
OUR FEDERAL UNION

A

CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE TO GOD.

With the respects of J. L. Nathan

OUR FEDERAL UNION

CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE TO GOD.

THANKSGIVING DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED IN THE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DETROIT,

NOVEMBER 28th, 1850.

BY GEORGE DUFFIELD,

PASTOR OF THE SAME.

DETROIT:
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CORRESPONDENCE.

DETROIT, Nov. 29th, 1850.

REV. GEO. DUFFIELD—

DEAR SIR: In behalf of many of our fellow citizens, we have the honor to request you to furnish us, for publication, with a copy of your able and eloquent Sermon, delivered on "Thanksgiving Day," the 28th inst.

Feeling it to be the duty of every true lover of his country to aid in disseminating correct views of the duties of individuals, under the Constitution of the United States and of the blessings we enjoy, by favor of Divine Providence, under this glorious Union, we hope you will not hesitate to comply with our request.

We have the honor to be,

With much respect, your obedient servants,

J. L. WHITING,
JOHN PALMER,
B. WIGHT,
GEO. E. HAND,
S. BARSTOW,
MORSE STEWART,
THOS. W. LOCKWOOD,
DAVID FRENCH,
A. SHEELEY,

Z. PITCHER,
D. SMART,
J. A. VAN DYKE,
JNO R. WILLIAMS,
E. P. HASTINGS,
D. COOPER,
E. BINGHAM,
J. KEARLEY,
J. S. FARRAND.

JOHN LADUE,
D. E. HARBAUGH,
HENRY LEDYARD,
J. M. HOWARD,
GEO. V. N. LOTHROP,
ROSS WILKINS,
ELON FARNSWORTH,
D. GOODWIN,

DETROIT, Dec. 3, 1850.

TO MESSRS. J. L. WHITING, Z. PITCHER, JOHN LADUE, JOHN PALMER,

D. SMART, D. E. HARBAUGH, HENRY LEDYARD, &C.:

GENTLEMEN: The discourse, a copy of which you request, was a mere effusion of grateful feeling, designed to lead others to a thankful recognition of God's great mercy to our beloved country. It contains no studied argumentation, or discussion of principles. Whatever reasons for gratitude it suggested, were embodied in a simple sketch of providential favors toward the United States, contrasted with the condition of all the world beside.

The mind that dwells chiefly and continually on evils, is apt to become sour and unfitted for grateful recognitions. Indications are not wanting of an evil tendency of this sort, on the part of those who seem to overlook the marvellous benefits of our glorious Union, because slavery exists under its constitution. The pulpit, especially on a day of Thanksgiving, is neither the place nor occasion for ministering aliment to such a spirit.

In common with the great body of the ministry and membership of the Presbyterian Church

of these United States, I love, and cherish gratefully, the Federal Union, as the richest legacy of our pious and patriotic fathers. While I long and pray, that the southern states might awake to the consideration of what experience, in the northern and western, has proved to be the wisest and best policy, as well as the dictate of enlightened philanthropy, viz: At the earliest practicable period to abolish slavery, I am far from believing, that it should be made a theme of altercation and strife, producing alienation and division. Nor can I look, but with regret, on any influence the pulpit and ecclesiastical bodies may exert of this character. As conservators of public morals, the strifes of party politics are not the avenues for them. While indeed the right of free discussion and petition should be sedulously guarded and never relinquished, they can both, in my estimation, be exercised without reviling our constitution, or resisting governmental authority.

Under the influence of such views, the discourse was prepared. Although written for parochial benefit on a particular occasion, if you think it may, in any degree serve, to quicken a sense of gratitude to God for our noble and happy Union, to allay sectional strife, and to enlighten the humble christian in reference to his obligations alike of patriotism and piety, it is at your disposal.

With sentiments of respect and friendship,

I remain your obedient servant,

GEORGE DUFFIELD.

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 MADE TO

A THANKSGIVING DISCOURSE.

PSALMS, LXV. 11.—Thou crownest the year with thy goodness and thy paths drop fatness.

We meet this day, beloved friends, to commemorate the goodness of the Lord. The last year has been replete with tokens of His Munificence. On some of us, he has indeed laid his afflicting hand, and given us to drink from the cup of sorrow; sending disease, and commissioning death to bear from our embrace the objects of our Love.— But while in mercy and in faithfulness, He hath afflicted us, He hath strewed around the great masses of our population so many expressions of his bounty; hath so abundantly blessed the labors of the husbandman, and multiplied the fruits of his industry; so enriched the country with exuberant crops, and so prospered nearly all the avocations of labor and commerce; so preserved the great machinery of our Government from any disastrous jars, and so prolonged the mildness and golden grandeur of a glorious Autumn, that we may well and gratefully say: He hath crowned the year with his goodness, and His paths drop fatness.

This has been a year of unprecedented prosperity in our own City, and throughout our country. The pestilence has indeed raised its Hydra head in many places, but its deadly stroke has been confined to very sparse and limited localities. Disease also in other forms, and death, in some portions of our State and country, have been particularly active; but they have been so restrained from general ravages that we have much more cause, to thank God for His goodness, than to complain of any unwonted severity of His Providence.

It would be difficult to make an inventory, of the many outward benefits and mercies dispensed by His providence during the past season, even though we should classify them in detail as personal, domestic, social, sectional, civil, national, ecclesiastical and religious. It is not our object to attempt to enumerate them in such categories. As this day is observed, at the recommendation of the highest civil authority of our State, and is intended to call forth our thanksgivings to Almighty-God, for the many peculiar and distinguishing blessings conferred upon us as a people, your attention, beloved hearers, shall be directed to the consideration of OUR FEDERAL UNION, AS A CAUSE FOR OUR GRATITUDE TO GOD, AND THE MANNER IN WHICH WE MAY BEST EVINCE IT.

The subject commends itself, as well, to every patriotic bosom as to every christian heart. And the more so at present, not only because of the exuberant stores of wealth poured forth from our prolific soil, and the great activity and success in almost every branch of industry, marking the passing year as one of abounding and almost unexampled prosperity, but especially, because our condition as a Nation, contrasts so strongly and remarkably with those of Europe and the world in general. Wherever we turn our eyes beyond ourselves, we see sadness and gloom, oppression, impoverishment, "distress of nations, and perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring. Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

Within the last three years we have seen all Europe convulsed, the masses of her population rising, and struggling to throw off the yoke of their oppressors, as if they were no longer able to endure their misery. The whirlwind first fell on France, and having borne its Monarch from his palace, and flung him on the shores of England, passed in rapid motion over the continental nations, striking dismay into the breasts of tyrants, shaking the very foundations of their thrones, setting at nought their might, scattering their forces, and inspiring the oppressed with the hope of a better day, when the blessings of peaceful industry, and of civil and religious liberty, should fill their land with gladness. As yet no such hopes have been realized. We see nothing but the dim haze, and mirky atmosphere filled with dust and scattered fragments, whirled upward by the hurricane, now settling down and depositing the confused and shattered memorials of the havoc and ruin it has accomplished.

France at present is still; but it is as the volcano ceases its throes, to prepare for fresh eruptions. The rulers whom the people placed at the head of their affairs, have turned traitors, alike to them and liberty, and are forging fresh chains to bind them down in servitude and oppression.

Prussia is distracted and bristles up for war. Her Monarch, having violated his oath and pledges, is menaced by Austria, and finds himself, held in check by the Autocrat of the North, and harrassed, alike by weakness and the consequences of his inconsistency and treachery.

Austria lies at the feet of Russia, and must do the bidding of the despot to whom she has been enslaved.

Hungary having profusely bled has fainted; her groans have echoed through the world, but brought no help.

Russia hangs like a dark thunder cloud at the North, ready to rush down with impetuous fury, whenever the chaos of German politics shall have set the Electric current in motion.

Denmark and the Holsteins have paused in their skirmishes, while marches, and countermarches, and orders for further movements of hostile aspect, are occurring among the Hessians, Austrians and Bavarians.

England is thrown into excitement by the audacity of an Italian Priest, who has presumed to parcel out her spiritual dominion, and employ the renegades of her own National Church to restore the us-

urpation of Rome over the consciences of her people, and sow discord and confusion, in her political society, by undisguised and systematic hostility to her national freedom and her national faith.

Spain and Portugal are sinking still lower and lower in the whirlpools of their own civil wars and commotions.

In Switzerland the old landmarks are being swept away, and the genius of liberty, which once shone so brilliantly there, is soiled and dimmed by the ultraisms of Rome, and Radicalism.

In Piedmont and Sardinia only is resistance made with some hope of success to the political power of spiritual tyrants. The coward fugitive and mendicant at Rome, who claims, to be the vicegerent of Heaven, and of right, to give laws to the world, is at his wits end. Although restored to his place and palace, and supported by the armies of France and Austria, he finds his capitol and dominions full of wretchedness and ruin.

Turkey, throughout her whole extent is wasting by rapid decay.—Consumption is deeply seated, and preying upon her vitals.

Central and Eastern Asia are overrun with barbarians, or have fallen under a foreign yoke. Even in China, the dynasty, which has so long ruled with iron hand, the destinies of the Empire, decries the day approaching, if not already begun, when civil strife threatens to tear it in pieces. And Africa, poor degraded Africa! continues the work of self-torture, amid the darkness of its Fetishism, by the predatory wars of its own savage and barbarous tribes.

Every where the old world is in an uneasy and wretched condition. The light of the Gospel has been extinguished to a great extent in Europe, and only glimmers here and there, to make the darkness more palpable. It has been thrown in, too, in different parts of the heathen world, upon the mass of its black and reeking corruptions; but while some are learning to trace their way through the mazes of ignorance and error, superstition and crime, and, seize the hope of a better day in a better world, the great masses are oppressed and suffering; nor know the way or means of relief. The rulers seek not the interest of their people and the public good; or if they do, they seem not to understand it, or deem it practicable to be obtained, in any other way than by exalting themselves, and riveting fresh chains upon their subjects. The prophet's description is perfectly appropriate: "Their watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, sleeping, lying down and loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter." We turn from such sad scenes; and looking around, upon this great confederation of Free States, are filled with grateful emotions. Here Freedom dwells, and beckons to the oppressed from every quarter of the globe, to come, and seek relief from present ills, and safety from the coming tempest. The fair tree of liberty, reared by the valor, and patriotism, and piety, of our Sires, and nourished by the care, and zeal, and wisdom of their sons, strikes deep its roots, and spreads its branches far and wide. From the wild and

dreary wilderness of the North, to the burning sands of the torrid zone; from the stormy Atlantic to the mild Pacific, under its shade is found shelter and protection for science, civilization, virtue, and religion. The oppressed of all nations gather in; and telling the story of their wrongs, find sympathy and solace, and a resting place from their persecutors and pursuers. The banner of this glorious Union floats majestically on the breeze, the beacon of hope, to cheer the wretched, and direct, the exiles of other lands, to the only spot where genuine Freedom dwells.

Never since the days, when Israel were brought out from Egypt's bondage, and their tribes established in the land of promise, a blessed and glorious confederacy, marked and honored, by the favors, and mercies of Heaven, has the world seen so grand, and simple, so admirable and perfect a system of human Government, as that which binds, in one mighty and magnificent Union, these thirty and one free and independent States. Here the human mind is unfettered. Here we breathe the breath of Heaven, and drink the limpid waters of our flowing fountains. Here we clamber over our lofty mountains, and float upon our spreading Lakes and rivers; bound over our verdant prairies, and pierce the depths of our majestic forests, unawed by the tyrants rod, unrestrained by his menace, free to rear our dwellings, to till our lands, and to gather round us the loved inmates of our happy homes. Our sons grow up to wealth, and influence, by our side. Our daughters shed around the lustre of their purity and worth, like the jewels of a monarch's crown. Our towns, and villages, rise and multiply as by enchantment. Our commerce pours its broad streams of wealth into our great emporiums, and thence, as by the vigorous action of great hearts united, send the enlivened blood in warm, and rapid circulation, back to the remotest members, to nourish and sustain the whole. Our manufactures afford the means of industrious employment, for thousands at home, and place us beyond the power of jealous and rival foreign nations, to make us serfs for their enrichment. Our free schools disperse the light and benefits of science, and mould, and multiply, the mass of educated mind, for purposes of safety and virtue. Our presses scatter, like the leaves of the forest, their teeming publications, diffusing, and circulating knowledge, among the multitude. Religion lends her restraining and renovating influence, to check the growth of corruption, and purify the popular mind. Churches rise on every hand, and rearing their lofty spires, point upwards, to the God who rules on high. The ministers of Jesus Christ, are free and zealous, to proclaim the riches of His grace, and pour the light of heavenly truth, in steady blaze, to enlighten, and to warm into healthful action, the conscience of the mass. The Bible and religious Tract, circulate with constant flow, borne, by the hands which Christian munificence supplies, into every hut and hamlet of the land, to tell of God, and Christ, and things of Heaven, infinitely more exalting and ennobling, than all this world can furnish. The Sabbath, silently sheds its serene sweetness round, inviting to enjoyment and repose, like balmy odors beaming freshness and exhilaration to the faint and weary. Our youth

are gathered into the Sabbath and District Schools, and taught to aspire after usefulness and honor. Colleges and Universities, rise almost numberless, in every part of our land, to afford facilities for a liberal education. The blessed Gospel, of the grace of God, lives uncorrupted, proclaiming those truths of salvation and of Christian brotherhood, which unfold and enforce the moral equality of man, and are the best and only efficient preventive and check against oppression and despotism. No lofty nobleman, in imitation of his loftier Liege, here treads upon his fellow man, as mean by birth and by condition, and unworthy to be admitted, to an equality with him in matters of civil and political rule. The poorest man has the same rights, and by free and equal suffrage, can exert as direct an influence on the men and measures of Government, as the proudest millionaire. No where in the world, is there found, so great an amount, and such wide and equally diffused means, of happiness, as in our own beloved country. The nations of Europe, compared to it, are like the camp, or lazaret house, or penitentiary, compared with the peaceful field, the cheerful home, or smiling palace. Happy, happy, happy, land! Far distant be the day, when thy peace, thy liberty, thy bliss, shall be assaulted and destroyed!

Here the free spirit of mankind,
Throws its last letters off—and who shall place
A limit to the giant's untried strength!

Europe is given a prey to sterner fates,
And writhes in shackles: strong the arm that chains
To earth her struggling multitude of states:—

But thou my country, thou shalt never fall,
But with thy children:—thy maternal care—
Thy lavish love: thy blessings showered on all—
These are thy fetters:—Sons and stormy air
Are the wide barriers of thy borders, where,
Among thy gallant sons, that guard thee well—
Thou laughest at enemies: who shall then declare
The date of thy deep founded strength, or tell
How happy, in thy lap, the sons of men shall dwell.

But whence, it is natural to ask, have such prosperity and happiness been derived? Who, or what, is the guardian genius, which, under God, so signally has preserved the peace, and promoted the bliss of these United States? To the influence of Christianity, her institutions and precepts, her spirit and power, must we look, as to the great presiding, moulding, and protecting minister of all our social, moral and spiritual security and joy. But these are God himself, working, by the chosen instruments of His own direct efficiency, for the comfort and salvation of all, in every land and every age, who personally make His arm their trust. The question returns again, when speaking of the masses organized and under the influence of political government—which, in some form, is essential to the public good—so diverse here from what it is in other lands, where yet, for individual salvation and scarcely more, the Gospel sheds its blessed light. Who can be ignorant, or who can fail to see, that by the good providence of God, the national Union of these confederated States, bound together under the same constitution, forms the element, the life and

soul, of that civil, political, and social prosperity, distinguishing us as a people, from all the nations of the earth?

Our patriotic fathers, who laid so broad and firm, the deep foundations of this noble structure, were well acquainted with the principles, and value of true Freedom. They were men who had been taught from the word of God, the liberty wherewith Jesus Christ our only Lord and King, hath made His people free. They wore the livery of Heaven; nor could they brook the thought of dishonoring its lofty dignity.—They breathed the heroic spirit, and gloried in the title, of the freemen of Jesus Christ. The charter of their rights, as well as of their hopes they found in the immutable, infallibly inspired, and divinely authoritative, word of God. To be true and faithful to Him, to meet the full obligations of their personal responsibility, they felt it essential that no earthly sovereign whatever, be he lordly King or ghostly Bishop, must dictate to the conscience. The supremacy of Jesus Christ was with them, a radical and fundamental fact, and all that was glorious and precious in their immortal hopes, clustered round it. They had carefully studied the sacred Scriptures, and imbibed the Spirit of their Lord and Savior, the holy one of Israel, who had trained His infant church for Freedom. In the high hopes and destinies, proposed to each member of the church, and all his household, by the covenant, God had made with Abraham; in the school of Egyptian bondage, where He had disciplined His people, by practical suffering, into a hatred of tyrants and oppressors, and from which He had Himself delivered them, by His own mighty hand, and outstretched arm; especially, in the free republican institutions He had given to the Hebrew race, and the establishment of their different tribes, as free and independent States, yet all united in one great commonwealth, for the preservation and promotion of their common interests; in the record, of his grace and the charter of our rights, given in the word of God, our Christian fathers, had not only imbibed the spirit of freedom, but also found the model of that government, which, in their wisdom, they happily adapted to the condition of society. In England, Scotland, Holland and Geneva, Christianity had appeared in her native and lovely dress; and in the Bible, delivered from monkish cells and superstition, and brought, by the Reformation, to bear, not only upon individual liberty of conscience, but on the legislation and action of government, they had learned the elements of civil and religious liberty.

The world, at first, for centuries, rejected the Republican institutions given by God to his church. The Jewish people also afterward, did the same, demanding a King, that they might be like the other nations of the earth. Twenty-five years after that, Israel forgot himself, and had become a slave to an earthly sovereign. Athens, among the Greeks, on the demise of Codrus, abolished monarchy, and proclaimed herself a republic. Henceforth in Greece, and afterwards in Rome till about 30 years before the birth of Him that came to emancipate the world, the spirit of liberty lingered in the earth. After His death, that spirit revived. The rise and spread of Christianity among the nations diffused, by means of the churches of Jesus Christ, during the first and second

centuries, the simple, beauteous models of republicanism, as they had been preserved in the Jewish synagogues, from which they took the form of their organization. The heaven worked, till the Roman Emperor, grasping the spiritual power, allied it to the civil, and sought to crush their liberty. Claiming equal supremacy with Christ, our only King, and making the church part and parcel of his realm, Constantine reared the great fabric of spiritual and political despotism, which for centuries grew worse and worse, first as "the beast," and afterwards as "the image of the beast," corrupting and oppressing the nations of Europe, till the glorious Reformation broke the yoke of tyranny, and called back the world, to the consideration and adoption of Heaven's plan, disclosed in the Scriptures, for the preservation and promotion of genuine freedom.

Our country is the legitimate offspring of that reformation. And the model of our glorious Union is the nearest approximation, ever made by human government, to the confederate republics of Israel, which owned and honored, originally, "no King but God."

It is, to the legitimate and happy action of the Constitution of these United States, derived in its bold outline from these sources, that, under the guardian and benignant providence of God, we owe our civil and political freedom, our social and national happiness, and the world is indebted for the only Asylum open to the oppressed of all nations. God be praised for this monument of wisdom and philanthropy!—Long may it be preserved! and palsied be the arm first lifted to strike the fatal blow, designed to sever the chords uniting us as one grand confederacy of free and independent States!

We are well aware, notwithstanding the admiration and attachment, we express for this Constitution, and for the machinery of our Government, we shall be told, that there are evils in them both, and that their friction works disastrously to some interests of humanity. But we expect nothing perfect from uninspired man. Nor do we look for any perfection in human Government, till the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, according to His promise, shall reappear, and set up His Kingdom upon the ruin of the thrones, and dominions, of earthly tyrants and oppressors. Admitting these evils, however, still we question, whether there ever was a government on earth, save that of the Hebrew Commonwealth, devised by the wisdom of Jehovah, so beautifully adapted in all its provisions, to the great wants of human society, and so admirably balanced, in all its functional powers; so complicated in its structure, and yet so simple, and so free from friction; moving with such clarity, and yet with so much ease, and safety; and combining so wonderfully its centripetal, and centrifugal forces, as to make it roll steadily, and gloriously, in its orbit, like some bright constellation of the Heavens, in its wide extended, and far reaching cycle. But because it is not perfect, we would not, therefore, undervalue or reject it. "I have seen an end of all perfection here below," said the inspired Sage; and we should learn with him, not to jeopard present good by perilous Utopian schemes. Imperfection ever must leave its impress on the works of man. Rather would we cherish, tenderly and gratefully, the Constitu-

tion Providence has given us with all its imperfections, than rashly to resist, and rabidly revile it.

We have no fellowship, or sympathy, with those who make that Constitution their reproach, and seek to rend this glorious Union, because Slavery has not yet been extirpated. All organized societies, and combinations, pledged by oaths and promises, under whatever religious or other pretexts, it may be done, to vote only for men, that will, at all hazards, prosecute their purpose, and who seek to agitate and inflate the angry stormy passions of men, do but peril every collateral interest and aim of good government, and, eventually, become the turbid fountains of faction. Such means, to secure an end, however desirable in itself, only betray ignorance of the very nature of true liberty. Those who adopt them, evince as well, their utter unfitness for liberty themselves, as the danger of entrusting them with the liberty of others. We have no confidence that the evils of our political and social system ever can be remedied by any talisman which they possess. No Midas' touch has yet been given by their wisdom, or patriotism, to transmute the iron into gold. The evils in our political system cannot be remedied at once. They must be worked out by degrees, whatever be the specific for their cure.

Time and experience, wisdom and patience, are necessary. God, in His providence, develops by degrees, the virtues necessary to correct the incidental ills that cleave to mortal things. We are dependent ever on that providence, and must learn, to trust Him for His care and protection, in a thousand exigencies, where no human foresight, wisdom or valor would be sufficient.

Whatever are the evils existing in the system of our Constitutional Government, as yet, at least, they are not fatal:—none but what may be remedied by prudence, patriotism, virtue, and the fear of God.

It is indeed, an evil, serious and distressing, that Slavery exists.—Would that it could be speedily removed! But we fear that empirical physicians, and ignorant quacks, who, looking only at the festering sore, and understanding not the importance and necessity of attending to preserve the constitution in its healthful vigor, may administer poisonous nostrums, only to irritate, and end in incurable gangrene and dissolution.

Had our Constitution recognized the One only living and true God, and His providence, and declared what is the fact, that it was founded on the divine, moral law, and framed for a Christian people, it had been, in our estimation, more perfect than it is. But these are assumptions which, some of our courts, have already distinctly recognized as principles to be respected in the interpretation of its provisions. Had it prohibited the continuance of slavery after a certain date, and given no recognition of it, or concession to it, in the several States, in which that terrible evil then existed, it had been also in our estimation, yet more perfect. But then, had this been insisted on, the Union had never been formed. The Constitution and Confederacy, had both died in the womb. There would have been no such thing, and it is more

than probable that there never would, or could have been, the same amount, of social, political, and national prosperity, secured by any other means, which have been under it. It has been the *Ægis* of our safety, the fountain of our prosperity. Shall we, therefore, now make war upon it, and rend it to atoms because the evil still exists? That were suicidal madness.

From many of the States, Slavery has already disappeared, by their own action, the only mode in which it is possible, for it to be removed from the remainder. No legislation can be of force, that goes beyond the Constitution. Thus far in the history of our country, the providence of God has greatly favored the cause of Freedom, and the Constitution has been blessed as the instrument of immense good to oppressed and enslaved humanity.

The horrid evils and abominations of the African slave-trade, have ceased, and what was once legal, is now declared piratical. Abounding prosperity, rapid increase of population and wealth, the diffusion of schools and churches, of art and science, commerce and manufactures, industry and frugality, order and virtue, have placed the Free States far ahead of their sister States, still cherishing the paralyzing system, and deeming it indispensable to their welfare and existence.

God is teaching by examples. Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa, strung along the borders of the Slave States, and Maine, Michigan and Wisconsin, more remote, in addition to the older States whose prosperity has excited the wonder of the world, and even provoked the jealousy of the South, are His comments, by which in great forbearance and mercy, He will have them learn it, to be both their interest and duty, by some wise and timely action of their own, to imitate their more prosperous neighbors, and prepare to set their bondmen free.

In this work the churches have lifted up their voice; and that with which we are connected, has testified, in the spirit of meekness and love, refusing, to resort to acts of excruciating violence, or sunder bonds of endeared union, or indulge in opprobrious epithets, or array itself against the constituted authorities of Government. Already has the triumph been virtually achieved, and the limits of slavery circumscribed. The die has been cast. The balance of power has been turned in favor of freedom. Amid all the confusion and uproar and threats, and alarm, produced on this subject, the providence of God, has said to the slave holding interests, thus far shalt thou come and no further.— Beyond that, the way is clear for the march of freedom. It remains for us to co-operate with His providence, and wisely and prudently seek to carry out His designs. To denounce, revile, and rouse the fiery passions of men, is not the way to convince. To abuse the master is not the way to better the condition of the slave. The fires of party strife enlighten not, nor diffuse a general heat. They do but prove disastrous conflagrations, serving to array man against his neighbor, and to whet the mind and appetite for civil wars. If men would but see it, Providence has made it plain, that in due season, slavery must

cease. But until the States that sanction it, can be made to see it right and best to abolish it, no human power, save that of moral suasion, can touch it. God's providence is evidently preparing for it.—The tendency of His measures is steadily that way; slowly, but surely, and happy will it be for us, if through maddened zeal and frenzied impatience, we do not run before that providence, and seek too eagerly to snatch the reins from His hand. Vituperative resolutions, and angry agitation, will never accomplish it.

As a christian church our duty is, to speak the truth, in love; to follow the counsels of the sacred Scriptures: to warn, rebuke, entreat, exhort, with all, long suffering and gentleness, only applying the rod of discipline where flagrant sin requires it. To cut off and denounce, anathematize promiscuously by the wholesale, is only to make the evil worse, as well as to violate the covenant bond of our fellowship, which unites us, in peace and harmony, as the Presbyterian church of these United States. It is by thus acting, we shall both become approved of God, and exert the most effectual influence on the minds of those who administer the secular and political government.

Our civil rulers are not responsible to us, as ecclesiastical and religious men, but to God, and to their constituents. They have heavy responsibilities to sustain; and should have our sympathy; and when rightly discharged, our support. Sworn to support the Constitution of the United States, they cannot, in fidelity to their oaths, adjudicate or legislate against it. The laws must be in accordance with its provisions. Those who make them, may err in judgment and discretion. Occasionally their enactments may be unconstitutional; but the Supreme Court of the United States, are the best and only proper judges of that. They may also be found to work mischief in various ways not foreseen. But it is not our duty, as Christians, or as citizens, therefore to revile, and to resist, the functionaries of government, much less, to conspire to prevent the execution, even of laws, which, it may be, as individuals, we cannot conscientiously obey. We may of right, and with propriety, discuss the merits of a law, prudently and respectfully point out its evils, and petition for repeal, amendment or redress; but to array ourselves as Christian men and churches, by factious conspiracy or force, against the execution of laws; or to combine with political and partizan associations; is to be guilty of a direct act of civil rebellion and insurgency, and of disobedience to the command of God, who enjoins upon us to respect the power as His ordinance. Should a human law require us personally to do what conscience and the law of God forbids, we must, each, on his individual responsibility, obey God, and quietly abide the consequence—be willing to suffer, and if needs be, to die for God and conscience sake. But even in that case, as the Master Himself, has taught us by His own example, we have no right to rise up and resist by angry or insurgent violence, and conspire against the execution, even of an unrighteous law. Revolution is the tendency of such a course, and that can only be justified when the government has ceased to exercise its legitimate functions, and become tyrannical and oppressive beyond all other remedy. As Christian men we have re-

sources in God far greater than in any arm of flesh, and we are not to seek, or expect that the governments of this world should be in our hands. Our Savior refused to be made King. The way to secure His interference, is by relying on His promise, and faithfulness, and by demeaning ourselves, in all conscientious obedience to His will, in the spirit of Christ. When He sees it best, He will interpose, or by the movements of His providence, turn the counsel of the wicked into foolishness, and establish the cause of the just. "Say ye not a confederacy, to all them to whom this people say a confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread." More, infinitely more, may be expected from the meek repose of faith in God, and conscientious obedience to His will, in all matters of personal duty, than from attempts, by christian people, to counteract governmental corruptions and danger, or by any factious, impatient conspiracy, to resist "the powers that be, which are ordained of God." Petulant, angry dictation and menace, can accomplish nothing but evil. "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

There are other evils in our social and political system, beside the one to which we have just adverted, but our object being to excite your grateful emotions for the mercies we enjoy, and not to afflict, by any consideration of evils incidental to our government; and having already trespassed sufficiently on your patience, they need not be stated. Cold and ungrateful must be the heart, that withholds its tribute of praise, and chides and murmurs, because of evils yet existing. Whatever they may be, they are all to be remedied, only and effectually, by enlightening the public mind; by diffusing the blessings of universal education; by cherishing the Sabbath; by establishing christian institutions; and by watching and guarding, most zealously and carefully, against any and every system of spiritual or political domination, that may arrogate to itself exclusively, and by authority, the right to form the public conscience, and to dictate the public policy.

The corruption of the people, the prevalence of ignorance and vice, afford ample opportunity and temptation, for designing and selfish demagogues. The abuse and debauchery of the elective franchise, may work our ruin, as effectually as slavery. For protection against all we must look to the guardianship of His overruling Providence, who has ever shown abundant kindness, and mercy to our beloved country.

If He allows us in this happy land, to exhibit to the world, the glorious spectacle of a free and independent nation, exercising the rights and functions of self-government, it behooves us to see to it, that we do not betray such a precious trust; nor prove ourselves unworthy of it. We owe it to the great Author of every good and perfect gift, to respect His counsels, to obey His laws, to circulate His word, and to honor His institutions and His Sabbath: for without His aid, through the influence of these things, all our attempts will prove abortive. We shall be in danger continually, with wild theorists that will rise, of running off into visionary, foolish, and hurtful schemes, of

social improvement, like the socialists of Europe, to issue only, in disorder and ruin. We owe it also to our children, to the generations to come after us, and to the swelling tide of foreign immigration, to foster and give increasing efficiency, to our system of free schools; to throw into them the light and power of truth and sacred morals; and by diffusing universally the benefits of a good education, to guard against the selfish arts of those who seek through ignorance, to corrupt and to destroy. These will prove the best and most appropriate expressions of our gratitude to God, for His great goodness to our beloved country. Our territory is wide and vast enough for teeming millions yet to come. We have a place of safety, a shelter from the storms, that hurtle round the old world; and woe betide us if we rush into their vortex!

Our duty is to cherish our own republican institutions; to foster the spirit of liberty; to protect and prize our Constitution; to cultivate the arts of peace, and to seek, by the power of truth and good will, rather than by the sword and civil wars, to promote and consummate the great ends of our glorious Union. Whatever sins we have, which as a nation may subject us to the chastisement of Heaven, they are yet pardonable. God's ways have been very stately towards us. He has scourged us often, and quickly, for our follies and sins; and that most graciously, for their correction; and as repeatedly and quickly afterwards, has He lighted up the strokes of His rod, and blessed us with the abundance of His bounty. Our crimes are not the crimes of Europe. God grant that we may ever be preserved from them! that no blood of Saints may ever be found to stain our skirts!—no persecution of the Jewish race, or of the ministers and church of Christ ever provoke His wrath!—no corrupt system of superstition, or idolatry, court or consummate, directly or indirectly, alliance with the State! and no spirit of lawlessness, anarchy and civil war, demand the retributions of His vengeance! But, that, with grateful hearts for mercies past, and gratefully cherishing the institutions He has given us, we may preserve, and transmit to the generations to come, unbroken and unimpaired, all that is valuable and excellent in our great national confederacy! And may this noble Union, bound together by the ties of blest fraternity, ever stand erect and girt about with the fastnesses of Omnipotence, until that great day, when our divine Redeemer shall Himself reappear to claim “the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.”

O, God! look down upon the land that thou hast loved so well,
 And grant, that in unbroken truth, her children still may dwell—
 Nor while the grass grows on the hill and streams flow through the vale,
 May they forget their fathers' faith, or in their covenant fail!
 God keep the fairest, noblest land that lies beneath the sun,
 OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY, AND OUR COUNTRY EVER ONE!