

THE

OBLIGATIONS

OF

131-21

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

TO

HIS COUNTRY AND THE WORLD;

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE PHILALETHEAN SOCIETY

OF

HANOVER COLLEGE,

September 28th, 1841.

BY GILBERT M^c. MASTER, D. D.

MADISON, IND.

PRINTED BY SIMRALL AND JONES,

1841.

PHILALETHEAN HALL, Sept. 28th., 1841.

Rev'd. G. McMaster, D. D.

SIR—We, the undersigned, have been appointed a Committee by the Philaethean Society, to solicit of you, a copy of your very able address, for publication, delivered before that Society, upon yesterday—its first annual anniversary. In the discharge of this very agreeable duty permit us to add our wishes to those of the other members of the Society, that you will comply with the request,—believing that your address is eminently calculated to encourage and enlighten the mind of Students.

With sentiments of the highest regard,

Yours, &c.

JOHN F. TRENCHARD,
SAM'L. G. DAILY,
THOS. C. McCUTCHEN, } Committee.

REV'D. G. McMASTER, D. D.,

HANOVER, Sept. 28th., 1841.

Gentlemen:—

For the kind reception of the address delivered on yesterday, before the Philaethean Society of Hanover College, you will be pleased to convey to the members my grateful acknowledgments. The publication of the address was not contemplated by me; and I am aware that the request of it, for publication, is due to the partial kindness of the Society, rather than to the merits of the production. As soon as it can be prepared for the press,—for it was but partially written,—a copy shall be forwarded.—Accept, Gentlemen, my best wishes for your personal welfare, and for the advancement of the interests of your society.

G. McMASTER.

Messrs. JNO. F. TRENCHARD,
SAM'L. G. DAILY,
THOS. C. McCUTCHEN, } Committee Philaethean Society.

323.65

M227

ADDRESS.

*Gentlemen of the Philaethean Society,
and respected Audience:*

MUTATION characterizes the condition of our world. The age in which our lot is cast contributes its proportion to the progress of that revolution which affects what is sacred as well as what is secular; and which reaches both the sentiments of individuals and the policy of States. These reciprocally act upon each other. To this revolutionary process our own country is not a stranger.

That remarkable political and moral phenomenon,—the Declaration of our Independence,—which proclaimed the birth of a nation, destined to make developments and to exemplify principles of deep interest to man, was one, and a commanding one, of those events that engage attention, awaken thought, and rouse the mind to action. It has been followed by results which concern the future and embrace interests not limited by narrow bounds. The principles of that event pertain to man, and to it, civilized man throughout the world has been, and is, turning some of his most earnest thoughts, and profoundest reflections. The principles of representative Democracy, first exemplified upon a large scale, and in a form which promises permanency, by these United States, have shaken the thrones of Kings, extorted concessions to oppressed humanity, and have made both the despot and his vassal feel that they are men:—the former that he is dependent, the latter that he has power. The truth has been proclaimed and the example has been given, assuring all, that man is capable of self government. But it is cultivated man, man, guided by intelligence, and influenced by moral principle, that is capable of this self-rule. This lesson America is called upon to teach the nations. In the science and practice of it her sons must themselves be adepts. In order to this every principle of our nature must be improved, every particular faculty in harmony with others, and in well directed action, all must concur.

1146125

The localities and resources of these States—this great confederacy of Republics,—are peculiarly favorable to such a work. Far removed from the neighborhood and corrupting influence of the consolidated powers of Eastern dynasties, we are called to a course of measures adapted to a new condition of things. The geographical delineations of our country call forth anticipations of no ordinary magnitude. Our vallies, countless in number, are fruitful in all the productions of nature; and our mountains, from the granite and marble quarries of the East, over the Alleghanies of the middle regions, to the Rocky mountains of the West, are rich in ores; while our rivers, from the St. Lawrence to the Oregon, furnish mediums of transportation for their various productions, to their appropriate points of destination. The mind is charmed while the eye traces the lines of these delightful streams, the Penobscot, the Connecticut, with their beautiful villas and cultivated gardens; the Hudson, with its magnificent scenery, better to the Empire State than a stream of liquid gold; the Delaware, washing the shores of the State that bears its name, and those of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Time would fail, and the occasion does not require, to follow the current of the Potomac, or the Savannah, with their kindred streams, which beautify and enrich the States of the South; the Susquehanna, the Alleghany, and their tributaries, which adorn and give wealth to the Keystone State. And of our own beautiful Ohio, studded with its lovely islets, how much might be said, while in its course it refreshes so many great and growing Commonwealths; until it mingles its streams with the waters of that prince of rivers, the majestic Mississippi! The heart expands, while the mind is charmed, in tracing the lines of this mighty Empire, from the Gulph of Mexico on the South to the Lakes, and within their channels—those inland Seas—on the North; and from the Atlantic on the East to the Pacific on the West.

To whom does this Empire, so extensive, so various in its magnificence, and so rich, belong? The title to it is not lodged in the sceptred hand of the occupant of the palace; nor in that of him who is the tenant of the feudal castle. It belongs to the citizens—the people of the United States; a people who can, as associated, refer to their origin with a distinctness with which

none other can; and the individuals, with little trouble, could trace their family lineage to their first settlement of the country, and many of them still farther. Their nobility they find in the antiquity and honor of human nature, their charter is stamped with the seal of heaven; the device engraven upon it is the image of God; and in their escutcheon they are taught to glory in proportion as it appears unsoiled by the spots of sin. Reposing, under a benign Providence, upon himself for his personal honours, the American believes

—*Miserum est aliorum incumbere famæ.*

And to him who boasts of the feudal origin of his nobility he is inclined to say,

*Et tamen ut longe repetas, longeque revolvās
Nomen, ab infami gentem deducis asylo.*

Upon man and his character, present and prospective, we are prone to speculate. Did we know all the causes and the condition of those causes, now in operation, in forming the character of the men of America, and especially the men of this confederacy, we could foresee and foretell the results. In anticipating our future character we must take into account the materials that make up the mass of our people, and the peculiarity of circumstances under which their character must be formed.—We derive our origin from every civilized nation of Europe.—Possessing various forms of education, prejudices, and habits, our fathers met upon the shores of the Western Continent. Variety of character, novelty of circumstances, extent of country, freedom of institutions, gave a spirit of enterprize, a comprehension of views, a liberality of thought, and tendency to concession in mutual intercourse, to all of which the world had in great measure been a stranger. Traces of these are distinctly seen in our public institutions, and in our social progress.

Upon that character which is to be formed in our own tier of North Western and South Western States there is no Western man who does not think and feel. That character will be the result of various ingredients in combination; possessing, we hope, what is most excellent in each of the primitive parts. Of it, we have at present before us three principal elements, all of them possessing much that is eligible; and of a fourth, a sprink-

ling may be expected. Of these complex elements our own Commonwealth has its full proportion. From the East we have the legitimate offspring of the Round-heads of the 17th Century, the Puritans of England, with their various forms of independent thought, their multifarious inventions, their persevering enterprize, carrying in their train the conveniences of an advancing civilization. From the South we have the descendants of the Cavaliers of the same period, with their chivalry, pruned of some exceptionable shoots, the old character improved, still holding its place in the Old Dominion, the land of clear heads and noble hearts. From the Middle States, chiefly, we have the Presbyterianism of Geneva, Holland, and the British Isles, with its love of liberty, Senatorial dignity, and high moral bearing. The sprinkling of a fourth ingredient you have in the annual immigrations from abroad. These elements are in the process of combination; and we greatly misapprehend the signs of the times, if, in the regions whose shores are washed by the waters of the Ohio and the Mississippi, there is not about to be formed a character of no common elevation. Extended territory, fruitful soil, increasing numbers, ready communication with distant parts, free institutions, resting upon and sustained by the eternal principles of christian morality, with literary establishments open to all, rising in rapid succession on every hand, are ours. What that is requisite to the aggrandizement of a people, has not the Providence of the Supreme Being put into our power? Such is our heritage, such, if true to ourselves, are our prospects. Shall, however, through neglect or mismanagement, these delightful regions, so rich in promise, become the theatre of a gloomy superstition? the home of a religion of tawdry decorations, debasing to the mind, to the heart corrupting, to the man debasing, and to rational freedom ruinous? Or shall these elements of high character fall under the paralyzing influence of a doubting scepticism; or yield to the power of a dark, headless, heartless, and ruthless infidelity? You, young gentlemen, can give the answer to these inquiries. That answer will be emphatically in the negative. But be it remembered, that Divine Providence contemplates man not only, nor chiefly, as a physical, but also, and chiefly, as a rational, moral, and active

being. Agency is a distinct attribute of our nature, to which Philosophy has not yet assigned a place sufficiently distinct and prominent, without the employment of which we may not expect any important object to be accomplished, or any desirable prospect to be realized. Prepare for the accomplishment of a great event, and engage in effecting it.

I. An object of paramount importance is distinctly brought before the mind of every young American, and especially of every educated young American:—the moral and intellectual aggrandizement of his country. The feeling of responsibility, on this head, should be deep and permanent. To America is committed the cause of both God and Man, under circumstances very peculiar; circumstances to which other nations have hitherto been strangers. To qualify you, as a portion of the citizens of this Republican Confederacy, to meet, in your place, these responsibilities under which you are laid, a superintending Providence has guided your steps to these halls, as it has directed others elsewhere.

Permit me to put you in mind of what you must have already observed: that by the constitution of things, intellectual and moral improvement is indicated to be the great business of man. Without his interference, the seasons in grateful vicissitude roll around the year; the revolution of day and night require not his vigilance; without his care the clouds distil their dews and rains; while he reposes in slumber, nature prepares for his use, her fruits; he has little to do with, and he knows little of his own organization. Irrespective of his direction, the digestive organ discharges its functions, the lungs play, the heart beats, the blood makes its way in the accustomed channels, through every department of the corporeal frame. Why all this complicated machinery, so independent of our attention? Is it not to leave man at leisure to cultivate mind and heart.

1. To effect this, Truth, truth in principle, truth in aims, truth in means, truth in its relations, truth in action, must awaken, influence, and guide you in your exertions. The name assumed by your Society, *Philaethean*, indicates your devotion to that cardinal virtue. Bear in mind, that to the greatness of a people *true learning* is indispensable. Literature and science, and the

arts, useful and fine, must among us have their home; and in every dwelling of our land, in due measure their light must be possessed, and their power be felt. In furtherance of this, with no part of your college *curriculum* can you dispense. Instead of abridgement, the advance of discovery and the condition of the times call for extension.

2. The developments of physical science will put in requisition much of your attention and time. These you will not be reluctant to give. The several departments of this extensive subject are all delightful. The strata of the Earth, a subject, upon a superficial view, apparently without interest, is furnishing matter of interesting thought. Geology has already risen up to the dignity of an important science. The fossil remains, found in those strata, and the laws of their formation, shed a new light upon the mysteries of nature, which may greatly subserve the cause of true religion. In conducting us back through the revolutions of which they are the only records, to periods too remote for easy calculation or conception, they impress upon our minds the necessity for the opening, sublime declaration of the Bible,—“In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.” Matter, however ancient, was not eternal.

3. As to mathematical science, few, rather none, at this day, would enrol their names, as its opposers, with the Epicureans and Pyrrhonics of former times, or seek to shield their opposition to it under the venerated name of Socrates.—There is no danger of the well balanced mind of the true scholar being led, with some of its votaries, such as CARAMUEL, VOSIUS, BERNES, and others, to assert either its necessity or great importance, in the explanation of the mysteries of Metaphysics, Grammar, Theology, and even Poetry; as well as every other department of study. That a competent acquaintance with mathematical studies will prepare the mind for a close investigation of various other subjects, none will doubt. How far the application of mathematics to Theology is recommended by the example of Caramuel’s demonstration of the inconsistency of Paul’s rapture, with the motion of the Earth, we shall not inquire; and how far the adaptation of mathematics to poetry is illustrated by the author of the Loves of the triangles, we leave the

admirers of that poem to decide. The silly attempt of scepticism, sometimes made, to discredit moral truth, because of its defect in mathematical evidence, receives nothing but the smile of contempt from him who knows that each department of knowledge has its own appropriate laws of evidence, whether it be physical, mental, moral, or mathematical.

4. It is hoped the undervaluing of classical learning has not made its way to our Western regions. Classical study is admirably adapted to form the mind of youth to habits of activity, of accuracy, and of reasoning; as well as to give strength and polish to it. The material of thought may pass before the mind, or it may lie dormant within its recesses, unshapen, unknown; and it will be useless, till embodied in words, and clad in the attire of language. The study of a foreign language brings us into contact with a nation's mind. It brings mind into communion with mind, upon the subjects of thought, the forms and habits of thought, of the heart's emotions and the soul's susceptibilities. It carries us far beyond the mechanism of mere words. Every language embraces in itself its grammar, and in that grammar is a profound philosophy. Those rules that to the tyro appear so dry, are the results of philosophic investigation, and, in their analysis, they conduct back to original principles, which have their source in man's immortal mind, his relations, pursuits, and condition. A nation's history may be traced in its language. Those portions of your academical years, which you employ in classical study, are not lost. To converse with Greek and Roman minds, in their state of highest improvement, is an advantage not lightly to be esteemed. Should any of you, amidst the busy scenes of life, be so far unmindful of those your early companions, as to forget their vocabulary; yet in the mental training and its results, which you had in their study, you will have an ample compensation for your labor and your time. These you can never lose.

5. To the science of morals the thorough student will not be inattentive. As a practical affair, indeed, you have carried with you this subject, from your homes to these halls. The elements of mental and moral science, are to a great extent, possessed by all our youth who have been religiously instructed, in the pri-

mary symbols of the Reformation Churches. But it is desirable that the scholar in his mental and moral operations, as well as in his physical, be able to trace them to their source, in the abstract principles by which they are influenced, and, as far as possible, be able to contemplate them in their proper relations; or in systematic order. Intellect and morals, as well as physics, have their settled laws; and to understand the principles and operations of the higher phenomena of nature, is not less desirable, than an acquaintance with the subordinate. The elevation, however, of intellect without moral culture, may form the Demon, and augment his capacity for mischief; and the culture of material nature, regardless of intellectual and moral, may add to the accommodations of the animal; but cannot meet the constitution of man, whose home is heaven, and whose family is that of God. It is moral culture that prepares the intellectual and immortal being for the companionship of that family. Physical, mental, moral, and religious nature, are all within the Empire of the Creator; they are distinct, yet connected parts of one great whole; the study and knowledge of which no liberal scholar will ever attempt to separate. And upon these subjects, he will guard against a floating, doubtful, and uncertain state of mind, as exceedingly dangerous. A few first principles well settled and applied will, on this subject, protect against the bewilderment of silly doubting.

The study of moral science is a noble, as it is an important, pursuit. The student ought to trace the principles of the science to their proper source. Its principles should be well settled. In this, as in other departments of human business, a false principle is more dangerous than twenty mere blunders in practice. A reference in application, to the sound principle, will soon make all right, where the practical error has occurred; but the false principle multiplies error at every move.

Rejecting the broken cistern of Mandeville, that can hold no water, the infidel utility scheme of Hume, the selfish theory of Paley, the fanciful sympathetic hypothesis of Smith, and the more plausible claims put in for conscience, as the foundation of moral distinctions, the sound moralist will trace the law of those distinctions, to the relationship of man and his Creator. —

The science of morals originates from the character of Him who is glorious in holiness. To his moral creation he communicated that character,—that assemblage of attributes,—which it became him to give; and those relations he established between himself and that creation which were suitable to him and them, and fitting for them among themselves, and with surrounding nature, under his universal government. Out of those relations, thus established, arises the law by which they are regulated. Ultimately we find the law of our moral nature proceeding from God, along with our being; bearing the signature of his character, and stamped with the seal of his authority. Hence its obligatory force. All on this side of that is mere expediency,—of no higher import than advice, though emphatic advice.

Thus, in the exercise of reason, guided by that light which is shed upon the subject, we recognize the relations between us and the Supreme Legislator of the Universe; possessed of the moral sense, we feel the obligation of that law which flows from those relations; in the benefits which arise from the observance of this law, we see its utility, and thence some of the motives to obedient action: but neither utility nor the moral sense sustain the place of Supreme Lawgiver. The true philosophy of morals connects man with the Creator, elevates him to a happy concurrence with him in action; and to a blessed fellowship with him in enjoyment. Where the law of morals is understood, as thus originating, enlightened devotion will be found its associate. Piety gives vitality, animation, and vigor to sound morality; morality repays its debt, by beautifying piety. Religion recognizes in the actings of reason and discoveries of nature, all that is most excellent.

As there is no faculty of mind that should be left unimproved, so neither is there any department of literature and science that should not be cultivated. In all these departments, indeed, it would be unreasonable to expect every one to excel. With most of them, however, there may be a passing acquaintance, and with some of them the learned man must feel himself at home. To aid in the requisite labours for such attainments, such institutions as this, and other like College Societies, are highly important. If you have not already adopted the measure, may I be

allowed to recommend the distribution of the whole range of learned inquiry, into its distinct parts; and while you meet upon the ground common to all, let there be a division into classes, to each of which shall be assigned its own peculiar subject of investigation. In your collegiate course, this can be but partially carried into effect; but let your relation to this Society be permanent; keep up its organization, let its senior members feel their obligation, periodically to bring each his literary or scientific tribute to the common treasury of knowledge. Correspond with each other, with kindred institutions, extend the boundaries of light, preserve method, be faithful to good arrangements, and much may be done. Remember the Royal Society of London had its commencement in the study room of Boyle; and how small the beginning of the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, under the auspices of Franklin, were, is known to all.

While this will tend to subserve the interests of learning, it will likewise cultivate the social principles of humanity, and strengthen the bonds of friendship. The recollection of those transactions—of those “Attic days and evenings” will be pleasant, when the course of years shall have carried you into the regions of old age. To feel this very sensibly now, you are too young; but the time is coming when you will appreciate it more.

6. In these noble engagements, the student must guard against mistaken apprehensions, and the influence of false positions.—Among these we might notice the idea, that low attainments will answer the purpose. Rather always aim high. Listen to the voice that says,—“Look aloft.” To succeed, the thought must not be indulged, that what goes for genius is indispensable; and guards must be placed with care against the more dangerous illusion, that genius, without assiduous toil, is sufficient to insure eminence. Newton ascribed that pre-eminence which others awarded to him, but which he assumed not to himself, to patient persevering industry, and not to superior powers. Decent talent, above, or even upon the level of mediocrity, with assiduity, will attain to high acquisitions.

*Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus pectora roborant.*

While refusing to yield to the paralyzing thought, that what

is denominated genius, superior genius, is indispensable to the acquisition of literary eminence, and repudiating contentment with superficiality,—for it is here that there is truth in the poetic adage—

“A little learning is a dangerous thing,”—

we would not be understood as denying due homage to the superiority of a strong and well balanced mind,—high powers in harmonious alliance and activity. In recognizing the advantages and claims of such, we are not disposed to concede all that has been demanded for the practical mind;—demanded under the assumption, that such a mind is intuitively qualified, without the toils of study, by some intrinsic superiority, not only to succeed, but to excel. Something like this has sometimes been intimated as the prerogative of the American mind. This is not the manly, just, and indignant repelling of foreign slander, which once ventured the assertion of the tendency of man to deteriorate on the Western Continent.

To our political institutions the people of the nations look with admiration; to our self government with solemn approbation; to our onward march, as a great confederacy of Republics, with hope and joy. In these institutions, and their administrations, may be traced the developments of our mental character, and for those developments, comparatively, no citizen need blush. Still, let us not be vain; for that would be puerile. Let us not be arrogant; for that would be unbecoming. Our advantages are great; our prospects grand; but there is much to be done which we have not touched, and much of importance to be known of which we have not learned the alphabet. America has mind, but it is the mind of man with all its essential infirmities,—the mind indeed of immortal man, like that of the possessors of our common nature in every land. It is a practical mind; but like mind elsewhere, if advantageously practical, it must be cultivated with assiduous care. It is mind, placed under circumstances, peculiarly favourable to an illustrious and a happy progression

The times on which we are fallen are propitious. Society is on the advance. On the scale of social, intellectual, and moral improvement, the world never stood so high as at this day. In

moments of peevishness, the good man may be tempted to bring the brighter points of a past age, into contact with the darker spots of that now in progress, and give the preference to the days of other years; or the Anchorite, in his cell, disappointed and irritated by the world, may talk of the superiority of other times. The language, however, of candour is the language of inspiration,—“*Say not thou, what is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.*”

Who would exchange the present for the past? Who would barter the philosophy of language of this day, for the mechanism of language of the 16th and 17th Centuries?—the mental philosophy of Locke, Berkeley, Campbell, Reid, Stewart, and Brown, for the Dialectics of Aristotle?—or the demonstrations of Newton and La Place, for all the amusing visions of the astronomy, of ancient times? And in the school of morals who would sit down at the feet of Socrates, Plato, and Tully, in preference to our Wardlaws, Abercrombies, and Waylands? Imperfect as modern compends of Moral Science confessedly are, they are beyond comparison superior to the productions of the earlier ages. We have not forgotten the just and high claims of classical antiquity, nor those of statuary and painting—but when we have granted all that can be justly demanded, still it will be found, that in whatever contributes to the conveniences, the elegancies, and pleasures of life, our age is greatly ahead of those of our ancestors. The single instance of the application of steam, to so many objects of importance, has, of itself, effected a revolution in the relations, condition, and pursuits of man. The steamer and the rail road with its car, go far toward the annihilation of distance, and for the purposes of business they greatly lengthen time. The vision of the Poet of Derwent, little more than fifty years ago considered as the flight of the Muse, has been more than realized—

“Soon shall thy arm, unconquered Steam! afar
Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid car.”

By this, remote regions are brought into proximity, and those who would have forever remained strangers, as neighbors, sit by each other's side. The wonderful applications of science to

physical objects are obviously intended to be subordinate to moral ends.

We have not, amidst these objects of interest and high promise, suffered to pass unnoticed the multitude of existing evils, nor are we unapprized of future dangers. A disregard of moral principle and of social obligation walks abroad. Impatience of authority is extensively manifested; for low purposes, ignorance is flattered; and disorder is encouraged and under the insulted and injured name of rational liberty, licentiousness is taken by the hand. Amongst us will be found in alliance, a latitudinarian indifference to truth, and the extreme of a narrow minded bigotry. The name of religion is assumed by atheism, and, the more effectually to recommend itself, the mystic cant of fanaticism is adopted. The Pantheism of Spinoza, and the more ancient heathen scepticism, is seen within our borders, in the attire of German Transcendentalism. These elements of evil are at work. Their tendency is to disappoint the good man's hopes, to increase, and perpetuate the moral desolations of our world. To counteract them, to raise man, and elevate the social state above the malign influence of those causes of ruin, solid learning, firmness of character, expansion of mind and heart, and enlightened and liberal activity, are imperatively required.—Repelling the claims of Mammon, and refusing to embellish the temples and to load the altars of that groveling Demon, and inattentive to the flattering solicitations of a meteor fame, the true scholar, the really learned man, must identify himself with the cause of virtue and human happiness; and leave his reputation to be recorded in the annals of a renovated world. In the work of this renovation there are objects which the scholar only can reach, and ends, high ends, which he only can accomplish. Upon man, and especially upon the educated man, the world has claims which he must not presume to protest.

Society is every where, and in all its departments, convulsed. The frame work is shaking from the plates to the sills, and the foundations themselves are heaving. The materials of a better fabric exist. To put them together will require skill. The apprentice,—the young scholar—of to day must be the moral architect of to-morrow. A noble object is before him: the rear-

ing of the moral edifice of the world. It need hardly be remarked, that to effect this he must begin at home. He can reach and touch the interests of the world only through the medium of his own country. This brings us to notice,

II. What is to be done for our country, that it may reach that elevation, which its resources indicate to be its destiny.

1. The first thing to be sought is the formation of a sound public sentiment. It must be a sentiment comprehensive in its character, guided by light, influenced by rectitude, high in its aims, honourable in its bearing; and whose proud,—not arrogant,—brow will cause vice, and meanness, and trick, under its indignant frown, to quail. This will elevate man; make him feel that he is Man, Earth's Lord and Heaven's Heir. Courtesy and kindness must be maintained; but flattery must be laid aside. Ignorance must not be taken for knowledge, nor confusion for order; and vice must not be treated as virtue. Call every thing by its own name. This public sentiment must be planted in the nursery, watered in the school where youth is trained, expand in the state of society at large, and its fruits be found in every department of life. This public sentiment must be taught the value of character, to understand the great principles of moral order, and to feel the weight of responsibility, under those principles, that attaches to every individual. It will, thus, be the guardian of right, and the protector of the legitimate claims of man, however humble his station, or however unbefriended by those of distinguished name.

When on great and complicated questions, society is divided in judgment, this public opinion will secure to minorities, from majorities, a just consideration of what is due to them. The common stock of essential, social rights and advantages, is the common property of all. The minority, because a minority, has forfeited its claim to none of these. That a measure has been carried by a majority, is a very imperfect index of its rectitude; and it is especially so, when, under some momentary combination of circumstances, an excited multitude brings their heterogeneous views and power to concentrate upon an individual person or measure, whether in approval or opposition. In an enlightened and sound public sentiment, in such a case there

is safety for the public. It is one of the advantages of associated civilization, that legitimate order throws its protecting shield over all. This civilization, as it approximates towards completion, will bring the principles of law into contact with the mind and heart of its subject; or rather, in such a state, the dictates of legitimate authority become incorporated with the nature of its subject, and in this condition of the community, every right of every individual is secure. Principle regulates the pursuit of every measure; and by a sound public opinion, as by the rules of the Athenian Areopagus, every attempt to address passion instead of reason, or to put partial interest in the place of public right, will be repudiated.

In most nations of the earth there is little or no public opinion. Despotism allows it not. Towards it a feudal Aristocracy looks with no favorable eye. In a Democratic Republic only can it exist, and expand, and be powerful and beneficial. There man rules and man is ruled. The principles of law interwoven with his dispositions and habits, he rules himself.

Our own country has opened an extensive field upon which to form and happily to exhibit, in operation, this public sentiment. It is not yet perfected. It is, we hope, in progress. The two great political parties which divide our citizens, perhaps, in numbers, wealth, and character, nearly equal, have, upon this point, much in their power. It will not be said that the men of either party should sacrifice their settled principles, or convictions, of political economy. But it is affirmed, that between the parties there should be a distinct and honourable understanding, from which no political consideration shall be permitted to seduce them, that no party measures shall with either be tolerated, the tendency of which is to lower the standard of morals, or to sink the dignity and estimate of human nature. In other words,—let them enter into a *bona fide* league, that they will banish corruption from their elective canvass. In the matter before us, the Church in America has, upon some important points done much. In our country no clergyman of doubtful morals can be sustained. In other respects a great deal remains to be effected. The Judiciary of the United States, and of the particular States, generally, have largely contributed to the formation of a sound public opin-

ion. In this respect the bar, in the course of the last forty years, has not been without salutary effect. It is wished that we could speak, without exception, upon this subject, of the legislative halls of the Union, and of the States. This is to be remedied, whatever the defect may be, at the ballot box, on the day of election.

In our extended Confederacy, however, it should not be concealed, there is a great mass of population belonging to no party in politics or religion. Without knowledge, destitute of principle, and strangers to character, they are here to-day and yonder to-morrow. They are sufficient in number to give ascendancy to the party that may engage them for the day. They constitute an undeniable species of conservative power. Ere the public sentiment of the country be completely sound, the beams of light must be spread upon this crowd, and the spirit of reform must imbue it. Upon the features of our public opinion, from their political position, intellectually and morally worthless as they are, this multitude casts a shadow, corresponding with their own unsightly character. Mistake us not; from the polls we would not exclude an individual of this class; from the ballot box we would not banish one of them; but we would have them made capable of appreciating the value of our rights, and the worth of moral character. We would have them elevated above their present position. They are capable of it, and if those to whom it pertains put to it their hands, it will soon be done.

2. In the formation of this public sentiment, the general mind must have a distinct impression of the truth of the universality of the moral government of God. That the Supreme Being has placed man, in every relation of life, and pursuit of time, under responsibilities; that his moral law is the ultimate and supreme rule of conduct, and that to Him whose throne is established in the heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth over all, each individual shall render an account, must be deeply impressed upon and habitually felt by the individual and social mind.

To give lessons to the people at large, upon this subject, is worthy the philosopher,—the son of reason and of wisdom; and especially the advocate of truth. How becoming in the professional gentleman! The professor and practitioner of the healing art has, in this matter, much in his power. The softened

heart and the solitudes of the sick room are favourable to seriousness. The enlightened Physician is always humane, let him add piety to his humanity. His well-timed remark in favour of religion and an elevated morality, may be followed by impressions deep, salutary, and permanent. The court-room, too, with advantage to the cause of order and justice, may be made a school of morals. Law is always presumed to have its source in the principles of eternal rectitude. Why should the bench hesitate to refer distinctly to this fact? Why not give dignity to the tribunal of justice, by the recognition of its relation to the throne of the Eternal Being? And to the bar a noble opportunity is often given, of extending a salutary influence over that portion of the community, that usually throng the court-house. Be assured, courts of Judicature will never reach the high eminence of their destiny, till bench, and bar, jury box and the witness' stand, evince their consciousness of being in the presence of the God of justice, the Judge of all the earth,—that he is among them; and till they really feel that each of them, in his respective place, is a minister of God, and that they act for the Lord. The Divinity, by them, carries forward an important department of his moral government among men. Courts, possessing these high attributes of moral character, will rarely have their docket dishonoured with bad or trifling causes; and the witness, who is ready to barter his perjury for its price, will seldom, very seldom, dare to offer himself upon the stand.

The evidences of this authority of Heaven may, on those occasions be traced in the moral constitution of our nature; in the developments of that constitution, as they are expressed in the opinions of our fellow-men, and as they are more formally unfolded in the administrations of the social state. Providential dispensations, not unfrequently, most impressively teach lessons upon this subject.

—————*Valet ima summis*
Mutare, et insignem attenuat Deus,
Obscura promens.

These are topics upon which the friend of mental science loves to expatiate, and in which the moral philosopher is much at home. Without pedantry, when his audience will justify it, the professional gentleman, in the course of his avocations, can bring them

forward for practical purposes, in their scientific forms: and when situated otherwise, he can strip them of their technical dress, and make them interesting to all. He can thus contribute to make firm, and beautify the moral fabric of his country.

3. In forming this public sentiment, and under it giving development to moral principle, in its appropriate application, false maxims to which currency has been given by the political cant of party demagogues, must be encountered. Among these maxims, uttered in turn by some of all parties, is this somewhat popular one;—"Politics and religion have, and should have, no connexion with each other." As a matter of fact, it is generally true that they have no connexion. That they should have none is the dictate of infidelity. For those who, in the affairs of the Commonwealth, prefer to practice villainy, and who wish to do it without reproach, and if possible without remorse, it is a very convenient aphorism. It is one, however, which the good man who purposes to carry with him his religion, as the great influencing principle of his life, whithersoever he goes, should not entertain, for it is in contravention of all the hallowed tendencies of his heart. To states as well as to individuals, these two principles are essential in morals;—The universality of the divine government, originating in the rights of God himself, and conducted according to his *umoplan*; and man's responsibility, as a moral being, for all his voluntary acts and dispositions of soul. But let us not be misunderstood.

No apology is put forth for those political establishments which, under pretext of favouring religion, give a pre-eminence to one section of the Church of God, compelling all others to be tributary to the favoured party. No defence is meant of those arrangements where the Commonwealth, or a portion in it shall presume to give to the Church her system of religion, or shall interfere in her administrations. No plea is put in for that amalgamation of politics and religion, which makes the church a part and parcel of the political government, and the political state a constituent part of the church. Under pretext of regard to religion, no man may be deprived of any right to which he is entitled by natural or revealed law. Religion and politics are distinct, as is the soul and body of man. Church and State are dis-

inct in nature, and may not be confounded, any more than heaven and earth. Yet it is not true, that these have no connexion with each other. Soul and body are connected in man: Earth and Heaven are related, in the empire of God; and so are religion and the policy of states;—so are the Church and State themselves.

That civil and political liberty, order, and law cannot exist, but as they are sustained by pure morals, is universally admitted. That morality is sustained by religion is an axiomatic position. The morality which is not connected with God cannot long endure, and while it does exist, if exist it can, it will do little. The dictates of reason upon this are clear, and in perfect accordance with those of supernatural revelation. It was the dictate of reason in the Prince of Midian, "Provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness;"—Ex. 18: 21. In correspondence with this was the dictate of God, by his Prophet;—"Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes"—Deut. 1: 13. The electors and the candidate for office should both feel the reasonableness and the authority of the affirmation: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."—2 Sam. 23: 5. We are no advocates of the ghostly form of rule, of the dark ages, of Europe; nor are we disposed to yield the dearest rights of man, civil, religious, and ecclesiastical, for safe keeping, to the hands of dark and heartless infidelity, sealing the lips of the ministry of Christianity on the subject of political morality, under the pretext, that it is an affair of State. Slander, and theft, and murder, are affairs of State. Must the pulpit be silent upon these?

The maxim to which reference has been made will not bear the test of reason, and it is in opposition to universal matter of fact. What is our own practice? We will not admit the foreigner to the exercise of the elective franchise, till under the solemnities of religion he gives his pledge of fidelity to our civil institutions. The most distinguished of our citizens, though chosen by the people, is not admitted to the chair of State, till qualified by a solemn act of devotion, in the presence of Almighty God, whom he invokes as a witness of his fidelity, in

discharge of the functions of his office. So in the administrations of our courts of judicature,—jurors, witnesses, counsel, judges, are all sworn—The oath is a religious institute, of most solemn import. The witness, too, must be religiously qualified, otherwise his testimony is not admitted. Such is the law in most, if not in all, of our States. That religion and the affairs of State have no connection is not true in reason, is not sustained by revelation, and is contradicted in fact, by every civilized people. The only inquiry that is admissible in the case is, What shall be the form and extent of the connexion between them? For ourselves we hesitate not to say, that we place much more dependence upon their connexion in the enlightened minds, purified affections, established habits, and virtuous conduct of the citizens, than in the records of the statute book. In the statute book, however, to some extent, it must be found.

4. In the elevation of his country, and in order to this, the formation of the character of its citizens under an enlightened and pure public sentiment, the Christian patriot, as the special means, will rely upon the religion of the Son of God; upon its doctrines, its laws, and its pure, simple, but impressive institutes, as the medium by which its great and commanding principles are to be brought into contact with the public mind. “Sanctify them through the truth, thy word is truth,” was the language of the great Intercessor, who is also the Prince of the Kings of the Earth. The religious is the higher portion of our nature. But that portion stands not alone; it is in connexion with every other constituent of our moral constitution. A practical mistake here has been followed by some unhappy results. This mistake is, that Christianity belongs exclusively to the religious sense.—The unhappy result is, that to this sense only, has it been generally addressed. The religion of the Bible, in its adaptations, addresses itself to man in his entire organization. It has been long ago observed by the elder President Edwards, that Christianity has not yet come near the accomplishment of its promised effects. No wonder: it has not generally been brought, in the plenitude of its adaptations, to bear upon the whole of man, and the whole of his condition, as a subject of the divine government, in this world. When the entire Church is prepared to

give it this direction, according to its own bearings, soon will the earth be filled with the glory of the Lord. The Religion of the Gospel contemplates, and addresses the whole of man: and treats him as related to the whole moral Empire of the Creator.

By this religion objects of the holiest and loftiest character are brought before the mind, and arouse it to action; whilst those of loveliest feature touch the heart with a transforming influence. This religion, adapted to the complex constitution of man,—to his intellectual, moral, religious and social constitution,—in the production of its appropriate effects, brings man into companionship with Him who inhabiteth eternity. There he is humble. But he is not mean. Feeling the high attributes within him of his intellectual, moral, and active nature, recognizing his immortality, and knowing the near and heart-engaging relation in which he stands to his Creator—the High and lofty One, he asserts his dignity, respects himself, and will not dishonor himself nor his God, by what is low in character.

It is worthy of remark, that Christianity has carried in its train literature, science, and the arts; and with its purest forms have been associated the assertion of freedom, and the possession of the highest degrees of rational, civil liberty. In the political as well Evangelical acceptation of the expression, it is true—“If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” The whole spirit of the Gospel goes to assert the rights of man. To the exercise of those rights, its principles give direction; and to their possession stability and permanence.

To one other feature of this religion permit me to invite your attention. Superstition and every other system of false devotion, on the one hand, is found ministering to the depravity of man’s fallen nature, and on the other, making war upon some of its constituent parts. Hence the immoral indulgences and unnatural penances of the same system. The religion of the Bible calls for the destruction of no faculty, for the eradication of no affection of the soul. It purifies, directs, improves and exalts, but spares all. It is this religion, imbuing the soul, that gives to man his highest character. It is this that will form and establish the public sentiment of which we have spoken. But I must have done.

Young gentlemen,—You are on your way to the eternal state. In the arrangements and administrations of Providence, you are connected with a great Republic; the interests of a pure religion are before you; and in these you are called upon to act a noble, a magnanimous part. The leading moral characteristic of the United States is Christian, their institutions free, their population numerous, their resources boundless. The history of the past is flattering; the promise of the future is encouraging. Great and good men have, in hope, anticipated the future glories of America. To you will its management, with all its extended, and complicated, and sacred interests, be soon committed. Be prepared to act well your part. Without ill will to other lands,—nay—with the generous intention of blessing them,—seek the elevation of your country. Bring your acquisitions as an offering to promote her intellectual, her moral, and her social interests.

In the forward course of man, be ever ready to join the good in the maintenance of sound principles. Aim high; be upright; be honourable; seek the place of eminence in doing good; be firm in virtuous purposes. Disappoint not the hopes of kindred, friends, and country. By your country, act propitiously on others. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things honourable, whatsoever things just, whatsoever things pure, whatsoever things lovely, whatsoever things of good report; if there be any virtue, and if any praise, think on these things. Thus, in an humble, yet confiding reliance upon your Redeemer, and in obedience to his will, seek for glory, immortality, and eternal life.