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THE  
DESTINY OF MAN:

AN ORATION

Delivered in the First Presbyterian Church, Easton, Pa., on Tuesday Evening,  
July 26th, 1853,

BEFORE THE

ALUMNI OF LAFAYETTE COLLEGE,

PRECEDING COMMENCEMENT.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM HENRY GREEN,

PROFESSOR IN THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY.

PHILADELPHIA:

WILLIAM S. MARTIEN.

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REV. WILLIAM H. GREEN:

*Dear Sir*—We have been appointed a Committee of the Alumni to express to you the thanks of the Association for your able and eloquent address of last evening, and to request a copy for publication. The subject was one of interest, and its discussion was creditable to yourself and the Society you represented. For these reasons we hope you will see the propriety of complying with the wishes of the Association.

Yours respectfully,

E. F. STEWART,  
W. W. COTTINGHAM, } *Committee.*  
H. GREEN,

EASTON, *Wednesday, July 27th, 1853.*

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TO MESSRS. E. F. STEWART, W. W. COTTINGHAM and H. GREEN,  
Committee of the Association of Alumni.

*Gentlemen*—I greatly fear that the address to which you refer will not be found to merit the commendation expressed in your note. Nevertheless, I feel constrained to place at the disposal of the Association what was prepared for them and at the instance of their kind partiality.

Truly yours,

W. HENRY GREEN.

## THE DESTINY OF MAN.

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SONS OF LAFAYETTE! I greet you as one of yourselves. I revisit these scenes, once so familiar, with feelings akin to those indulged by him who returns after years of absence upon ancestral halls. Memories of the past are stirred; visions flit before me of years gone by. My imagination re-peoples with familiar forms and faces, spots which they have long forsaken, and transports me back again to the merry days of yore. It is the pleasing illusion of a moment which a moment more dispels. My classmates! My College friends! where are they? A few here perhaps: more scattered over the wide world, contending with various success for the prizes dispensed upon its crowded arena; some are already gathered to the silent tomb. As I linger here, and cherished recollections pour in upon me, I would fain recall the past. I would that I could bid the world stand still, or cause its ponderous wheels to traverse back the spaces over which they have already rolled. But life flies apace. The march of time is onward. It turns not back, nor stops. The mighty tide, along which we are borne and a part of which we are, is ever on the flow. It knows no ebb. The high destinies of earth are ever accomplishing under the bidding of the Supreme. The flood of human affairs rolls on

unceasingly and resistlessly, entirely beyond the control of individual men. These can no more check its progress, or refuse to yield themselves up to its power, than those drops of water which in their aggregate make up the currents of your beautiful streams can disobey the impulse which hurries them onward to the ocean.

Is it a forced analogy to compare our academic retreat to-day to waters in repose, to a quiet eddy formed behind the walls of Alma Mater, into which we have escaped from the rush of agitated waters beyond, shortly again to re-enter them and to be hurried onward? Let us improve the calm of this unruffled hour to cast a hasty glance upon the broad surface of the stream. Under what impulsion is it rushing forward? And whither is it sweeping with its vast living cargo? Can we calculate the forces? Can we divine the end? This suggests my theme, *THE DESTINY OF MAN*, not the individual, but the collective race, viewed not as a child of heaven, but as a tenant of the earth.

Whatever doubts some of the would-be wise have ventured in modern times respecting the unity in origin of the human race, it is undeniable that mankind is morally and historically one. The population of our globe is not a prodigious assemblage of individualities, related only by the loose aggregation of the sand heap. Society—the Human Race:—there must be some idea suggested by those sounds, and there must be some reality correspondent to their meaning. What do these words imply? Not merely that there are vast numbers of individual men, alike in physical structure and in mental constitution, yet standing apart, each by himself. These words awaken the conception of a unity, in which all the parts are held together, forming one inseparable whole. They speak of multiplied, diversified and strong relations. Society finds not its counterpart in some crowded thoroughfare through

which men press, each holding on to his own way and busied with his own thoughts, scarce noticing the throng around him, except to avoid being jostled by them as they pass. Constrained by necessities of his inward nature to put himself in living connection with his fellows, man is subjected in consequence to new laws of life, to new conditions of activity. He no more moves or acts by himself or for himself alone than one of the planets of our solar system can wheel onward in its orbit uninfluencing and uninfluenced. And as well might the natural philosopher think to discover all that can be known of matter in the laws which govern a single body unacted upon from without, while neglecting those which regulate the motions, harmonies and perturbations of bodies acting on each other, as the student of man imagine that he can get to the bottom of his subject by the sole study of the isolated individual. Each man born into the world becomes a part of the moving mass, and is what the social influences to which he is exposed make him. Not that he loses his personality, his self-acting power, and becomes an impuissant thing, a mere creature of the forces which play upon him with no inherent life of his own. Society is not to be conceived of as a vast machine moved by a grand spring of its own, and individual men as the wheels which move only as they are propelled. The life of society is but the resultant of all the living forces found within its bosom. It has no existence separate from the individuals that compose it, any more than the gravitation of the universe exists independently of material bodies. Each man has a living soul, with an energy, intelligence and will, which are modified and acted on by social position and social influences, but which are never lost.

This whole living generation of men is a unit, bound together by reciprocal actings and influences. And yet it does

not stand by itself alone. It is not to be dissevered from the generation past, nor from the generation to come. It finds in the former the conditions of its origin, and the solution not of its physical existence only, but of its intellectual and moral state and of the standing which in every respect it occupies. The succeeding generation will stand in the same relation to the present, as the present does to the past. It will come in to occupy its place, to fulfil its tasks, to reap the benefit of its labours. A great poet has compared successive generations of men to the leaves of trees ever falling and renewed. The figure will be adapted to our subject, if the trunk and branches be allowed to represent society, and individual men the leaves. It will be perceived that while the latter fall away year after year, there is an abiding result produced, a heritage from one year accruing to the next. The leaves fall off and perish, but the trunk remains, and every year shoots upward and the branches extend outward and the wood is hardened. Or if society be compared to the surface of the ocean, the life and activities of the individual will be as the waves which rise and sink, while yet the advancing tide is setting steadily in upon the shore. So generation after generation passes away, but the race lives, and the influence of each generation abides and leaves its impress upon all that follow. The world is not fixed in dead stagnation. The past is not dead: it lives on in the present.

In order to arrive at a comprehension of the point which I am desirous to present, it is necessary to rise from what is particular to what is general. We must not confine our thoughts to the individual acts of individual men, nor even contemplate singly the movements of a particular age or country. We must seek out the bonds which link all in a higher unity together. We must search for the grand moving causes which control and shape successive eras, which scoop

out or determine the channel along which individual energies shall be directed.

No man can understand history who does not recognize its unity, who does not see that all the affairs of men constitute together one vast chain; each event is a link drawn onward by preceding events, itself inducing those that come after. History cannot be written—it degenerates into mere annals, where this is not perceived and kept in view. The lives of individual men cannot be separated from the period in which they moved, nor can they be exhibited without unfolding the whole state of things in which they played their part. Who could gain any just idea of the Reformation, its character or its causes, if he went no further back than Tetzel's sale of indulgences? or who could comprehend the principles of the American Revolution, by taking as his starting point the destruction of the tea in Boston harbour?

This, then, is the object presented for your contemplation, MAN, not the man of one country nor of one age, but the race; and the race not considered as made up of dissevered individualities casually jostled together, but as a vast comprehensive unity. Look abroad upon this mighty human mass; survey its forces and its movements, and tell me what it is that you behold.

To the eyes of some thus viewing it, the world seems a disordered chaos. Forces innumerable are in operation in bewildering confusion with every various intensity and in every conceivable direction. The endless threads of influence present a knotted tangled mass, and defy all attempts to trace or to unravel them. The earth appears to be a great seething cauldron where all is wild agitation, but with no grand definitive result. Humanity is driven, the sport of every various influence, like the ocean tossed by uncertain

winds. But what seems confused upon a narrow view of things, is explained by making the range of vision broader and more comprehensive. Phenomena, which superficially considered are diverse or conflicting, may be resolved in common into some higher law in which they find their unity. Things which at first sight seem disconnected, will be seen upon a more narrow inspection to bear a close relation to each other. The ultimate laws of nature are simple when once we have arrived at them, and they explain much that seemed irreconcilable before.

There must then, we conclude, be some result which is the true summation of all the forces acting upon humanity. It is that at which we wish to arrive, for it will reveal to us the direction of the grand movement of the race. With all this seeming confusion of currents, eddies and counter-currents, which are busy upon the surface of the great human ocean, there is yet a motion lying deeper than this, into which the whole of these partial streams is ultimately resolvable, a steady transmission of the great body of its waters in some determinate direction. Now, it is possible, this being the case, to conceive that these waters might flow in a perpetual round, the race remaining stationary as a whole, though every part is in active motion; the general sum of human knowledge, civilization, virtue and happiness remaining the same while constant fluctuation is going on in the several parts of the human family. Thus the waters of the terrestrial oceans are in incessant flow. By the action of the sun, the winds, the earth's rotation, there is set in motion a gigantic system of currents circling round the earth, through which the whole of its briny contents is forced perpetually to flow, and yet the ocean maintains from age to age its ancient bed. Where the voice of Omnipotence first said to it, Thus far shalt thou go and no farther, there

its proud waves are still staid. Its currents return upon each other, pressing on again and again in the same incessant round. The stream which pours from east to west at the equator is fed by others returning from the poles, and so the circuit is kept up for ever. Is this the motion to be attributed to the human race, ceaseless revolutions but no progression? In one quarter of the globe we see nations rising from barbarism and pagan superstition, to civilization and Christianity. During the same period in another the lights of science and civilization have been quenched in degradation and barbarism. Contemporaneous with the spread of virtue and knowledge in one part is their decline in another. If empires rise, it is upon the ruins of those which have preceded them; if they fall, their broken fragments furnish materials for a new erection.

Is this then an adequate description of the movements of mankind? Has there been, and is there to be nothing but revolution, revolution, revolution, among men? Is there no onward march? And is it by necessity that the brightening light of day in one of earth's hemispheres must be attended by the deepening shades of night in another? Credit not the tale. It is thus with physical, material forces, because they have attained their equilibrium, and beyond it they cannot go.

The activity of all the material agents in the universe is expended in endless cycles. Celestial and terrestrial movements are in this alike. In the graphic language of the wise king of Israel: "The sun ariseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteneth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the

rivers come, thither they return again." All the forces are so nicely adjusted that they exactly balance each other, and although in incessant action, they remain in perfect equipoise.

\* If now, we could believe that the race of men taken at large occupied the highest position in which they were capable of sustaining themselves, or that their immortal powers were on a precise balance with the physical forces of nature that surround them, then we could believe that any advance of the race was out of the question, and that in spite of all the fluctuations and the heavings which take place upon the troubled surface of humanity, its general level must remain permanently the same. But mind is not in equipoise with matter. The former is superior, and must vindicate that superiority by a progressive mastery.

Besides, the protracted existence of the world would be without any worthy end, if the race of man was stationary as is thus supposed; if it has reached already its term of ultimate advancement, beyond which progression is impossible, and all motion is henceforth but a weary drifting round and round. If any thing is apparent, it is that this world was set up as a theatre for man, for the play of his spiritual activities. Here they are to manifest themselves, here display their strength. If then, all has been long since exhibited that is to be displayed, and nothing more remains, no latent powers yet to be unfolded, no new and untried part to be acted, no onward motion, no progression, but the same thing over and over again for ages and ages still; sweeping round in the same tiresome circle which has been swept again, again and again; where is the use of the world remaining? If we have learned what the first lesson in any human science might teach us, that the Creator has made nothing in vain, nothing without a worthy end, we shall not

be satisfied but there are purposes yet in store for man, waiting their full time to be revealed.

If then, the race is not stationary, if it is not hopelessly revolving in an ever returning orbit, the movement in which it is projected must be forward or backward, it must be advancing or retrograding. It must, I say, be one or the other of these. If it be said that it is advancing in some respects, and retrograding in others, we must take again the resultant of these two movements; and unless they be in exact equipoise, which would throw us again into the motionless, or the rotary scheme from which we have just escaped, we shall find that there is upon the whole an advance or a decline; and whichever it be that is superior, we may be assured that it will ultimately overpower and bring into its train that which even now offers to it an ineffectual resistance.

The idea of the world's retrograding is not a new one, nor has it been confined to a few misanthropic, disappointed minds. It was embodied in the classic fable of the golden age successively deteriorating to one of silver, iron, lead. It has found its way into the scheme of many a moralist, who has thought that his own age exceeded in vices and crimes those of any other. It is the belief of this which has led age after age to hang in admiration of those who have preceded them, and to fancy that the men and the deeds of their own times fall far below those of times gone by. Paganism never deified the heroes of the present, but always those of ancient days. And may it not be true? May it not be that this idea, which has wrought itself thus into the conceptions of men so widely diverse, has its foundation in the reality of things? May it not be, that fallen man will be suffered to fall deeper and deeper still? He has capabilities for indefinite elevation, but a moral blight has come

over them, and his aspirations have been checked, and his upward tendencies have been reversed. He has an intellect fitted to soar, and he is bringing the world beneath his mastery, and chaining the elements to do his bidding. The wind is compelled to waft his vessels, and the fire to propel his swift-wheeled chariots, and the lightning to bear his messages. He has shown his power to conquer nature, but has he not failed to conquer himself, and will not this prove his ruin? Civilization may increase, and science flourish, and wealth multiply, and proud monuments of art attest his fame, but is there not all the while rottenness concealed within the trunk, in spite of this appearance of vigorous growth, premonitory of certain ruin, and remediless decay? Attained to this pitch of seeming greatness, is not dissolution waiting at the doors? May not in the just judgment of heaven, and to vindicate the supremacy of moral law, a depraved race be suffered to sink lower and lower, until it shall be made palpably apparent that all the vigour of the human intellect can avail nothing beneath that terrible weight of corruption which is crushing it to the earth? There are portions and periods of human history from which this is undoubtedly the lesson to be read. Yet, for the race at large, we may justly entertain higher hopes than this.

But how is the destiny of humanity to be decided? Is the decision left to chance? Have we here an infant borne along in its cradle upon unconscious waters, with no guiding over-watching power, the plaything of casualty and accident, and whose destiny no one can predict, whether it shall sink hopelessly in the remorseless current or be landed at last in a haven of security? No such power exists, or holds sway in the universe as chance. What is it? Where is it? What has it ever done? The name is a cover for ignorance or imperfect vision. What men ascribe to chance is the pro-

duct of acting causes and the evolution of fixed laws, though so subtile as to elude detection, or so complicated as to defy measurement. Are we ruled by unintelligent, inexorable fate? fate is a figment of men's brains. Do then the fortunes of humanity depend upon the fickle will of man himself, inconstant as the shifting breeze? Are the hopes of the world left to the uncontrolled free-will of the actors in life's busy scenes? I answer No, again. It is beyond the reach of possibility, that the lights of science should be extinguished, the fountains of virtue sealed up, and the world go backward. This is a result not left dependent on human caprice or accidental causes. Not more fixed is this globe in its orbit with the certain destiny of rolling onward around the centre of light, than the march of mankind is surely onward in all that is good and great. Nevertheless, we found our hopes of all this not in man, but in the gracious purposes of his benevolent Creator. He has disclosed what he designs. He has sketched for us the ideal of the regenerated earth. To that, man is to be lifted; lifted, not by a sudden bound, but by the slow maturing of plans laid in eternal wisdom, which are steadily working out their accomplishment, and which can no more fail than the mighty laws by which external nature is propelled can prove insufficient for their task. With this grand advance accordant with the will of the Supreme, seeming and partial retrogrades are no more inconsistent, than the backward motion in the lowermost rim of your carriage-wheels proves that the whole is not speeding forward. As the planets of our majestic system roll round the sun, they seem to be now advancing, now retrograding; and yet the astronomer will tell you, that our whole system, sun, earth, and planets are every moment urging onward with unmeasured celerity their march among the stars. The vista is closing up behind; suns and sys-

tems that we are leaving in our track are fading from view, while the heavens are opening before us, our course is onward still, and to what point far off in the unknown distance we may yet be carried, is left to vague conjecture. In the same way, man is projected onward in his race toward the infinite. Whereto he has attained, we see; but what he is destined to reach we know not, except as we can gather it from the few hasty glimpses furnished us by inspiration, though these are enough to waken the largest hopes and stimulate the most ardent desires.

Man is imperfect, but perfectible. Full perfection will not be reached and is not to be expected in the present state. That is reserved for a higher sphere. But it argues extremely low ideas of what our Creator has in store for us, or of those endowments and capacities with which he has furnished man, to fancy that the limit of earthly perfectibility has been attained or even approximated as yet.

It is not necessary to assume that the race is advancing in natural endowments, intellectual, moral or physical. This probably is not the case. But each generation stands upon the shoulders of its predecessor; and unless it lives in vain, contributes something to the advantage of its successor greater than itself enjoyed. It is by successive courses laid by the patient painstaking of age after age that the great structure of human progress is carried forward. If each generation were dis severed from its predecessor, then must the world stand still. The men of each age would be precisely where their fathers were, with the same fruitless labour to renew, of rolling up the weary hill the ever-returning stone of Sisyphus. There could then be no permanent acquisition; no tasks accomplished, nor lessons learned, to endure for all future time. Progress would be impossible. The unity of the human race would be broken. There

would in strictness be no human race, nothing but human individuals. But as it is, every age contributes its share to the increasing store of human wealth. The thoughts, the ideas of former periods, their skill, their knowledge, refinement, cultivation, are the common stock of this. This constitutes the capital with which we are furnished at the outset, descending to us by legitimate inheritance, and which we are not only to treasure up, but to increase, that it may descend enlarged to them that shall follow us. And thus the wealth of mankind grows by successive accumulations, and the law of progress is in an ever advancing ratio.

The two great functions to be regarded in the onward progress of mankind, are the natural powers and capabilities of man and the directing hand of God. Both co-operate in determining the result, and neither may be forgotten in the estimate we form. Man is made capable of better things, and is adapted to a loftier position than he at present occupies. He finds in himself restless longings after unattained good. His anticipations of the future are gilded with hope and spanned by the rainbow of promise. His wishes are always expanding beyond his present lot, and his conceptions of what may be gained invariably outrun what he has actually acquired. Hence he is ever reaching and striving after something which lies beyond him, ever sighing after some improvement in his condition. Real or imaginary evils urge him to seek their removal. Actual or fancied good impels him to endeavour its attainment. And thus the human mass is swayed by impulses, which forbid a quiet acquiescence in the present. It is ever on the move, sometimes flowing gently in a placid stream, and anon heaving in mad tempestuous surges lashed to fury by pent up passions suddenly finding vent. These movements may often be wild, erratic and misguided. It is not strange that they

should be, when we contemplate merely their human source. But all are under the conduct of a controlling Providence, who directs and overrules all to the destined end of human welfare. And no limit can be set to man's advancement, but that which is fixed by the possible unfolding of his powers in this his mortal state.

The progress of the human race is the grand resultant of all the forces operating in its midst, both those which are natural and those which are supernatural. And this imparts to it a character of universality, preserving it from becoming partial and one-sided. No one man, no community, no nation even, nor age, contains within itself all the elements from which a symmetrical development of humanity must proceed. One will extend its efforts and establish its triumphs in one direction, another in another; but no one in all at once. All are necessary parts to the completion of the whole; all join in the general onward march. And it is by the combination of all that the ultimate result is to be attained. There is always something defective, something one-sided and incomplete in the various onward movements of distinct portions of mankind. The questions and the struggles which arise, have something about them that is partial and local; and the results must bear the same partial character. Repeated trials with varying elements and under varying conditions are needed to apply the requisite correction. Just and enlarged ideas are of slow growth, and demand an expanded theatre for their production. Take, for example, the problem of civil liberty; or that no less important and difficult of religious toleration and the rights of conscience. Who can write a just account of the birth of these great ideas, and their expansion to their present shape and dimensions before the eye of enlightened humanity, without drawing his materials from the whole his-

tory of man? They are not the products of one age or people, nor of any single set of influences. It is by the concatenating together of all the influences which operate broadly over the whole world and down the whole course of time, that the needful correction is applied, and that the progress of man becomes just, uniform and symmetrical. And the more intimate and thorough this concatenation can be made, the more the influences which are at work lose their contracted local character and diffuse themselves widely, the less will there be that is irregular and sporadic in the movements of the race. To this the intercommunication of the age is largely contributing. Let a despotic blow be struck in Hungary, or persecution be waked in Tuscany, and the reverberations will rouse a sentiment of indignation over the world that will make even tyrants tremble. Mankind are coming to resemble a body through which the pulsations of life are transmitted rapidly and surely to every part. And from this is to be augured only good. True it is, that evil is invested by it with tremendous power; and that by such aid it appears with a malignity and spreads with a virulence before unknown. But all that is good too, is arming itself with similar weapons for the encounter. Let the battle be joined between light and darkness, between good and evil. Let them have a fair struggle, and have no fears for the issue. To indulge in gloomy apprehensions for the result, is to doubt the inherent superiority of truth, as well as the gracious providence of God above. When the Most High in the person of his Son introduced the gospel among men, he brought in that which would operate as a corrective of every disorder, a remedy for every ill, and the fruitful source of every heaven-born blessing. With that gospel given to the world, and God's Spirit attending it, let there be no fears as to what the end shall be. The cause of

human advancement and human amelioration rests on too secure a basis for the enemies of man's welfare seriously to disturb it; its march is too majestic to be easily impeded. This heavenly boon belongs not to one nation, nor to a few nations, but to mankind. It shall come everywhere as a purifier, everywhere infuse a new spirit. As it advances, it shall do its work of purging out the evil from the hearts of men, and from the institutions under which they live. And as that weight which hangs like a heavy clog upon the wheels, retarding the progress of man's upward destiny, is shaken off or worn away, the world shall advance with accelerating speed.

Those narrow views which are too frequently entertained, must vanish before a conception of this subject in its length and breadth. When histories shall be written starting from this which is their only legitimate point of departure, the bearing of the events recorded upon human welfare, when they shall with faithful pen write down on every page in what relation each fact narrated stood to man's advancement or the improvement of his condition, then the past will be viewed with other eyes and with a juster appreciation of its real worth than it is at present. In fact, what is the true function of history rightly understood but just this—to tell the onward progress of the great human tide, to mark its epochs and the varieties of its flow? And when this shall be done, and truly done, it will force from all the acknowledgment that an almighty Providence was everywhere, and everywhere working good for men: that from the most unlikely causes and the most untoward instruments, and even out of events seemingly the most disastrous, good was brought and the cause of human weal gained fresh triumphs.

That bigotry and illiberality which sees every thing through the coloured glasses of a narrow system, and traces all good

to the handful of its own party, may learn a lesson from this grand scheme in which a race co-operates: and from the fact that they who isolate themselves instead of rising to a superior cultivation, sink to barbarism: and that the first dawn of progress, the first step of an incipient civilization follows upon intercourse and interchange and intercommunication. Even as regards the physical structure of men, segregation invariably gives rise to deformity and deterioration.

Thus this magnificent scheme moves on. The actors in it are frail men, perishing almost as soon as they appear upon the stage, the good, the bad—the great ones and the common herd alike. Yet its steady onward progress is not interrupted from age to age. And this, while kingdoms rise, accomplish their end, then fall. Races of men with their special endowments and characteristics have each their particular work, which accomplished, they sink away and are supplanted by others, having again their several tasks bearing on the final destiny of man. Or it may be, we narrow down the scheme too much when we speak of man and make the occurrences of earth to terminate on him. Man may be linked in with the whole chain of being; and his destiny enter but as one of the elements concurring to make up a vaster plan. In the grand universal scheme, worlds may be but as individual men to the scheme conducted on the earth, mere waves rising and sinking on the ocean of eternity, while the grand tide flows on, the tide of universal being, drawn upward and onward by the centre of omnipotent attraction. Worlds may be born and die, pass their brief life-time, a life-time of ages in the calculus of man, but brief—a fleeting shadow—the merest point contrasted with the life of God, while yet they are working out an ever enduring, ever advancing scheme. Each may have its task; each its impulse to contribute to the moving mass: and the grand resultant

of the whole be a universal and unending progress of the entire intelligent creation in knowledge, in goodness, and in likeness to the great Supreme.

From this conception of the scheme of the world and the position held by its various parts, arise new views of the earnestness and the consequence of individual life. While there are those who would lose the individual in the general mass, I would rather increase his sense of responsibility and prompt him to an activity more zealous and unremitting. It gives new consequence to the actings of individual men to show them how they terminate not upon themselves, but produce results which enter into the great stream of humanity and contribute to modify its flow in all coming time. The age in which we live has its functions to perform, as all ages past had theirs. It has its contributions to make to the great cause of human weal which cannot be withheld without guilt to us and detriment to it. There are earnest questions in the present age—questions in the church, questions in the state, questions in social organization, in science, in morals. These must be guided to right solutions, not for the present emergencies merely, nor for our sakes alone who are the immediate actors in them, but for mankind and for all time to come. The thorough radical and the iron conservative stand alike upon extremes, opposite but equally mischievous and preposterous. The former would reject the present and sweep away the fruit of all past ages, bury the lessons of experience, ignore all that has been acquired and all that has been done for the cause of man by the earnest toils and struggles and thoughts of times gone by. The very foundations must be unsettled, every thing destroyed, that he may reconstruct by fancies of his own, and bring upon the stage some splendid Utopia which he has been hatching in his single brain. This is a folly and a criminality. As

though the world would be enriched by casting away its wealth! or progress made by breaking the links which join us to the past, and rendering all true progression impossible!

And, on the other hand, to him who takes large and manly views of things, is it less a folly and less a criminality to attempt to force stagnation on these busy scenes of life, to harden the present covering with which humanity has enveloped itself into an unyielding shell which shall press the life out of its expanding body—to lock the wheels of human advancement where they at present are, and bring all to a stand-still, and claim that the ultimatum is now reached and man may proceed no farther—and to represent it as a sacrilegious war upon things sacred when strokes are dealt at venerated abuses, or the cry is lifted to the congregated hosts of men, which God and nature bid us raise—March on! March on!

There is needed on the part of the men of the present age an intelligent conception of the work before them; that they be not blindly led as dupes of the designing, nor, on the other hand, stand doggedly in the way of that which they should labour to promote. We want neither that servile dependence on antiquity and authority, which is inconsistent with independence of thought and manly freedom of action; nor that unbridled lust of innovation which cannot brook to walk in good old paths simply because others have walked therein before. It is a time demanding enlarged and comprehensive, as well as sound and sober views. It is time that narrow-mindedness and bigotry were banished both from Church and State. What is good is no less good from having made its appearance in an unpromising quarter. What is evil is no less evil for being found in company with that which we admire and revere. Instead of standing

proudly aloof and asking, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? it is wiser and better to come inquiringly and see. That blind attachment to party and to sect which will fight obstinately for the wrong when held by our own side, rather than yield to the right propounded by an adversary, is unworthy of men of sincere and upright, not to say liberal and cultivated minds. It is hard to find embodied in real life unmixed error or unmixed truth, absolute good or absolute evil. Every where there is a call not only for charity and forbearance, but for a wise discrimination, to refuse the evil and to choose the good. And be it by all remembered, that they who by word or deed or earnest thought add aught to the world's wealth, contribute thereby a permanent addition to the heritage of mankind.

Destiny has been made the watchword of spoliation. The strong have trampled on the weak and called that destiny which was the outgrowth of their own unhallowed passions. The destiny of man shall be our watchword too; but it shall be one beckoning onward and upward, and to be attained not by violence, oppression and bloodshed, but by a peaceful and wise devotion to the truest interests of our race.

THE END.