

mightier than armies. The Gospel has come to them "not in word only but in power," and they can utter it in the confidence that it is "the power of God unto salvation." They well know that there is but one thing to do, and that is to save souls, and that anything short of this is failure. They will feel that they have in their possession the remedy for the woes of the world, and they will burn to apply it. They will go out from the Seminary with the glad feeling of a man who is carrying provisions to a family that is starving, or with the feeling of the commander of a life-boat who is hurrying to the wreck where souls are perishing. They will come before their audiences like a breathless messenger of good news with their hearts bursting to tell it.

Now, my Brother, there is no use in evading it. Theological Seminaries cannot afford to shut their eyes to the fact that it is only such a ministry as this that can meet the wants of the world, and satisfy the demands of the age in which you live.

Look at the facts for a moment.

*First.* This is an age in which there is a dissatisfaction with the pulpit. It is a dissatisfaction that has been growing for years. The proof of this is patent in the expedients which the pulpit has adopted to evade this dissatisfaction. Some, imagining that the Gospel had become trite, have gone off into the fields of literature and philosophy for subjects of discourse, elaborating intellectual essays, and complimenting the Bible by prefixing a verse as a motto to indicate the point of their departure. Others have sought to mingle religion with every-day life by taking their topics from the newspapers, by discussing whatever is uppermost in the public mind, and by making the pulpit a platform for Sunday entertainment. As a reaction from both these, some have endeavored to satisfy the public demand by a more interesting kind of Biblical

preaching, treating of Oriental manners and customs, giving pictorial views of history, with lessons upon the geography and agriculture of the Bible, embracing, after the manner of Solomon, everything from the "cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that springs from the wall."

Now, the remedy for all this is such a ministry as we have indicated. Men, whose hearts are filled and thrilled with the "truth as it is in Jesus," will not need to discourse of geography or agriculture, nor to go for themes of interest to literature or philosophy. No, Jesus to them is the centre of all interest, and out of the freshness of their own experience they will set forth His preciousness with such cogent persuasion that men will look up with surprise and say, "We never saw it before. We will have none but Jesus, none but Jesus."

*Secondly.* This is an age in which doctrine is at a discount. Disguise it as you may, it is nevertheless true that the popular mind has a dread of doctrine. Erratic preachers and theological adventurers, who know no theology, and have not logic enough to comprehend a formulated statement, have thrown gibes at dogmas; but, strange to say the public mind has caught these gibes, and the impression has passed from mind to mind until people everywhere are saying, "Oh, don't preach doctrine. Give us something interesting, something that will attract the young." Now, unreasonable as all this is, we dare not conceal from ourselves the *fact*. There is doubtless a reason for it. Doctrine has been abused. It has been preached in such a dull, heavy, lifeless way that people have gone to sleep over it. Students have gone out from the Seminary under the impression that the professor's lecture is just the thing they are to present in the pulpit, and some have given out half a lecture in a single sermon, whilst others have been generous enough to give the whole. They suppose a theological lecture to be fixed ammuni-

tion, and that they are to load and fire the very cartridge which has been given to them.

Now the remedy for all this is a ministry that can preach doctrine *all ablaze*. If a man can put the light of his own living experience inside of the deadest dogma, he will make it a spiritual transparency that will interest and attract. A heart that is full of Christ will gild every doctrine with the halo of His glory.

*Thirdly.* Closely allied with this is another characteristic of the times. This is an age of *action*, of action so intense, that all life loses much of its inwardness by the intensity of its outwardness. Hence men have readily caught at the idea that religion is a *life*, and that its expression is *action*. It is of little consequence what a man believes, if he is busy in good works. Hence the inwardness of religion is forgotten, and all piety is made to consist in *doing*. Here is a great error, but it is an error that springs out of the tendencies of the times. True indeed, religion is a life, but it is a life that springs from truth believed. All the fruits of well-doing spring from the "incorruptible seed" of truth planted within. All this busy doing of good works which does not spring from this root must either be a flower without a root, or the galvanism of a false zeal which will end when the spasm subsides. Now this alarming error must be met by a ministry that knows, from a heart experience, whence life comes. Some, in ignorance of this, are attempting to galvanize churches by *organization*. We have heard of generals who organized victories, but we have no confidence in *organized piety*, or in good works that do not proceed from the germ of living doctrines imbedded in the soul.

*Fourthly.* Bear with me again whilst I advert to another feature of the times which a theological teacher must regard with alarm. It is the growing tendency to preach

only half the Gospel. There are some who sum up the whole message of God to man in the words "Come to Jesus." To them God has but one attribute, and that is love, and into this all others are merged. These are precious parts of the Gospel, but only parts, and to magnify a part into the whole, or to hold up these isolated truths so constantly to the light as to ignore or eclipse others, is perilous. It divides Christ, it bisects the Gospel, it separates "what God has joined together." The effect of this is not only to produce an ill-shaped and distorted religion, not only to open an easy way to universalism, but these neglected truths rise up and come back upon us in the retributive form of errors and heresies, which seem to meet the want in man, which this neglect of the whole truth has failed to supply.

Now to counterbalance this tendency you must, with the help of the Divine Spirit, train up men who know how to preach a *full-orbed* Gospel, how to present a *whole Christ*, not only for justification but also for sanctification, who will teach that there is not only a "*coming to Christ*" but "*an abiding in Him*" for all that the soul needs. You must send out preachers who not only know about God, but who *know God*, that He is a God of justice as well as of love, a Sovereign as well as a Father. To preach only half the Gospel is to commit a worse sin than Ananias, who kept back half the price.

But we cannot pursue these thoughts further. In one word, a ministry with a living experience of the truth is the remedy for the evils of the age, and the answer to the demands of the world.

One word more in conclusion. You, my Brother, stand in a historic position. The name of this Seminary is known in all the world. Its chief distinction is its Biblical teaching. The ground of its faith is the *Bible*. Its only question is, "What has God said?" Its only proof

is God's Word. Its professors have never reached the point of thinking that they knew more than the Bible. This Seminary has always taught that there are but two questions to be considered. *First.* Is this the Word of God? *Secondly.* What does it mean? and this ascertained, there is nothing left but to believe and adore. The preaching which has always been taught in this Seminary and illustrated in the pulpits of its graduates has been simple Biblical preaching; not that kind of Biblical preaching which strings texts together, and repeats them like a Romish saint his beads in an endless rote and in a sacred monotone which charms to sleep, but that intelligent Biblical preaching which makes the text emit thought as the sun emits light, which couples God's Word and man's doctrine like voice and echo, and which puts such life and interest into discussion as to make the word a living oracle. The Princeton student has always been known by the honor which he puts upon the Divine Word.

My dear Brother, I need only to say to you "*continue in these things.*" You have the footsteps of godly and illustrious men before you. Shall I say to you "follow them?" Nay, there is a more sacred footprint before you. Better take your position here, as Mr. Standfast did in the river Jordan, and say, "My foot is fixed upon that on which the feet of the priests that bare the Ark of the Covenant stood, while Israel went over Jordan. I see that head which was crowned with thorns, and that face which was spit upon for me. His voice to me is most sweet, and His countenance I more desired than they that most desire the light of the sun. Wherever I see the print of His shoe in the earth, there I covet to set my foot too."

May God bless you, my Brother, and prepare you for your solemn work.

## Inaugural Address.

### DOGMATIC CHRISTIANITY,

THE ESSENTIAL GROUND OF PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY.

FATHERS AND BRETHREN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

In obedience to your call, I am here to assume the solemn trust involved in teaching Christian theology in this Seminary. Doubtless the design of associating an inaugural address with the induction of a new professor into such a charge is to afford him an opportunity of satisfying you, as the responsible guardians of the institution, with respect to his theological convictions and method.

I therefore affirm my belief that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in their integrity *are* the Word of God, as a whole and in every part infallible and binding the conscience, and the only divinely authentic informant and rule of faith in matters of religion. Christian theology is wholly in the Scriptures, and is to be drawn from them only by legitimate interpretation. This is true of systematic as absolutely as of exegetical or of Biblical theology. The system lies in the relations of the facts, and their relations are determined by their nature, as that is disclosed by the words of the Holy Ghost. The systematic theologian as well as the exegete is only an interpreter; the one interprets the words and develops the revealed truths; the other interprets these separate lessons in their mutual light and reciprocal relations, and develops the revealed system.

More definitely I affirm, not as a professional propriety, but as a personal conviction, that the Confession and Cate-

chisms of the Westminster Assembly contain the system taught in the Holy Scriptures. Or rather, in the more absolute terms of subscription imposed upon intrants by the Scottish Presbyterian Churches, "I do sincerely own and believe the WHOLE DOCTRINE contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by former General Assemblies of this Church, to be founded upon the Word of God, and do acknowledge the same as the confession of my personal faith, and will firmly and constantly adhere thereunto, and to the utmost of my power will assert, maintain, and defend the same." This is affirmed, not only because I believe this "whole doctrine" to be true, but because I also believe this "system of doctrine" to be the most complete and adequate presentation as yet attained by the Church of that truth revealed in the Holy Scriptures, which the Holy Ghost has declared to be "the power of God unto salvation." For therein Christ and His work is exhibited in their relation to human needs, experiences, duties, and destinies, and it is, therefore, the efficient instrument of forming character, of ruling action, and of effecting salvation.

It is precisely this last position which in the present day is so earnestly and in such various quarters denied. Besides the numerous classes of professed unbelievers, who positively reject Christianity, or the integrity and authority of its records, or at least some of its essential doctrines, there are many more, because of their position of professed friendliness, doing incalculably more harm, who, expressing no opinion as to the objective truthfulness of the church system of doctrines, maintain that it is at any rate unessential because impractical and unprofitable. Hence, they insist that the careful elaboration, and the prominent and ceaseless emphasis which the Church gives to doctrine imperils the interests of religion, by dividing those otherwise agreed, by rendering the candid

examination of new truth impossible through the bias of foregone conclusions, and by diverting the attention of Christian people from the great practical and moral interests of life to matters of barren speculation. They charge the Church with exalting creed above morals, and faith above character. They insist upon it, that the norm of Christianity is to be found in the Sermon on the Mount, and as such it is proved to be a religion of character, not of creed; and hence, that it is the duty of the Church to regard immoral action as the only heresy.

This tendency to depreciate the importance of clearly discriminated views of religious truth, rests in the case of different objectors upon very different grounds, and is carried to very different degrees. But against this entire tendency, which opposes creed and morals, faith and character, in all its forms and intensities, we protest, and proclaim the opposite principle as fundamental,—that truth is in order to holiness, and that knowledge of the truth is an essential prerequisite to right character and action.

The force of the objections against the importance of clearly discriminated truth in the sphere of religion is mainly the result of the vagueness with which the objections are stated. When it is charged against the Church, as its record stands in history, that it has subordinated moral and practical interests to those of scholastic speculation and party contests, there is a coloring of truth in the charge which commands attention, and disguises the real animus and ultimate aim of the objectors.

In order to clear the question of accidental complications, which constantly confuse the current discussions of it, we make the following admissions and distinctions:

1st. We concede that one of the sins most easily besetting theologians has been a tendency to over-refinement in speculation, over-formality of definition, and an excess of rigidity of system. Logical notions, creatures of the

understanding, have too often been substituted for the concrete form of spiritual truth presented by the Holy Ghost to faith. Theologians have often practiced a rationalism as real as that of their modern opponents, when their ambition to be wise beyond what is written has urged them to explore and explain divine mysteries, to philosophize on the basis of scriptural facts, and to form rational theories, as, for instance, of the relation of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ, and of the concursus of the first with second causes in Providence.

2d. We admit also that zeal for doctrine has in too many instances been narrow and prejudiced, mingled with the infirmities of personal pride and party spirit, and has hence led to the unnecessary divisions and alienations of those who were in reality one in faith, and to the conditioning of communion, and even of salvation, upon unessential points. Human nature has operated among earnest theological advocates with the uniformity and blindness of a physical law, leading each to choose a position as far as possible from his opponent—to unduly emphasize some Scriptures and depreciate others—to confine his attention to the fragment of truth he champions, exaggerating its proportions, and denying or minimizing the qualifying truths represented by his antagonist. This law has led to the multiplying of special theological tendencies, and to their development in all possible directions and to every possible extent, and has thus been providentially overruled to the extension of our knowledge, and to the ultimate establishment of the truth in wider relations. But the habit is in itself obviously evil, since for the individuals immediately concerned it sacrifices the truth as a whole to special elements, which by exaggeration or dissociation from their natural relations become virtually untruths. This is illustrated in the whole history of controversies, *e. g.*, between Nestorians and Mono-

physites, Lutherans and Reformed as to the person of Christ, between Supralapsarian Calvinists and Arminians, Churchmen and Puritans, Mystics and Formalists. It is plainly the duty of the individual to understand as fully as possible the position of his respondent, and to incorporate the other's fragment of truth with his own into the catholic whole.

3d. We must admit also that some advocates of theological dogma have lacked the courage of their convictions, and have betrayed their want of perfect confidence in the foundations on which they have builded by a disposition to discourage the fearless investigations of new truth in all directions, and to put an ungenerous interpretation upon all opinions to which their own minds were unaccustomed.

We claim to be sincere advocates of free investigation, in the true sense of that word, in every direction open to man. The believer in the supernatural revelation contained in God's Word is placed on a higher and more central point of vision than that of the mere naturalist, and he is thus rendered free of the whole sphere of truth. The true relation of the successive realms of the universe of being and knowledge can be read by one looking upon them from within outward and not from without inward, from above downward and in the direction in which the supreme light of revelation radiates, and not from below upward upon the side on which the shadows fall.

But it is absurd to suppose that true intellectual progress consists in a mere change of opinions, or that it is consistent with the destruction of the foundations which have been laid in the verified knowledge of the past. Truth once adequately established must be held fast forever, while we stand prepared to add to it all new truth substantiated by equal evidence. And it is a law which all educated men should be ready to acknowledge as axiom-

atic, that truth in any department once established must ever after hold the place of valid presumptions, influencing the course of new investigations in every department. Ruskin well testifies, "It is the law of progressive human life that we shall not build in the air, but in the already high-storied temple of the thoughts of our ancestors," and that any addition successfully made can "never be without modest submission to the Eternal Wisdom, nor ever in any great degree except by persons trained reverently in some large portion of the wisdom of the past."

It cannot be doubted that what is held by men as truth in any one department of knowledge must, in the long run, be brought into conscious adjustment with all that they hold as truth in every other department. That which is false in philosophy cannot long be believed to be true in religion, and conversely, that which is false in religion can never be rightly regarded true in philosophy. Consequently, in the rapid development of the physical sciences which characterizes the present age, it is inevitable that there should be serious difficulty in so adjusting all the elements as to allow us to become clearly conscious of the congruity in all respects of the new knowledge with the old. It is not to be wondered at even that at several points there is an apparently irreconcilable antagonism. But when we recall the obvious distinction between facts and theories, between established knowledge and provisional hypothesis, we are readily reassured by the recollection it suggests that the historic track of human thought is strewn with the wrecks of systems, of cosmogonies, and anthropologies, as certainly believed and as influential in their day as any of the anti-theological systems of the present day.

We should unquestionably open our doors wide, with a joy equal to her own, for all the facts which science gathers in her harvest-time. But is it not absurd to ask the be-

lievers in the great Church Creeds of Christendom to abandon, to modify, or to mask that ancient and coherent mass of knowledge which roots itself in the profoundest depths of human nature, and in all human history, which has verified itself to reason and every phase of experience for two thousand years, which has moulded the noblest characters, inspired the most exalted lives, and inaugurated the very conditions which made modern science and civilization possible—to modify or abandon all this in deference to one or the other of the variant and transient speculations which each in his little day claims to speak in the venerable name of science?

We admit also that all Christian doctrine, like all other truth, rests on evidence appropriate in kind and adequate in degree. Nor is it denied that human reason legitimately exercised is the organ by which alone this divine truth is to be apprehended and its credentials examined and verified. These evidences ought to be subjected to the most thorough legitimate examination. He is a false or a mistaken advocate of the truth who would impede such investigation or who fears the result. Most of those who depreciate Christian dogma as incapable of certain verification, or as impractical and unprofitable, simply beg the question as to these evidences. All such we refer to the Christian Apologist, who is fully prepared to meet all reasonable demands. At present we assume the truth of our dogma, and claim, that being true, every fragment of it is of transcendent importance as to the God-appointed means of effecting the moral and spiritual regeneration of human character and life.

4th. We moreover admit without hesitation that theologians must themselves be held to their own principle that truth is in order to holiness; that the great end of dogma is not the gratification of the taste for speculation, but the formation of character and the determination of

the activities of our inward and outward life in relation to God and our fellow-men. There is a patent distinction between the logical and the moral aspects of truth, between that manner of conceiving and stating it which satisfies the understanding and that which affects the moral nature and determines experience. Neither can be neglected without injury to the other. For if the laws of the understanding are essentially outraged, the moral nature cannot be either healthfully or permanently affected; that which is apprehended as logically incongruous by the understanding, cannot be rested in as certainly true and trustworthy by the heart and conscience and will. But all the great doctrines of the Scriptures may be apprehended on the side and in the relations which immediately determine the moral attitude of the soul in relation to God. It is possible, for instance, to treat the Biblical teaching as to the sinful estate into which man has fallen and from which he has been redeemed by Christ, as a metaphysical or a psychological problem, in which its reality and bearings, as a matter of experience, may be to a great degree disguised. On the other hand, it may be set forth, as it always is in Scripture, as it is realized in consciousness, and as it enters into all religious experience. If, as is asserted, religious experience is only the personal experience of the truth of the great doctrines of Christianity, as we are personally concerned with them, it follows that they must be conceived and stated in a form in which they admit of being realized in the experience. Any theological method which sacrifices the moral and experiential aspects of the truth to a metaphysical and speculative interest will soon lose its hold upon the consciences of men, and itself experience that law of change which determines the fluctuations of all mere speculative systems.

With these admissions and distinctions, we return to

our theme, that the truth revealed in the Scriptures, and embraced in what evangelical Christians style Christian dogma, is the great God-appointed means of producing in men a holy character and life. At present neither the general truth of Christianity nor that of any particular system of theology claiming to represent it, is the question. But the truth of Christianity being assumed, we affirm that the truths set forth in the Word of God in their mutual relations, are necessary means of promoting holiness of heart and life. That is, that dogmatic Christianity is the essential ground of practical Christianity.

1st. This will be made evident when we consider what Christianity really is and what is the essence of Christian doctrine. Unlike all philosophies, it is not a speculative system built up on certain principles or seminal ideas. It is, on the contrary, a divinely authenticated statement of certain facts concerning God, His nature, His attitude towards man as fallen, His purpose with regard to man's redemption from sin, and several stages of His actual intervention to effect that end. This redemptive work Christ has been, and is now engaged in accomplishing by several actions in chronological succession. The revelation of these purposes and redemptive actions has been evolved through an historic process, the separate facts of which are as definitely ascertainable as those which constitute any other history. Christian doctrine, therefore, is just God's testimony with regard to certain matters of fact, with which the religious life of the race is bound up. A distinction has been pressed, beyond all reason, between the matter of fact taught in Scripture and doctrines which, it is asserted, men have inferred from or have superadded to the facts, as hypothetical explanations of them. By matters of fact the liberal school means the external events of Christ's history as these were observed by the bodily senses of human witnesses, and assured to

us by their testimony; and these external facts of sense, perception, and nothing more, they admit to be valid objects of faith, forgetful that a more advanced and consistent school of their fellow-rationalists overset these external facts just as confidently as they themselves flippantly relegate dogma to the religion of the unknowable. These men admit, for instance, that we know, as a matter of "fact," that Christ died on the cross, and rose from the dead the third day; but they hold that the design with which he died or that the relation which His death sustains to man's restoration to the divine favor are matters of speculative opinion, but no matter of "fact."

The word "fact" in universal usage signifies not merely an action, a thing done, but as well any objective reality, and by way of eminence, a reality of which we have adequate certainty, in distinction from a matter of opinion or probable reality. Now that Christ died and rose again as our representative, that His death was a vicariously endured penalty, is plainly as purely a *matter of fact, i. e.,* objective reality, as definitely and certainly verifiable on the direct testimony of God, as the dying and rising again themselves. All that a witness in the Hall of Independence on the 4th of July, 1776, would have seen with his bodily eyes would have been the physical acts of certain men subscribing their names to a written paper; that was the optical perception, and nothing more. But no man would be absurd enough to deny that it is just as much a "fact," and just as certain a "fact," that they subscribed their names as the representatives of certain political communities, with the design and effect of changing their political constitutions and relations. The sensible transaction and its legal intent and effect were equally matters of "fact," and ascertainable with equal precision and certainty upon adequate evidence. Now the matter of fact of which Christian dogmas are the revealed expression

and attestation are those which more than any other conceivable facts are of transcendent importance and of immediate practical interest to mankind. The tri-personal constitution of the Godhead, and His essential attributes and eternal purposes—His relation to the world as Creator, providential Ruler, and moral Governor—His judgment of man's present guilt, corruption, and impotence as a sinner—His purposes of grace, and the provision made for their execution, in the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity, and in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension to universal dominion of the God-man—the work of the Holy Ghost—the institution of the Church—the resurrection of the body, the judgment and eternal condemnation of the finally impenitent and glorification of believers—these are the FACTS.

In every department of life all practical experience and activity is constantly determined by the external facts into relation to which we are brought, and upon our knowledge of and voluntary conformity to these facts. All modern life, personal, social, and political, is notoriously being changed through the influence of the facts brought to our knowledge in the advances of the physical sciences. All moral duties spring out of relations, as those of husband and wife, parent and child, citizen and community. All religion is morality lifted up to the sphere of our relations to God, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as Creator, Moral Governor, Redeemer, Sanctifier, and Father. Our question, at present, is not whether our theological dogmas are true, but whether, being true, they are of practical importance. Much of the cavil against their use is only a disingenuous begging the question as to their truth. We prove them to be true in the department of Apologetics, which draws upon all the resources of philosophy and historical criticism. And having proved them to be true, we now assert, in advance,

that morality and religion are possible only so far as these facts are recognized, and our inward and outward life adjusted to them. It would be incomparably more reasonable to attempt to accomplish all the offices pertaining to the departments of agriculture, navigation, and manufactures, while ignoring all the ascertained facts of the natural world, than it would be to attempt to accomplish the offices of morality and religion while ignoring the facts of the spiritual world signified and attested to us in Christian dogma.

2d. Again, our proposition that knowledge and belief of scriptural truth is the essential means of the production of holiness in heart and life, may be demonstrated upon universally admitted psychological principles. Knowledge is the act of the subject knowing, apprehending the truth. Truth is the object apprehended and recognized in the act of knowledge. In every act of apprehension there is required the object to be apprehended, and the apprehensive power upon the part of the agent apprehending. "The eye sees only that which it brings with it the power of seeing." All truth of every kind stands related to the human mind, and the mind is endowed with constitutional faculties adjusted to it, and effecting its apprehension. As an actual fact, however, in the present state of the race, many individuals are found incapable of apprehending and recognizing some kinds of truth. For the apprehension of some truth a special endowment and cultivation of the understanding is necessary; for the recognition of other truth a special temperament and cultivation of taste is requisite, and for the apprehension of other truth again a special condition and habit of the moral and spiritual nature. In the actual condition of human nature the truths revealed in the Scriptures cannot be discerned in their spiritual quality as the things of God. But when the soul is quickened to a new form of

spiritual life by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, this very truth, now discerned, becomes the instrument whereby the new spiritual life is sustained and developed. This accords with the analogy of the constitutional action of the soul in every sphere of its activity. The perception of beauty depends upon the possession of the æsthetic faculty. But that being possessed, the æsthetic culture of the soul depends upon the contemplation of beautiful objects, and the knowledge of the law of beauty in the endless variety of its forms. It is a law having no exception that the exercise of the perceptive faculty necessarily precedes and conditions the exercise of the affections and the will. Beauty must be apprehended before it can be appreciated and loved. Moral truth must be apprehended before it can be loved or chosen, and only thus can the moral affections be trained and strengthened. Mere feeling and mere willing without knowledge are absolutely impossible experiences, and if possible, they would be irrational and immoral. It is the grand distinction of Christianity that it is ethical and not magical in all its processes and spirit. It rests on facts. It moves in the sphere of personal relations. It is a spiritual power acting through the instrumentality of truth addressed to the reason, and made effectual upon the soul by the power of the Divine Spirit. And the truth, through the medium of knowledge spiritualized, acts on the emotions and will, and transforms character and governs life.

It is unquestionable that every one of the dogmas of Christianity, when spiritually apprehended, bears directly upon the moral and spiritual attitude and experience of the soul. A man can experience due sense of sin and repentance thereof only as he apprehends the truth of the scriptural teaching as to the guilt, pollution, and impotence inherent in the condition of our race as sinful. A man can realize a true evangelical attitude and experi-

ence of soul in relation to the several Persons of the God-head only as he receives the scriptural doctrine as to redemption in all its elements and in all its fulness. Christian doctrine thus acts upon and sets into spiritual exercise every one of the faculties of the human soul after its special kind, and thus instrumentally forms and disciplines to a perfect growth each of these spiritual habits or special modes of the action of those faculties which we call the Christian graces. And the spiritualized soul, in the exercise of faith, "acteth differently upon that which every" doctrine "containeth, yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatening, and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come." And thus Christians grow in the unity of the faith and "of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

3d. Having thus seen the relation which the knowledge of the truth sustains to spiritual character and experience, as determined by the constitutional laws of human nature, I now assert, in addition, that the Scriptures clearly affirm that God has recognized this constitutional principle and availed Himself of it by ordaining the doctrines of His Word to be His instruments in effecting His purposes of regenerating human nature. Christ prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth." In His great commission He commanded His Apostles to disciple all nations by teaching them whatsoever He had commanded them. He that believeth, *i. e.*, knows and accepts and obeys the truth, shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned. The doctrine as a whole is declared to be the power of God unto salvation, and to be quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of

the thoughts and intents of the heart. The Psalmist, whom the Holy Ghost honored to be His organ in instructing the Church by presenting to it the expression of a typical religious experience, celebrates the uses of theological dogma under a variety of descriptive titles, "The *testimony* of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the *statutes* of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the *commandment* of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the *fear* of the Lord is clear, enduring forever; the *judgments* of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." To which the great Christian Apostle adds, that "all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness."

4th. In confirmation of this truth, we appeal in the last place to the history of the Church in all ages. While we acknowledge that an unspiritual scholasticism has often done its best to transform the great concrete truths of revelation into mere general notions and verbal propositions, yet we confidently affirm that marked activity in the cultivation of theology on a Biblical basis and in an evangelical spirit, has always been one of the essential conditions of every revival or advance of general church life, whether *intensive* in the elevation of the ideal of Christian character, or *extensive* in the development of missions.

It is notorious that secular critics affirm that the prevalent moral catastrophes occurring in the ranks of professed Christians, and the comparative failures of the Church to raise the moral standard of the community, is due to an unacknowledged want of confidence in the objective reality of Christian dogmas which prevails in secret. This is a virtual confession of our affirmation that in the existing state of human nature the prevalence of morality and religion among the masses of men is possible only in proportion as the facts expressed by Christian dogma are known and realized as true.

But it may be rejoined by the depreciator of scientific theology, "Admitting all you have claimed as to the use and necessity of the truth in the form and order in which it is stated in the very language of Scripture, what is the authority for your system-making, and what the use of your theological dogma in its systematic form?"

To this challenge we answer:

1st. The Scriptures themselves suggest the systematic construction of the truths they communicate, and afford inspired examples of all the various processes by which theological dogma is generated.

(1.) As before pointed out, Christian doctrine is God's own account and interpretation of the historical facts of His interventions for human redemption. The facts themselves have occurred in historical order. The inspired account has also been gradually developed through the successive Scriptures in an historical order. There has been a progressive evolution of divine teaching by the concurrent action of a supernaturally ordered history and a supernaturally inspired order of prophets from the beginning. Each prophet received the entire antecedently accumulated volume of revelations from his predecessors, and has transmitted it to his successors enlarged and illuminated with his own specific contribution. The revelation does not consist in set categorical statements, but in this historical evolution through sixteen centuries, through successive dispensations, through sixty-six separate books, composed by about forty different writers in every form of composition, the germs and shadowy outlines of truths gradually unfolded into the complete disclosures of the finished canon. This method of revelation of course necessitates the interpretation of the Bible as an organic whole—the tracing of the divine teaching in every element of it from its dawn to its culmination—the determination of the mutual relations of each part to each

other part and to the whole, and thus by directly disclosing a system of revelation running through dispensations and centuries, it incidently discloses the systematic relations of the facts and principles revealed.

(2.) The Apostolical writing and preaching afford constant examples of all the processes by which theological dogma is generated, as, for instance, analysis, logical inference, generalization, dogmatic definition.

(a.) Peter and Stephen, in their great addresses recorded in Acts, and Paul, in all his Epistles, draw inferences from selected passages of the Old Testament.

(b.) They all subject the data of Old Testament history to a logical treatment, and generalize Christian doctrine from a wide historical induction.—Acts. 2 : 14–36, 7 : 2–53; Rom. 4 and Heb. 2.

(c.) They continually appeal to the rational and moral intuitions of men.—Acts 17 : 27–29; Rom. 1 : 19, 20; 2 : 12–15. They assume and incorporate into their teaching a definite psychology, and their doctrines as to sin and grace correspond to the human faculties of knowing, thinking, feeling, and willing. They assert (1.) That man possesses a spiritual nature, which is the true seat of his personality; (2.) The validity and finality of intuitive truth as shown above; (3.) That man is a free agent, and therefore responsible; (4.) The relation of the affections and desires to volition; James 1 : 15, and see usage of *θέλημα* and *θελήματα*, 1 Cor. 7 : 27 and Phil. 2 : 13; (5.) The supremacy of conscience, Rom. 14 : 14, 1 Cor. 10 : 27–29, Rom. 2 : 14, 15; (6.) That responsibility is not measured by ability, Rom. 7 : 14–25 and 8 : 7; (7.) The law of habit *ἔξως*, Heb. 5 : 14, Rom. 1 : 21–31.

(d.) In their Epistles, the Apostles characteristically settle practical questions not by mere positive directions, but by appeals to principles grounded in the widest relation of revealed facts and doctrines, as, for example, the

debate as to circumcision among the Galatians, and as to the position of women in the Church among the Corinthians. They, moreover, were determined in the subject and form of their doctrinal developments by the collisions into which they were providentially brought with errorists either within or without the Church, *e. g.*, the tendency to latitudinarianism among the Corinthians, and the tendency to relapse into Judaistic legality and ritualism among the Galatians. This polemic principle has determined the development of doctrine in all subsequent time.—See *Delivery and Development of Christian Doctrine*, by Principal Rainy, pp. 87 and 208.

(*e.*) The Epistle to the Romans is a dogmatic treatise of the most systematic kind, as any competent analysis of the Epistle will show down to the minutest ramification of the argument.

(*f.*) Paul also, with characteristic boldness, exhibits the broad analogies and systematic articulations of the divine scheme of redemption, as, for instance, when he traces the parallelisms between Adam and Christ, or the relations of the Mosaic law, moral and symbolical, to the Gospel, or when he sketches a complete *ordo salutis* from the eternal purpose through effectual calling, justification, sanctification to glorification.

2d. Our second argument is derived from the fact that however much men and schools may differ as to the degree of dogmatic construction which they regard as admissible, yet it is unquestionable that some good degree of it is universal because absolutely unavoidable. Indeed, there is no class of men who dogmatize more dogmatically than the Agnostics themselves, or who show a more malignant spirit in controversy, as in the conspicuous instance of Mr. Matthew Arnold. "To disbelieve is to believe," as Dr. Whately truly affirms. The difference is that the dogmatism of each Agnostic is founded

on his own personal unsupported reason and self-will. While the dogmatism of the Christian Church is an act of obedience to the teaching authority of Christ, and is the consenting and mutually supporting experience and confession of an innumerable company of elect saints of all ages.

(1.) The formation of dogma is absolutely necessary for the simplest exegetical unfolding of the text of Scripture. If the whole Bible is admitted to be one as the Word of Jehovah, it must be interpreted in all its parts as every other book must be, in the light of the analogy of the whole. The mind of God expressed in one passage must throw light upon his mind expressed in another passage. If one Scripture declares that Christ is less than the Father, it can be interpreted only in connection with the limiting statements that He is equal to and one with the Father. All said of His birth must be interpreted in the light of what is said of His pre-existence; all taught of His humanity must be interpreted in the light of that which is affirmed as to His divinity. The teaching of the Scriptures as to redemption, justification, regeneration, etc., necessarily presuppose all that they teach as to human sinfulness.

(2.) Doctrinal construction is also rendered absolutely inevitable by the laws of human intelligence. All the objects of our knowledge are necessarily believed to be mutually consistent. They cannot be believed to be true if they are seen to be mutually contradictory. And there is in every mind, even the most sluggish, a gradual process of unintentional, if not of unconscious, co-ordination, by which the whole mass of our knowledge tends to be digested into systematic unity. 'Glaring' incongruities of faith may coexist for a time, but in the long run one or other element of belief gains the mastery, and adjusts the whole to itself. Every reader of the Scriptures, however igno-

rant or skeptical, has, as a matter of fact, a dogmatic system of his own, however crude. The only question is whether we will have a true or a false one; one formed by ourselves alone, or one which we freely and intelligently reach by aid of all of the associated Christian thought and experience of all the ages.

(3.) This necessity is made, if possible, more evident when we recognize the fact that the Scriptures are given to the Church as a community of individuals. As such the Church must come to a common understanding as to what the Scriptures teach, and as such she must teach that truth to others, and defend it from all errorists. This necessity for a common understanding at once leads to the necessity for common statements of doctrine, for conventions as to technical terms, definitions, and extended creeds. The duty of defending the truth from errorists must lead to controversies, and through them, as all history shows, to more precise definitions and to more articulate systematizing.

(4.) It is only through such a process that the Church has been able to advance towards a complete knowledge of all the contents of Scripture. Since, as before shown, objective truth forms character and governs conduct upon condition of its being subjectively apprehended in knowledge, it follows that the more comprehensive our knowledge of the truth the more complete will be our experience of its beneficial influence upon character and conduct. Now it is evident that this comprehensive knowledge of the contents of Scripture can be attained only through this process of systematic construction of dogma, in constant union with an ever fresh and spiritual exegesis of the text. The nature of the *truth* determines the relations of the *truths*, and is discerned by the same mental acts by which the relations are discriminated. The most abstruse and transcendental doctrines, such as the Trinity, the

Person of Christ, the eternal decrees, providential and gracious concursus, have, as all religious history proves, the most intimate and vital relations with all other truth taught in Scripture, and with every condition of religious experience. A man's conceptions of these gives form, whether he will or not, to all his thinking, feeling, or teaching upon religious subjects. They are articulated in every possible involution of thought and experience as expressed in all Christian liturgies and sacred hymns. At the same time they tend to build up theology into system, and to mould religious life into conformity to God.

Besides this, it is an accepted axiom that all error is partial truth, that is, truth dis severed from its relations in the entire system. Yet error is no less misleading and morally corrupting because its elements are dislocated half-truths. It is only a counter process that can cure the evil by giving us the whole truth in its integrity—that is, the truth as a whole, which is, synonym for system. To see the truth as a whole is to know the only pure truth. As the essence of error consists in an apprehension of a part out of its relations, so the essence of the truth is its integrity, a perfect sphere, comprehending all of its parts in their true relations.

3d. Finally, another necessity for systematic construction of explicitly defined dogma, eminently important in this age of general disintegration, is found in the unparalleled power of a coherent system of truth to resist pressure from without. This is a property which distinguishes systems of truths and systems of error. A system of error, when once undermined in its radical principles, must collapse at once by very force of the general coherence of the parts. But an articulate system of truth, on the other hand, rooted in fact, touching history, experience, consciousness at every point, and braced together by the reciprocal support of every part, has proved to be invincible.

An apparently overwhelming pressure at any one point leads to a reaction, induced by the elasticity of the coherent parts of the whole.

In the face of the deluge of aggressive unbelief, we are invited by not a few sentimental friends to disembarrass ourselves of the incumbrance of system in order that each man of us may escape with some dislocated fragment in his grasp. From their slowly dissolving islands of half-truths—slowly dissolving according to their own vociferous affirmation—they call us to leave the old continent which has survived the convulsions of ages, because bound together and buttressed by the primary granite rocks of God's truth entire. They fear the continent will break down of its own weight, while they hope that their soft, undulating islands will escape destruction by yielding, if not overlooked because of their insignificance. Whether this policy of preserving the truth by means of its disintegration be urged upon us by subtle enemies or by silly friends, we intend to refuse it utterly. We will maintain the whole truth to be the only pure truth, and the whole truth to be the truth as a whole—a complete system divinely revealed in all its parts, and invincible through the comprehension of all the parts in the whole.

Fathers and Brethren of the Board of Directors, your representative in his charge has reminded me that the chair to which I am called is historical, having for sixty-five years from the beginning been occupied only by Archibald Alexander and Charles Hodge. Alas, sirs, when I think of myself, I often cry, "Woe is me, that such a one as I should be called to inherit the responsibilities descending in such a line." And when I think of the Church, I cry with a far sorer wonder, "What times are these when such a man as I should be made to stand in such a place?" But God has done it. He has chosen a vessel earthen indeed, that the excellency of the power may be the more

conspicuously shown forth to be His own alone. Directors, since your responsibilities in the matter are at least equal to my own, I can surely claim your prayers that in this service to-day inaugurated *God's* strength may be made perfect in *weakness*.