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SERMON CCCCIII.

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GOD'S PROVIDENCE IN THE LATE FIRE.

"Except the Lord keep the city, the Watchman waketh but in vain."—
PSALM 127, 1.

OUR city has been visited by a terrible calamity. A FIRE, such as it was supposed could not again occur, has spread around us a desolation unequalled except by the memorable calamity of 1835. Manufactories and warehouses with their rich stocks of merchandise have been consumed; stately mansions have been laid in ruin; costly furniture has been strown about in one common wreck, while a military force has preserved it from pillage; families have been unhoused; the rich and the poor have been turned into the streets together, some watching with weary eyes the poor remnants of their property, and others made dependent upon charity for food and raiment. The fabrics of every art, the products of every clime, all that ministers to human comfort or luxury, served but to feed the insatiable flame. It devoured heaps of costly merchandise like chaff. The accumulations of years, the purchase of millions, that which might have clothed, and fed, and adorned a city, served only to redden the sky for a few hours, or to blacken the spot where it stood. Iron doors and granite walls presented no barrier to the raging element. These, shattered and riven, were heaped together in one promiscuous ruin. Plans of business were deranged; hopes of prosperity were frustrated; and a shock was given to the mercantile community, which, notwithstanding all our wealth and enterprise, must be seriously felt perhaps for years. Anxiety and alarm were spread far and wide, by

their midnight slumbers ere "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." There is a *day of fire* yet to burst upon our world; a day of judgment, when the Lord shall appear *in flaming fire* with his holy angels; a day of retribution, when a *fire* shall go before him and shall "devour his adversaries." "Who shall abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?" "Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burning." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"—for *our God is a consuming fire!* I warn you, dying fellow-men, to escape from that fire which burns to the lowest hell. You heard the cry of those who were struggling amidst the flames; you saw them leaving all and fleeing for their lives. Oh! be in earnest to escape a greater danger. Look not behind you, stay not in all the plain; flee to that *rock* which only shall withstand the fires that dissolve the universe.

SERMON CCCCIV.

BY REV. THOMAS BRAINERD.

PHILADELPHIA.

ON THE DEATH OF GENERAL JACKSON.

PREACHED IN THE PINE STREET CHURCH, SABBATH EVENING,
JULY 6, 1845.

"I exhort therefore that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men; for Kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godliness and honesty."—1 Tim. ii, 1, 2.

1. We are taught in this passage a respect for constituted authority. Almost any form of civil government is preferable to lawless anarchy, and therefore, Christians, subject even to Roman despotism were instructed to remember their rulers, as such, at the altar of prayer.

2. We are taught by the text the doctrines that God's Providence legislates over all rulers so that in answer to prayer, he will so "rule rulers and counsel counsellors," that their course of government shall bless their subjects.

3. We are taught in this passage that Christians are to regard

their civil duties and the welfare of their country, as a part of their religious obligations and responsibilities. They are so to deport themselves in their offices of holy living and prayer, as to bless mankind here, as well as hereafter. And if it be the duty of Christians to pray for those in authority, because rulers have a great influence on the weal or woe of their country, it may also be the duty of religious teachers to define, illustrate, and enforce the duties men owe to their country, as a part of the duties demanded by God. This I purpose to do this evening.

4. We learn from the text who are the best rulers, and who the happiest subjects. Those are the best rulers who so rule that their subjects, "lead quiet and peaceable lives in all Godliness and honesty." "Quiet and peaceable lives in all Godliness and honesty," suppose the protection of just laws, property, person, freedom and life made secure, and the subject himself estimating these blessings, pursuing a course of conduct marked by justice, temperance, moderation, benevolence and piety.

When these ends are secured, a nation has the highest tokens of God's favor.

The topics started directly, or by inference, from the text, suggest rich materials for thought and illustration, but I do not now purpose to dwell upon them in detail. I have suggested them not only because they sustain the main principles for which I shall contend, but because they afford license to the sacred desk for the discussion of these principles.

In this discourse I propose, without obligation to any logical arrangement, to discuss generally, the following topics.

What are the *essentials of national happiness and prosperity?*

What were the peculiar responsibilities of those who proclaimed our independence sixty-nine years since, and sustained it against a foreign power, and what are the duties peculiarly devolving on us to enrich and perpetuate our national blessings?

What lessons have been furnished to this nation by the life and death of one whose recent departure has aroused public attention and sympathy.

I can of course but briefly touch points of such magnitude.

What are the *essentials of national happiness and prosperity?*

Negatively, national happiness and prosperity do not depend on *extent of territory*. It is indeed requisite, that our territory should furnish fair scope for private enterprise and universal sustenance, but when we have already a domain which gives a plantation to every poor man who can invest two hundred dollars for its purchase—when our territory embraces the great rivers which conduct our commerce to the broad sea—when our climate is varied enough north and south to furnish the productions of every latitude—when our territory is large enough to embrace the resources of men and

means to defend us from foreign aggression—it is obvious we have no motive for conquest or acquisition.

2. Great *wealth* is not an essential ingredient of national happiness. All experience tells us that the middle condition of society is the happiest. Great wealth tends to excessive and morbid refinement and indulgence—it tempts to avarice, idleness, profligacy and licentiousness. The palmy days of Rome, of Tyre, of Babylon, were their days of enterprise and relative poverty. When they compelled the world to pour its riches into their bosoms, they sunk into the dead and putrid sea of effeminate and animalized luxury.

3. National happiness does not consist in great *military and naval* strength. True we need the power to defend our rights and interests, but beyond this our indefinite preparation of the instruments of death, only tempts to national bravado, to the lust of power and conquest, to oppression and legalized murder.

We have seen what are not essential to national happiness and prosperity. We are now prepared positively to state what are such essentials. And here allow me to make the very obvious remark, that a nation is not an abstraction, in distinction from the individuals of which it is composed. That is a happy nation in which there is the greatest amount of personal, social, family and neighborhood, felicity. It is obvious, then, that those causes which minister to the greatest good of individuals are the real essentials of national prosperity. The moral, social and pecuniary degradation of the individuals of a nation, is the degradation of the nation itself, no matter what may be the form of its government, or the loftiness of its pretensions. Keeping this principle in mind, I remark that the first essential to *national happiness is civil and religious freedom*. God has made man a free moral agent, and designed him to act for himself, under the influence of *self-love* and religious duty.

There is nothing which human nature more covets than liberty. Take away from a man the consciousness of freedom and the right of self-government—assume that he is born to be the slave of the interest, ease and pleasure of kings or petty tyrants and he feels degraded below the level of his race. The world becomes to him a prison—large, indeed, but sombre and hateful. The slave of despots may go to his task, but those cheering anticipations of benefit to himself and family, which lighten the burdens of labor, he can never know. The slave may eat and drink and dance in his chains, but his enjoyments are animalized, like those of the brute, to whose condition he is degraded.

Give a man liberty and he covets knowledge. Occupying his natural and Heaven-appointed condition of liberty, he loves light because it reveals his blessings and aids his aspirings, like the soaring bird that rises and floats in the airy element which God has

made its own. On the other hand, enslave a man, and he covets ignorance, like the mariner who closes his eyes against the vision of deadly rocks that he cannot shun. Where have new discoveries in science and new inventions in the arts originated? Almost always among the free, who expected to reap the results of their genius. Slavery is a most bitter curse, because it leaves man with his wants, his woes and his labors, but takes away the motives designed to soften the burdens of human life. In this land we are blessed with liberty, and it deserves all the eulogies which fourth of July orators have poured upon it. I have only to regret that our songs of joy, even in this land of freedom, are interrupted by the clanking chains of two millions of slaves. May God open the way for their final and safe emancipation!

II.—*A second requisite to national happiness is individual industry in some useful occupation.*—The wealth of a nation is made up of the earnings of individuals. If any individual, by industry and carefulness in business, accumulate beyond his own necessities, present and prospective, he is to remember that the decrepid, the sick, the imbecile and aged poor, the helpless widow, the friendless orphan, are to be sustained by the savings of the young, the healthful and the enterprising—so that no man has an apology for idleness. An idle man usually sinks to a vagrant. An idle family, whatever may be its present wealth, is on a rapid pilgrimage to vice, crime, beggary and contempt.

A nation, relinquishing industry and slow gains to embark in grasping speculation, presents a spectacle about as amiable, happy and hopeful as the gambling fraternities in our low grog-shops.

Every man, young or old, who spends time in idleness, would do well to remember that he is a missionary of moral corruption and universal beggary—that, if his example were imitated, we should have no country—or if we retained an empire, it would be a continent of darkness, pollution and vice. The Pharisee “thanked God he was not like other men.” Our idler, rich or poor, fashionable or unfashionable, may reverse this, and thank God that others are not like *him*.

He who covets food, shelter and life’s luxuries, without the industry to labor or the self-denial to save, has begun an apprenticeship to fraud and theft. When a nation is made up of such, it is unfit for liberty, and may covet the advent of an energetic despot as a boon from God.

III.—*A third essential to national prosperity and happiness is Temperance.* How wide-spread has been the prevalence of intemperance in our land! It has absorbed more money than all the expense of our revolution—all the outlay of our second war with Great Britain. It has absorbed more money than all our

academies, colleges—all our bible and missionary associations—all our hospitals and asylums. It has wrung this money from aged parents to gratify the appetite of profligate sons, and from the worn, weary, heart-sick wife and starving children, to gratify the diseased craving of a debased husband and father. This money has gone to fill the pockets of men who added nothing to the common stock of national wealth by their employment, but who first plucked their victims and then kicked them into the street. And have we lost nothing but money by this vice? The pilot has quaffed the cup, and, in the madness of intoxication, run his vessel at a great waste of life upon the deadly rock. From ships and steamboats, from stages and rail-road cars, from a thousand parts of our land, the shriek of fear and woe has come, because those entrusted with the safety of life had perpetrated reckless murder by sacrificing myriads to their own love of the cup.

And is the moral ruin of the victims of intemperance nothing? Who of us have not blushed at the degradation of some relative? Who of us have not visited the premature, sad grave of some relative, the victim of intemperance?

Now we must not, on the 4th of July, throw up our hats and shout that our fathers saved us from "a three-cent tax on tea," while we are coldly indifferent to the more cruel slavery which has ground to the dust hundreds of thousands of our citizens.

What tyrant on a throne, ever wrung from a living victim his health, his reason, his good affections, his self-respect, his reputation, his property, his industry and his undying soul?

Nero was merciful compared to this. Thank God, 80,000 of these victims have broken the yoke of the tyrant, and stand erect in the dignity of human nature and under the rainbow of hope.

But we must watch this cause. Our tongues will falter in their rejoicing over liberty till we see our country safe from intemperance. And we even shall distrust all pretensions to patriotism or philanthropy, which coldly regard the effort to make our country happy by making its citizens sober.

IV.—Another element of national happiness is *a spirit of peace and order*. We know how odious and how painful is the spirit of strife, contention, hatred and violence in a family or neighborhood. We know how malice embitters the enjoyment of an individual by gnawing the heart that cherishes it. Hence, we know that a nation, under the influence of a spirit of war and violence, is not only guilty, but miserable—not only robbed of communion with God, but hindered from the exercise of those sweet charities of the heart, which ennoble and bless a human soul. The spirit of war may for a time find its victims in foreign lands, but it nourishes a tiger thirst for human blood, which, sooner or later, leads to the carnage of civil war, when citizen butchers citizen. We ask that our po-

litical and religious opinions shall be treated with respect and toleration—we ask for the liberty to worship God, not only without fear of violence, but without opprobrium. We ask that our houses shall be safe from fear, so that our wives and children may rejoice around the domestic hearth and altar. We desire that all should cherish towards us sentiments of kindness and good-will. We must remember that we are no better than our race—that other men, and other families, and other nations, have the same desire and capacity for safety and enjoyment. If we ask for blessings at the hands of others, we should be as willing to grant as to take. To hate and injure others, of whatever nation or creed, is to break down those barriers which protect us and ours from violence and death. The right of self-defence we all admit. The duty to be prepared to resist wrong inflicted by another nation, may be as imperative as our duty to resist the midnight assassin. Still, I contend that the best protection of a nation against insult and injury, is the spirit of justice and peace. Who are the men that pass through life with universal respect and kindness? The peaceful and the just. Who is the man that is complaining of insults at home and abroad—of insults at parties—on railroads, in steamboats, and everywhere else? It is the man who is over jealous of his dignity—the man whose disposition to encroach on others, disposes others to encroach on him—the man whose ready appeal to personal violence tempts others to inflict violence on him.

He who should refuse to give way to others in Chesnut-street, would soon raise a mob. Jostling others, he would provoke the same spirit to jostle him, until he would be borne down by numbers. Let him courteously yield to others, and others will cheerfully give way for him. Men mirror back the temper we present.

In the Southwest, all are armed, expecting insults, and they soon find them. Here, we assume, that others are disposed to respect our rights, and they seldom disappoint us. The Empire of Rome, in the spirit of aggression, stretched her armies to the cold North, and stirred up the power that stung her to death. Napoleon nourished the spirit of war in France, until fear and hate brought at last a power from without to crush his empire. Great Britain is holding the world in fear. May she take warning by the fate of her rival. We are so insulated, that a peaceful spirit is safe as well as beautiful. If we teach our growing millions to love war, we shall rue it at last. "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword."

We want not tens of thousands of our young men to be corrupted by the camp; we want not the waste of millions of our own in efforts to waste the life and property of others; we want no flaming cities; no vessels exploded, and sinking, amid the cries of dying sailors; we want no wail of widows and orphans, over husbands and fathers prematurely slain; we want no interrupted in-

dustry, ruined commerce and down-trodden harvests ; we want no battle-fields, shrieking with the wounded and slippery with gore ; we want no war.

V. A fifth element of national prosperity and happiness, is the *universal prevalence of intellectual, moral and religious cultivation*. Let intellectual light be diffused, that the millions of our land may *know* their rights and their duties, social and religious. Let the truth of God be diffused to furnish those millions with the disposition and the motives to *do* their duty. The grand office of leading minds in 1776, was to rouse the mass of this nation to resist a foreign foe. They succeeded. Sixty-nine years of national existence and enlargement have raised us to an elevation above the fear of foreign enemies.

We have wrested the sceptre of government from a foreign despot, and reposed it where it ought to be, in the hands of the majority of this nation. Our destiny is no longer in the power of one man, but millions. If one man governed us, we should ask, with awful emphasis, what is his character ? If millions govern us, we may, with equal emphasis, ask what *is*, and *is to be*, the character of those millions ? Are they educated ? Are they moral ? Are they patriotic ? Do they fear God and respect the great principles of righteousness ? Who does not see the pertinence of these questions ? Who that loves his country does not feel their importance ? It is obvious, that while the grand mission of the Revolution was to battle down foreign domination, by fanning the spirit of martial feeling and resistance to tyranny, our great office, in the 69th year of independence, is, through the spirit of peace and universally diffused light, to educate into right principles and right action the millions who hold here the sceptre of power.

The revolution demanded the cultivation of the stronger passions—the nourishing of a sense of wrong, and the martial spirit to resist wrong. Now we need the passions to be soothed, lest they break out in violence on ourselves. Now we need to cultivate the intellect, the conscience and the heart, that men may “lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.”

The patriotism of the Revolution found its highest development, in hazarding life and property to defend the country. The high office of the distinguished patriot now is “fulfilled, by the exhibition of an example” of industry, temperance, self-control, of warm domestic affections, and love of public order in subjection to the laws of God and man—and of large and willing charters to diffuse that moral education, which shall elevate this entire nation to the practice of the same virtues.

The Revolution demanded agitation and exertions. We then asked for great changes. We have now gained our freedom and the means to defend it. Our true interest can now best be secured

by tranquillity and repose. We then had everything to gain by excitement and revolution. Now we have everything to lose.

A very remote predecessor in this pulpit, the Rev. Dr. Duffield, was associated with Bishop White as Chaplain to the Continental Congress. He was also for a time Chaplain in the Continental army. He made these old walls resound seventy years ago, with exhortations to the male members of this congregation to take up arms for their country. On a Sabbath morning, when the British were approaching, he told them he was "sorry to see so many yet at home."

It is now my duty, after seventy years, to exhort you to make similar great and patriotic sacrifices, to plant schools, academies, colleges and churches, in every destitute neighborhood, and to give your personal example and labors, to the great work of educating the youthful generation, that they, by their virtues, may be worthy to hold the inestimable blessing purchased by the blood of their fathers.

Dr. Duffield here prayed for the success of our arms in war. It is your duty and mine now to pray for the spirit of peace to be breathed over this great nation, that the arts of peace may beautify and enrich our domain from the sands of the Atlantic to the mild waves of the Pacific Ocean.

I must say here, although somewhat out of place, that our late President Jackson was always the warm friend and frequent patron of religious education. When the Rev. Samuel J. Mills was on a missionary tour to the West, his horse died, near Nashville. A great loss for a poor missionary. He was the guest of General Jackson, who promptly gave him another and better horse, as a mark of friendship to the cause.

A clergyman, now in New York city, of the highest standing, told me a few days since that when he was on a tour in Tennessee, twenty-five years ago or more, to obtain pecuniary means to build up the Presbyterian Theological Seminary at Maryville, Gen. Jackson was his best auxiliary. He gave him one hundred dollars most cheerfully, and volunteered a letter to all his friends in the South and West, urging the building up of such seminaries, as indispensable to the well-being of the country. Such testimony on such a point is valuable.

The grand instrument of national salvation in the revolution was the army, brave to defend their homes and their country. The grand instrument of saving this land now from idleness, intemperance, fraud and violence, and ultimate despotism, is the Church of God embraced in the various religious denominations. Her prayers are to propitiate Heaven's anger. Her active benevolence in good works, in promoting education and true religion, is to be the foundation of our national morality and prosperity. The moral virtues of no nation rise above its religion. When the

army of the revolution faltered in courage and self-sacrifice, the genius of our nation grew pale with fear and wept in sadness. When the Church of God in this land becomes self-indulgent, proud, sectarian and temporizing, forgetful of her high office, as Heaven's almoner of light and purity, angels in heaven might weep over a presage of national abandonment and sin. You will remember that in the most perplexing period of Gen. Jackson's administration, when clouds lowered over the whole political horizon, he was daunted by none of these things, but said "his greatest trouble was the schism in his favorite denomination—the Presbyterian Church." Partisans jeered him for this, accused him of hypocrisy, but is there any reason to doubt that his sagacious intellect saw that what impaired the influence of Christianity struck a blow at national morality and safety?

Patriotism and piety might now mourn over the religious apathy, not of a single denomination, but of this entire land. As the practice and enjoyment of religion is absolutely indispensable to the true happiness of each individual of the nation, that cannot be called a truly prosperous nation which is not increasing in the favor of God.

I propose now to advert to some lessons taught to this nation by the life and death of one of the most prominent of our citizens. As the death of any man under God's providence is a fair subject for pulpit discussion—as the President of these United States has officially called the attention of the nation to the decease of his distinguished predecessor—and as the individual himself bore a remarkable character both in life and death, I make no apology for introducing the name of Andrew Jackson on this occasion. As I shall express my honest convictions, with a desire to give no offence to any human being, by invading the political prejudices of any, I hope for your candid attention. With political creeds I have no concern here, but as the name of Andrew Jackson has an influence with millions, it is desirable to see how far it prompts to truth and virtue.

Andrew Jackson began life amid the storms of the revolution, when the war spirit was most rife in the land. He spent his whole life in a section of country where not to resent injury is to lose caste in society. He was a soldier for his country, and thus forced by duty into scenes of bloodshed. He was a man not only of singular sagacity, but of strong and quick passions—full of the chivalry of the military profession. He was not a professed Christian until he had retired from public life. Taking all these circumstances into account, it is not wonderful that there should have always been in his character an irritability under opposition and an occasional violence of language and manner which we, trained among calmer scenes and under a more steady and consistent Christian influence, must condemn. But an orphan at fourteen

years of age, first a soldier in the revolutionary army—then a prisoner in the British camp—then an emigrant at twenty-one, to sojourn in the Western wilderness among treacherous savages and lawless associates, had few opportunities to study the doctrine of Christian meekness and forbearance.

I was told by a distinguished gentleman of Tennessee, then an elder in the Presbyterian church, that in early times, when a howling wilderness of 150 miles in extent, filled with savages, separated Nashville settlement, then in North Carolina, from Lexington settlement, then in Western Virginia, they were accustomed to form caravans for mutual safety in threading this wilderness. One of these caravans, made up mostly of young men, among whom was Jackson, started from Nashville for Lexington, having a woman in charge going to join her husband in Lexington. The lady was taken sick the second night. In the morning several of the young men arose, saddled their horses and were about to leave, when young Jackson asked what they were about to do? Would they leave a woman to perish alone in the wilderness? They were impatient, reckless, afraid perhaps of Indians on their track. They said they must go on. Jackson levelled his rifle and declared he would kill the first man that put his foot in the stirrup; thus he brought them to a stand. They agreed to wait a day—the lady was then able to travel, and they reached Lexington in safety. This shows the kind of associates around young Jackson, and the kind of bearing which he came to regard as chivalrous and necessary.

We must judge such a man by his circumstances, not by ours; and tried by this standard, I think, what Walter Scott said of a Covenanter was true of Andrew Jackson. "His faults were those of his times and associates; his virtues were eminently his own." I may here in candor say that some of the leading measures of his civil administration I did not approve. The removal of the Cherokee Indians from their homes I resisted with my pen, and have often denounced it in this congregation. But I then believed, and I now believe, that no President since the days of Washington ever carried to the Presidential chair a more patriotic and honest heart.

Whether a measure were popular or unpopular—whether his friends approved or opposed—if he thought it right, he urged it without regard to personal consequences.

If a measure were too unpopular to be touched by his friends, he threw himself into the breach and shouldered the responsibility. This course, so far above the truckling, time-serving course of mere selfish and heartless demagogues of all parties, took the nation by surprise. The nature of his measures, and the energy of his will, excited, in many, fear, but all felt the power of this moral courage—of this abandonment of self, and many, while they dreaded

the effect of the measures, felt an increased admiration of the sincerity of the man.

This conviction of the sincerity of General Jackson, of his willingness to do what he believed the good of the country demanded, without respect to friend or foe, was one element of his great popularity. Mankind love a sincere and resolute character, and I hope politicians will learn from the example of General Jackson that "honesty is the best policy," while perhaps he himself would have been more wise had he sometimes lent a more open ear to the counsels of his judicious friends.

The sanction which the early example and the great name of General Jackson gave to duelling we must all deplore.

But we must remember that in office he struck at once from the rolls of the navy the names of two officers who had engaged in a duel, showing that his riper judgment disapproved the violence of his youth. In the early part of his last sickness, he said, "*May my enemies find peace*"—"may the liberty of my country endure for ever." This was the spirit in which he died, the spirit which I hope all his friends will cultivate.

General Jackson's defects were as open as his virtues. He concealed nothing, and the eyes of millions watched his errors. I will palliate none.

But among his defects known to this nation, has he ever shrunk at any sacrifice to discharge every pecuniary obligation? He once exchanged a delightful villa for a home in the wilderness to pay the debts assumed for a friend. Has he ever sought wealth by gambling, fraud, or overreaching in trade, or by speculating in office? Has he ever been accused of seducing innocence from the paths of virtue, or rioting in low debauchery? Has he ever shrunk in bearing his testimony to the value of temperance and religion? Has he ever neglected the poor to flatter the rich? Has he ever refused a well authenticated claim on his charity, whether from friend or foe? whether for an object secular or religious? Has he ever forgotten a friend in adversity, or received at the hands of any one an obligation which he did not endeavor to discharge? Has he ever forborne to bear his testimony to the truth and value of the Christian religion, or absented himself on the Sabbath from the worship of Almighty God? Has he ever failed to treat with kindness ministers of the gospel—to open his house and his purse to such as were in poverty and want? Has he not again and again sacrificed ease, and home, and money, and put in peril reputation and life to defend his country?

If with so many claims to national respect and gratitude, it be still true that the prompt decision, powerful will and ardent temper, which made him one of the greatest military commanders of this or any age, sometimes tempted him to precipitation, violence

and obstinacy, it only shows that he was a man, and, like other men, liable to err.

We cannot have the strength of the wind to swell our sails without a liability to tempests—nor the warmth of fire without danger of conflagrations. So neither can we find in man great abilities and energy for good without corresponding infelicities. To this our great Washington alone seems to have been an exception. It is enough to excite our best feelings in view of the death of Jackson, if we can *all* say—as I believe we can—that in spite of the defects, moral or political, imputed to him, he had a lofty patriotism—a large, honest and brave heart, and the ends “he aimed at were his country’s!”

It was not till the storms of his public life were over that he gave his attention practically to religion. The influence of a pious mother left always on his mind a firm faith in Christianity, and a profound reverence for its doctrines and institutions; but, like too many others, he procrastinated the great duty of “repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

When in Cincinnati, fifteen years ago, a beautiful young lady asked him to write in her album. He wrote—

“When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I’ll bid farewell to all my fears,
And wipe my weeping eyes.”

ANDREW JACKSON.

Politicians saw in this, cant, pretence or imbecility. Those that knew Gen. Jackson’s early life, saw in it the principles of piety planted by a departed mother and struggling in a masculine intellect and conscience, with the excitements and temptations of the world.

While at Washington, President Jackson has often sent for clergymen, visiting the city, to conduct prayer in his family. This showed his respect for religion at that period, and renders his subsequent conversion less wonderful. About seven years ago he united with the Presbyterian Church in Nashville, of which the Rev. Dr. Edgar is pastor.

Dr. Edgar, at his grave, gave a touching account of his conversion to God, and bore testimony that in the church he had developed a *consistent Christian character*. Convinced of his duty to serve God by a public profession, he stood up before the world, as a disciple of Christ. We only regret, as he doubtless regretted, that he had not thus consecrated himself early in life.

I. His death, though in the course of nature, teaches us first, *how vain is all earthly good*. Gen. Jackson had all the world could give him of office and honor. He lived almost four-score years, but “all the world gave, it has taken away.” His ear is

deaf to human applause. He moulders like the beggar in his shroud. The strong arm is palsied—the stout heart is still—the voice which has moved armies, and agitated a continent, is silent. What a lesson does this read to earthly ambition—how humbling to human pride.

The deceased took this humbling view of death, when he refused to have his remains laid in a sarcophagus, which three thousand years had spared, and the partiality of friends had presented. “Let me be buried” said he, “in the earth—by the remains of my beloved companion. I wish to be buried in a plain, unostentatious manner, without any pomp.”

His epitaph, fixed upon by himself, is :

“ANDREW JACKSON,
BORN 15TH OF MARCH, 1767,
DIED 8TH OF JUNE, 1845.”

He would not mock the humiliation of the grave, by attempting to garnish it with earthly splendor. He would let death utter its scornful and unbroken rebuke of human pride, avarice and ambition.

II. *The death scene of Gen. Jackson shows our need of religion.*—The light which cheered his pilgrimage through the dark valley was no reflected glory from splendid victories and lofty political stations. The huzzas of millions made no music for his dying ear. If he found peace then, and he did find it, it was in the evidence that God had forgiven his sins and renewed his heart. It will be so with us. We toil and strive for the world, but in dying, all the treasure that will avail us will be the hope of God’s favor and eternal life.

III.—*The death scene of General Jackson discloses a motive to begin early to serve God and our generation.*—On the Sabbath, two weeks before he died, the Lord’s supper was administered in the Presbyterian church near his residence. Unable to go out, he desired “once more” to receive the sacrament in his chamber. At the close, he said “when I have suffered sufficiently the Lord will take me to himself, but what are my sufferings compared to my Saviour who died for me on the accursed tree.”

On the Sabbath, the day he died, he first fainted and was supposed to be dead, but revived. He called all his little grandchildren and the members of his family—took each of his grandchildren by the hand and blessed and kissed all. He told them they had good parents—to keep the Sabbath and read the Testament. “Where,” he says, “is my daughter Mary? God will take care of you for me. I am my God’s. I belong to him. I go but a short

time before you." His grand-children began to cry. "What is the matter my dear children? Have I alarmed you? O do not cry—be good children and we shall all meet in Heaven." Turning to the servants he said—"I want to meet you all, *white and black*, in Heaven." Having exhorted them in an eloquent strain for half an hour, he sunk away and calmly expired.

What an affecting and sublime spectacle! The aged soldier and statesman, the idol of half the nation is slowly expiring. He has but a few hours to live, he is all weakness and pain, but he rouses himself from the gathering torpor of death and for half an hour gives eloquent counsel to all "to prepare to meet God." If children and youth and servants needed such counsel from his lips, they need it from ours. If conscience will not let us die in peace without discharging our duty in this respect, let us begin early and in our days of health beseech all around us to be reconciled to God.

General Jackson would take the sacrament in his sick chamber. He asked it as a privilege. Who in health then are justified in neglecting this ordinance as it is administered before them in the sanctuary? Let us learn the virtues of a death bed while we have health to exercise those virtues in acts of piety.

I thank God that he led General Jackson in the face of this nation to honor in his last years and hours, the Bible—the Sabbath, the church and its sacraments—and the great doctrine of salvation alone through the atonement of Calvary. We hope those who loved him will hasten to follow this his final example.

He was always a brave man, but he achieved his greatest triumph when he humbled his pride at the foot of the cross, and gained a hope which gave him *victory over death*.

His military and civil renown, may fade amid the mists of coming ages, but God grant that his noble and impressive testimony to the truth and value of the christian religion, may live in the hearts of men, until the pillars of this great globe shall crumble, and time itself be no more. Amen.