

# New Presbyterian Seminary Building

Pictures from Photographs  
Made by a Bee Staff Artist



EXTERIOR VIEW NEW BUILDING OF THE OMAHA PRESBYTERIAN SEMINARY.



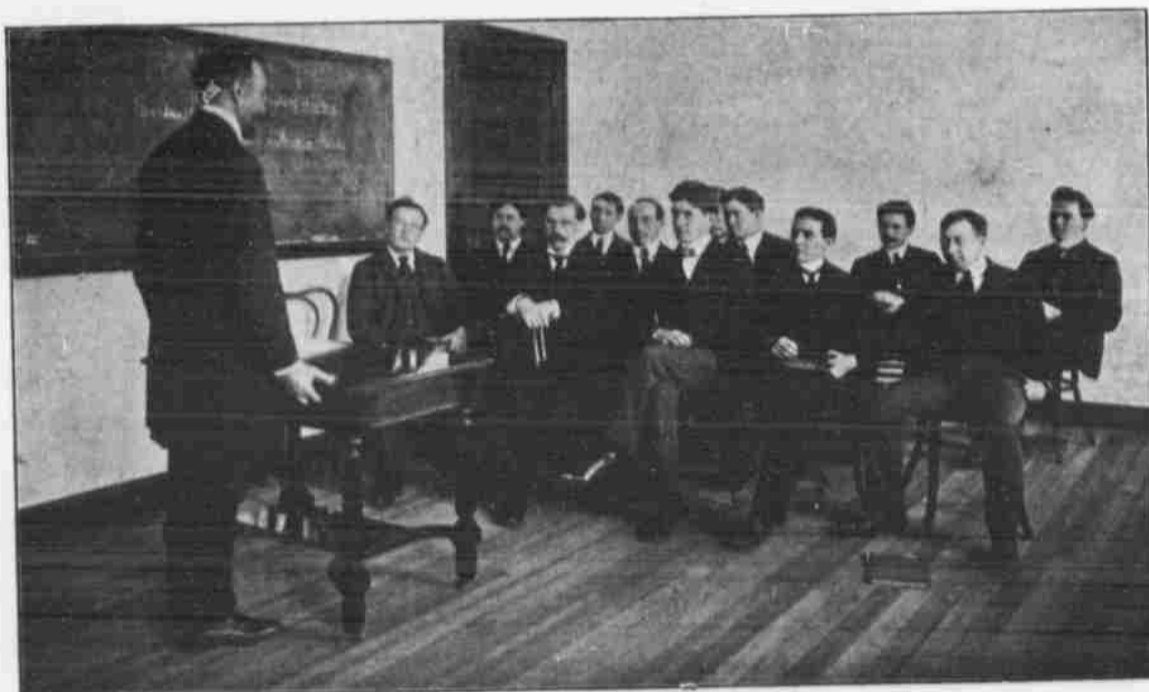
CORNER OF THE RECEPTION ROOM.



DR. A. G. WILSON IN HIS STUDY.



STUDENT'S ROOM IN DORMITORY.



ONE OF THE CLASS ROOMS.



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY.

**T**HE COMPLETION of the new building for the Omaha seminary of the Presbyterian church, which was the largest undertaking from a financial point of view in religious circles during the year 1902, marks a long step in advance for the Presbyterians in this vicinity, and, in fact, for the members of that denomination throughout the entire transmissouri country. In fifty years the church has not founded a new theological seminary, excepting the Omaha school. A circle drawn about Pittsburg with a radius of five hundred miles, would cover all the eastern institutions of learning conducted by the denomination. Then there is the McCormack seminary in Chicago, 500 miles to the east of us, the Louisville college and the seminary for the Pacific slope, located at San Francisco.

Fifty years ago these schools were ample, but now, with the development of the great northwest and of the states which immediately surround Nebraska, a great need has arisen for a school, which the older institutions are too distant to supply. It can be seen what a great territory is tributary to the Omaha school. In the next few years, with the natural increase of population in this region, a corresponding advance can be looked for on the part of the seminary, both in the direction of usefulness and of material improvement. It is asserted that during the twelve years which the seminary has been in existence, it has grown more rapidly than any one of the older institutions did during a like formative period. At any rate, starting under the worst of conditions, it has been kept out of debt, has sent out seventy-five graduates and has acquired property to the value of about \$100,000. Students are now in attendance from South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

In 1891 the seminary had its beginning. A conference of eighteen ministers and laymen met and decided that the time had come to begin the work of education in this city. For fifty years no new seminaries had been founded, and during that time the membership of the church doubled.

During the first period the struggling seminary had its existence in the study of the pastor of the First Presbyterian church. At first there was but one class, then a second was added and finally the senior class. The first professors were pastors of churches who taught without compensation in addition to their pastoral duties. This was the only way in which the seminary could have been started. Dr. W. W. Harsba, a pastor of Tecumseh, was the first president, and came here weekly to teach, returning to his church on Sundays. Dr. Stephen Phelps of the Council Bluffs church was another professor. Dr. M. B. Lowrie, now president of the seminary, was one of the first five instructors, coming here once a month from the Colorado church between Sundays for over two years. In 1893 he gave up his pastorate and came here to give his entire time to the seminary. He has now been serving for ten years continuously. Dr. John Gordon, pastor of Westminster church, and Charles G. Sterling of the Lowe Avenue congregation, were the local men on the original staff.

In 1895 Dr. A. G. Wilson of the Tekamah church joined the staff and the place of meeting was changed from the First to the basement of the Second Presbyterian church, where it continued for two years. It was during this time that the third class was added.

These quarters being too cramped for the growing seminary, the use of the building at Ninth and Farnam streets, now the Andrew hotel, was given by President S. H. H. Clark of the Union Pacific. During the spring of 1895 the old Cozzens hotel at Ninth and Harney streets was purchased for the use of the seminary by eastern friends without cost to the school. In 1899 Thomas McDougal of Cincinnati died and left the seminary his share in the building, and the others interested have since given their holdings to the institution.

In the fall of 1900, through the good offices of J. C. Wharton, an option was secured on a six-acre piece of ground in Kountze place, lying between Twentieth and Twenty-first streets on the east and west and Spencer and Emmet streets on

the south and north. As Lathrop street was not cut through, this made an undivided two city blocks, and an excellent location for the seminary buildings. Largely through the energy and skill of Mr. Wharton this property, worth easily \$30,000, was secured for the institution at the low figure of \$20,000. This amount was about half contributed by Omaha citizens, a considerable part of this being given in Kountze place.

"The great need now," said President Lowrie, "is for endowment. We have a faculty well qualified for their departments and a student can get as thorough, complete and practical an education here as in any of the seminaries of the church. Our graduates are eagerly sought for churches and we cannot supply the demand. In the past we have had to carry a double load—getting money for building and also for the living expenses and endowment of the institution. It will not be so hard in the future. We have already made a start.

(Continued on Fifth Page.)