

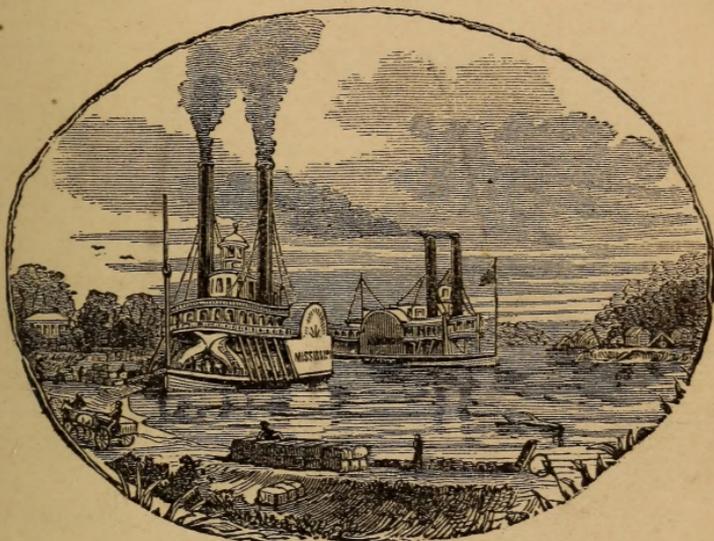
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STERLING'S

# SOUTHERN ORATOR:

CONTAINING

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

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PROF. RICHARD STERLING, A.M.,

PRINCIPAL OF EDGEWORTH FEMALE SEMINARY.

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warfare; he had left his testimony for the rights of men and obedience to Heaven; and is it too much to imagine him looking, at his last moment, toward heaven, with his dying eyes, and exclaiming with chastened rapture:

“What means yon blaze on high?  
 The empyrean sky,  
 Like the rich veil of some proud fane, is rending;  
 I see the star-paved land,  
 Where all the angels stand,  
 Even to the highest height, in burning rows ascending;  
 Some with their wings outspread,  
 And bowed the stately head,  
 As on some errand of God's love departing,  
 Like flames from evening conflagration starting;  
 The heralds of Omnipotence are they,  
 And nearer earth they come, to waft my soul away!”

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CCII.

CHRISTIANITY.—REV. B. M. PALMER, D.D.

Now, in glowing contrast with all this, consider the influence of Christianity as a religion of simple facts. It opens with the grand announcement that God is; and to all presumptuous inquiries into His essence, the rebuke comes with a voice of thunder from His pavilion, “Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.” If men would inquire into the generation of the universe, it turns the eye of faith, beyond the whole series of outward phenomena, to God's infinite power, and contemplates creation as a great incomprehensible fact: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” It does not suffer a metaphysical trinity like the Hindoo, Buddhist, or Platonic to be spun from human speculations, but baptizes us into the name of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It deals in no allegories of incarnate deities, but declares

as fact, "The Lord was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld His glory." It reveals God, not as a blind fate, working concealed behind necessary laws of nature, but God moving up and down in human history, "doing His pleasure among the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth." It proclaims an historical Christ, who lived and wept and died among men, and who now reigns "a Prince and a Saviour at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens."

It has a philosophy, indeed, which reason's golden reed shall take an eternity to measure, for the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal: a philosophy whose depth shall not be plumbed this side the gates of heaven. Yet, as a religion, its basis is the testimony of God, accrediting the facts which are level to the peasant and the sage alike. Both accept it upon the same grounds, and by the same faith in a divine testimony. Thus Christianity is competent to be, what paganism is not, a catholic religion for man as man, embracing within its comprehension, sympathy, and holy fellowship all ranks of social condition.

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CCIII.

THE HEROES OF MOORE'S CREEK.—JOSHUA G. WRIGHT.

AND now, my countrymen, my mission is well-nigh accomplished. I have read to you from that bright but bloody page in our country's history, which tells of the trials and the triumphs of those who made the tented field the scene of their glory. Gladly would I turn the leaf and pass to that page whereon is written the not less glorious story of those civic heroes who, in the revolutionary councils of the State, gave form and texture to our government, and have made our annals radiant with their wisdom and their gallantry. Right gladly would I present to your admiring gaze your Hooper and your Harnett, and other "bright particular stars" of your section, and of your State, who shone out so brilliantly from the darkness which then brooded over our political firmament. But the waning hour which your kindness has allowed me warns me to forbear.