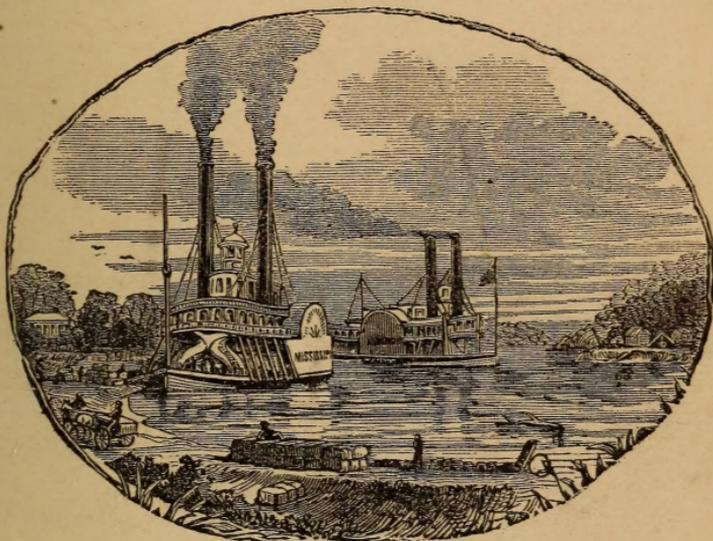


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STERLING'S

SOUTHERN ORATOR:

CONTAINING

STANDARD LECTURES IN PROSE AND POETRY FOR DECLAMATION
AND RECITATION IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.



BY
✓
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New-York:

OWENS AND AGAR, 110 WILLIAM ST.

GREENSBORO, N. C.:

R. STERLING & SON.

1867.

Library of Congress

1867

City of Washington

PN 4217
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Since the days of Bacon, the inestimable truth is fixed, that all things are subject to reason and discussion. The people are the keepers of our political treasures, yea, the solvers of the great problem of the fitness of man for self-government. They must not lack cultivation. Train, then, your own hearts and minds. Send the stream of Christian education leaping and laughing through the land. Bathe the souls of our entire population in its pure waters of knowledge, and you have crowned the works of your fathers, you have given perpetuity to their institutions, we are free forever, and you may well wear the unsullied honors of your sires.

CLXVII.

THE MORAL ELEMENT IN LITERATURE.

REV. GEORGE HOWE, D.D.

BUT, my young friends, there is another element of true and permanent literature, without which it must continually be superseded, of which the majority of these heathen writers, and indeed the great burden of the modern authors, are destitute. I mean the moral and religious element. The writer and scholar entirely deficient here must eventually be superseded and his name be forgotten. Voltaire fifty years ago reigned as king over the whole empire of learning. He gave laws to nearly the whole of literary Europe, and spake with authority to many even on these shores. His literature was various, his productions numerous and popular. But they lacked the moral element, and they have passed away. His name is no more honored, nor his memory revered even in France, which adored him. The professor who a short time since quoted his authority to a Parisian audience, was hissed in indignation. And Byron, the gloomy, powerful genius who so filled men's minds and mouths a quarter of a century ago, is doomed to lose his hold upon the hearts of men, because he lacked this conservative element of literature and of society itself. So the all-wise Ruler has determined that the memory of the wicked shall rot. And in proportion as Christianity is dif-

fused through the world, and rises supreme over other forms of religious belief, will this moral element be the more demanded by society. The day is coming when the immoral and licentious in literature will condemn it, for the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters the sea.

CLXVIII.

THE WARNINGS OF HISTORY.—ANONYMOUS.

THE past is secure. It is unalterable. The seal of eternity is upon it. The wisdom which it has displayed cannot be obscured; neither can it be debased by human folly or human infirmity. The future is that which may well awaken the most earnest solicitude, both for the virtue and the permanence of our republic. The fate of other republics, their rise, their progress, their decline, and their fall, are written but too legibly on the pages of history, if indeed they were not continually before us in the startling fragments of their ruins.

They have perished, and perished by their own hands. Prosperity enervated them, corruption debased them, and a venal populace consummated their destruction. They have sometimes been cheated out of their liberties by servile demagogues; sometimes betrayed into a surrender of them by false patriots. They have disregarded the warning voice of their best statesmen, and have persecuted and driven from office their best friends. They have revered power more in its high abuses and summary movements than in its calm and constitutional energy. They have surrendered to faction what belonged to the country. Patronage and party, the triumph of a leader, and the discontents of a day have outweighed all solid principles and institutions of government.

Such are the melancholy lessons of the past history of the republics down to our own. Let the history of the Grecian and Italian states warn us of our danger. Let the American youth never forget that they possess a noble inheritance, bought by the toils, and sufferings, and blood of their ancestors, and capable, if wisely improved and faithfully guarded, of transmitting to their latest posterity all