

THE  
LITERARY AND EVANGELICAL  
MAGAZINE.

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A DISCOURSE

*Delivered before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Hampden  
Sydney College, at their Anniversary Meeting, on the 24th of Sep-  
tember, 1824. By JOHN H. RICE, D.D. Published in confor-  
mity with a resolution of the Society.*

GENTLEMEN,

I am fully sensible of the honour conferred on me by the appointment which I am now about to fulfil; and duly appreciate the importance of the service, which you expect me to perform. Our Society, being yet in its infancy, is but little known, and has, of course, excited but little interest. While this is the case, the association will produce few of the benefits which were anticipated by its founders. It is your wish, then, that on this occasion the claims of the institution, and the advantages likely to result from it, should be so exhibited as to enkindle new ardour in the bosoms of its friends, and enlist the zealous co-operation of those who have not yet given us their countenance. There is no affectation in the declaration that I wish you had an abler representative. But your choice has imposed this duty on me: and while I cheerfully render my best services, I rely greatly on that indulgent kindness, with which I am sure you will regard this humble effort.

It seems now to be generally admitted that Virginia is deficient, in various matters connected with her dearest interests, and her highest glory, as a state. Her sons are richly gifted by the author of nature; and they justly glory in their political consistency, and their devotion to the cause of liberty.

Yet she is comparatively poor in the means of affording them the highest improvement of which they are capable. The only well endowed college within her limits owes its wealth to *royal*, and not to republican munificence. We have no great libraries, where the student may find means both of exciting and gratifying his curiosity. We have no extensive philosophical apparatus, to enable the votary of science to explore the mysteries of nature, that are yet to be revealed. We have no great collections of subjects in natural history: no splendid cabinets of minerals; no botanical gardens; no anatomical preparations for the benefit of our young citizens; for the excitement of their curiosity, and the aid of their researches. Hence, in all these branches of natural science, we fall far behind many of our fellow-citizens in other states. And hence the interesting fields of Virginian botany, mineralogy and geology are quite uncultivated.

In the Old Dominion, too, we are lamentably deficient in associations for literary and philosophical improvement. In other states we find academies of the fine arts, philosophical societies, Linnæan societies, and similar institutions; where the men of learning, and votaries of science meet, and open to each other the stores of their minds, communicate the fruits of their research, and apply one to another a constant stimulus, by which continual progress is made in all that adorns man as an intellectual being, and gives elevation to his mental character.

These remarks direct the attention to another point wherein we are greatly defective; it is a spirit of literary and philosophical enterprise, which prompts all who feel its influences to make mighty exertions and great sacrifices to advance their favourite objects. Politics and money are the great all absorbing interests in this part of our country; and their influence is every where seen and felt. To them all our schemes of improvement have reference. The student, when he is toiling in the midnight watches, is supposed to have them ultimately in view. And he who in any pursuit, manifests indifference towards these favourite objects, is thought to lack common prudence, or to be laying some deep plan, the means of attaining which do not appear.

Various causes have combined to produce the state of things thus briefly described. Without pretending to make a complete enumeration, we may for the present advert to the following.

We have not in our state any great city, where intellect and the means of excitement may be concentrated. Men

must be brought together, and into collision ; must be constantly in the view of their fellow-men, and roused by this public observation ; must have easy access to the various means of improvement, and a motive sufficient to insure vigorous exertion, before they will put forth steadily their whole intellectual strength. This is so well known as to have become a common remark. But when this concentration takes place, and mind is raised to its highest tone, a great city then is in a state, what the heart is in a human body. An influence is sent forth from this central point which is felt at every extremity of the commonwealth.

The physical geography of our state has prevented the growth of any of our cities to greatness. The Roanoke, the Powhatan, the Rapahanoc and the Potowmac must be united before Virginia can have a London or a Paris, a New-York or Philadelphia. And while this is the case, our country population is thinly spread over a great surface. Our citizens are not, in the pursuit of their daily business, brought frequently into contact. Not being congregated in villages, it is inconvenient for them frequently to meet, and hold intercourse. On the contrary they are generally confined to plantations, and when out of the society of wives and children, have no intercourse except with overseers and negroes. Perhaps there is no situation in the world more suited to repress a literary spirit.

The character of our population too, exerts an unfavourable influence on the interests under consideration. The condition of a class of men, whose wits are not sharpened by *necessity*, who live a life of comparative indolence, and who are much given to the indulgences of sense, is not the best adapted to intellectual improvement. And perhaps, when a large part of the inhabitants of a country is shut out by political regulations from the possibility of bettering their condition, and of course feels none of the promptings of hope to vigorous exertion, the effect is greatly increased. Generally, that community makes the best progress, in which the higher classes excite the lower by example ; and the lower press on the higher in their efforts to rise.

These, and perhaps other causes have brought us into a situation, in which there is a deplorable want of the means of exciting a spirit of mental improvement among our fellow-citizens. A survey of these means and their application, may well engage the attention of the philosophical patriot. It is becoming quite obvious that perfect liberty to pursue happiness in one's own way is not of itself sufficient to rouse men

to vigorous exertion. We enjoy this liberty in its fullest extent. But do we not see that they who, by the pious care of their fathers, have been blessed with good education, are obliged to exert their influence in various ways to excite others to the right use of their privileges? Otherwise, why the necessity of establishing among us a literary fund, and primary schools; and of getting up that whole expensive apparatus, which our state has prepared for the improvement of our fellow-citizens? How has it happened that men who have the greatest facilities of procuring the means of subsistence, are so very apt to degenerate? Why should they who live where the waters or forests always afford a supply of food, be generally the most illiterate and rude, improvident and intemperate of our population? All human things may well be illustrated by the comparison which Virgil makes to convince the husbandman of the necessity of selecting the best of his crop for seed,

—Sic omnia fatis

In pejus ruere, ac retro sublapsa referri.  
 Non aliter, quam qui adversa vix flumine lembum  
 Remigiis subigit, si forte brachia remisit,  
 Atque illum in præceps pronò rapet alveus amni.

Now it is a question of no small importance, by what means shall the people of our country be excited to make those efforts which the nature of our institutions requires. That this is an urgent case, is most obvious from the facts that there are very few good schools among us; and that Virginia furnishes fewer regular students in the Colleges of the country than other states which have not one half, no nor one third of her population. We see that it is in a great degree in vain to furnish a charity fund for the education of her poor. Why, to borrow the language of a man revered and celebrated for his wisdom, should we put a price in the hand of a fool to buy wisdom, when he has no heart for it? The illiterate, accustomed as they are to sensual enjoyments, and having no idea of any other kind of happiness, need some one to open before them the treasures of knowledge, and pourtray the flowery paths of literature before they can be excited to make the effort and practise the self-denial necessary to fit them for intellectual gratifications. They have no heart for these things; and must be driven by force, or allured by rewards to frequent the school and pursue a diligent course of study. But who will thus compel or allure the children of ignorant, and too often vicious parents.

It is true that much might be done by establishing good elementary schools in every neighbourhood. An able teacher; a man fitted for his office by temper, and attainments, can always rouse the minds of ingenuous pupils, and enkindle in them an ardent thirst for knowledge. But we want a sufficient number of such competent instructors in the first place, and then pupils to put under them? Pupils will be found in abundance in our country, when parents shall have learned the value of education. But whence an adequate supply of competent instructors, shall be derived for our growing population, I am greatly at a loss to conceive. If one third of the children born in the United States this year should live to be old enough to go to school, they alone will require at least 4000 teachers, at the rate of 25 scholars for one master. And if all the young men, who graduate in our colleges should become teachers they would not supply at the utmost more than one third of the adequate number. Shall we then turn from the colleges, and look to the little, petty, temporary institutions, called old field schools, for teachers of our young citizens? Then shall we go down indeed on the scale of national improvement. Alas how many a child has learned from his teacher scarcely any thing but to hate his book with a perfect hatred? Perhaps our country suffers under the pressure of no want more severely than under that of an adequate supply of competent instructors.

But to furnish this, and at the same time afford suitable places where boys can be fitted for college, we greatly need in different parts of the state a competent number of well supported academies. Institutions of this kind, where boys are kept under a closer inspection than is possible at college; where they are trained and disciplined for college life and college studies are of very great importance. They are the proper places for that sort of *grounding* in elementary knowledge without which the course of study at college does not, and from the nature of the case cannot, afford half of its advantages. And I have greatly wondered and deeply regretted that the thousands, which have been and are every year squandered on what, is falsely called the primary school system, have not been appropriated to the erection of institutions like these. We want academies, both male and female,\* at

\* Nothing but the want of time in preparing this Discourse, prevented the speaker from dwelling on this very interesting and important subject. It is one, in which the whole community is deeply interested. Perhaps there is no country in the world, where the women are more completely *domestic*, than they are in our own; and none where female influence is more gener-

which a course of education might be given, suited to the purposes of all, except those who wish to pass through the higher discipline of college.

Having mentioned the primary school system, I cannot help in passing, expressing my indignation and sorrow that an expedient like this, which requires every man whose children are to partake of its proffered benefits to give in a declaration of pauperism, should be called the primary school system of Virginia. Our country does not need a plan like that enacted by our law. We need a system that will make education cheap, so as to bring it within the reach of every honest industrious man. We need schools scattered through

ally felt. This is a most happy circumstance. And it affords a powerful argument in favour of female education.

It is trite, I know, but very important to remark, that when ladies are distinguished for domestic habits and virtues, their maternal influence is very great. They mould the hearts, and to a great degree form the understandings of the future fathers and mothers in our country. Now they, who have in their hands so great a part of *early education*, certainly ought to receive that cultivation of heart and mind, which would fit them for the discharge of the very important duties of their station. This is no easy work. It demands skill and judgment, as well as attention. Surely preparation ought to be made for it, that it may be done well. Look at the majority of girls of eighteen, in the country, and see what are their qualifications for a place at the head of a household.

But female influence is felt not only in domestic life;—it reaches to every part of society. Every where it ought to be salutary. Our ladies ought to be intellectual as well as sensitive; refined as well as elegant; intelligent as well as affable; *good* as well as *pretty*. No where, indeed, are they more modest, more pure and delicate, than among ourselves; but if to these graces of the female character, were added suitable mental improvement, the effect on the whole community would be most happy. A higher spirit of literature would pervade our state; and young men would spend that time in study, which now they waste in dissipation. A loftier tone of moral feeling would be awakened, and we might hope to witness the purity, without the extravagances of chivalry.

But suppose that parents generally, wished to give their daughters a good education, where could they find the means? There are perhaps four or five good female schools in the whole state, in almost every instance raised by the individual exertions of their teachers. In this case the whole apparatus, and all the fixtures are private property: and the undertaking is altogether at private risque. Hence, the expenses are beyond the reach of any but the wealthy. And even *they* think that they cannot afford to send their daughters more than a year or two to school. Hence, too, it is extremely rare to find a lady with any thing like a complete education. There is that sort of superficial acquirement, which inflates vanity, and renders the possessor ridiculous in the eyes of all judicious persons.

But justice cannot be done to this subject in a note. Measures ought forthwith to be adopted, to render female education cheap, and to make it as complete as possible. It was for this reason, when speaking of Academies, that I introduced *Female Institutions* of this kind, at which the means of improvement might be accumulated, and a complete course of suitable instruction be given at a moderate expense.

the country, at which the instruction given, will be to excite our youth to seek for more extended knowledge ; where such a taste will be afforded as will create a vehement desire for more.

But here I think it my duty to observe that one reason why there is not a higher literary spirit among those who have gone through college, is, that they have made so poor preparation for their course. In consequence of this, they are compelled to perform hard drudgery, and work doggedly as they proceed from class to class ; and in the end, are heartily tired of the whole thing. They leave college without being able to pursue any study with that facility which makes it delightful, and are willing enough to forget that of which the acquisition has afforded them no pleasure. Or if some little ardour has been excited, it is soon cooled when, on going out into the world they meet with no congenial spirits to keep up their enthusiasm.

In summing up these observations, I may state that we need that concentration of intellect which produces collision and creates emulation. We need good elementary schools for the first stage of education ; we need well endowed academies in every county, with respectable libraries and able preceptors to afford to all classes of youth higher instruction than they can receive in the elementary institutions ; and we need in suitable situations colleges with ample endowments, where a course of liberal studies may be completed. These, added to a well conducted University, whither young men who aim at the highest distinction and the greatest possible improvement, might resort to gratify this noble ambition, would complete the scheme. The first of these particulars is out of our reach. Wealth and commerce must be concentrated to make a great city. Division of land into small tracts is necessary for a dense population. But suitable efforts might produce good schools.

After all, however, the great desideratum is to excite a spirit of improvement in the great mass of our population. This might be done in some good degree by a proper attention and effort on the part of the educated men of the country. Would they but employ the influence which conciliation and kindness create, in the families of their uneducated neighbours ; and would every man of substance contribute by donations and legacies to the building and endowing of good schools in his neighbourhood, a great change would be produced in the intellectual character of the country. Still however, nothing can supply the want of a body of well educated men, led by

professional duty to promote the interests of morals and learning. Such a body of men is furnished by the christian religion in its ministers. In all countries, the ministers of religion exert the greatest influence on the great body of the people. Hence in most countries an alliance has been sought between the government and religion. This was notoriously the case with the various forms of ancient heathenism. This set the example which has been too often followed with unhappy effect by christians. But the whole history of this subject shows the influence of religion. Christianity, in its original form, was well suited to promote intellectual and moral improvement, without danger of abuse. For in the original platform of the church, the rights of the people are fully recognized. The power of church-rulers is MORAL power; and every thing done by them, is done by reason and persuasion. And such is the Polity of the church in this country. Now, who does not see that a man will exert a mighty influence in a neighbourhood, who is chosen by the people that he may apply the full force of reason and persuasion entirely for their benefit, whose business it is every week to deliver the best discourses that he can prepare; who is bound to afford to young and old the best moral instruction which all acknowledge to be most truly excellent; nay who is bound by his profession to take the young as soon as reason dawns, under his particular moral training, and in a word to bring the whole extent of his mental power and attainments to bear on the mass of his people?

But although this cannot but be obvious to every man of unprejudiced reason, it may be well to state a few facts on this subject. It is affirmed then, that wherever the people are accustomed to the regular instructions of an educated ministry, there they are the most enlightened: and all kinds of literary institutions flourish most among them. In Scotland, the people are more completely brought into contact with their religious teachers than in any other country in Europe; and more young men frequent the Scottish Universities, in proportion to the population of the country, than are afforded by any other nation to their literary institutions. In the north of Germany, where there is a Protestant population, literature flourishes vastly more than in the south, where it is Catholic. The state of Connecticut, where there is an enlightened clergyman stationed at every interval of five or six miles, there are more regular students at their College, than are afforded by Virginia, with nearly four times its population. This induction of facts might be extended all over the Christian world, and at every step confirmation of my remark would be afford-

ed. I speak now only of the intellectual effect of a well educated ministry of religion, operating merely by its moral power on the population of a country. And it may well be doubted whether any institution that has ever been tried, or can be devised is likely to produce equal mental excitement. Among the means then for exciting a general desire of improvement, this ought on no account to be neglected. A comparison of the population of different parts of our own state would alone justify me in ascribing this importance to that institution.

It would carry me much too far to point out the measures by which these facilities of promoting knowledge might be acquired. In relation to all that regards the higher order of schools, we have a right to look to our Legislature for aid.— But, from what cause it has proceeded I will not say, the Legislature has always looked on this institution with a step-mother's jealousy, and treated it with a step-mother's severity. It has rendered good service to the state, although she has left it now nearly fifty years to struggle with poverty. It is increasing in reputation and usefulness, but still its unfinished buildings and scanty library give sad tokens of continued neglect. We trust, however, that the liberality and munificence of the people will not soon be exhausted, and that this source will never fail.

We hope for much too from the increasing devotion of the Alumni of the Institution. Yet it must be confessed that suitable measures have not been adopted to keep up that feeling, with which young men have usually left college. We have hitherto had no association to bind them together in one united body. We have had no societies, whose anniversaries would call them together to renew their acquaintance, to talk over the scenes of their youth, and rekindle the ardour of their love. They do not meet to lay plans and adopt measures for the prosperity of their college. Long ago there ought to have been formed here an Immortal Band, pledged to each other by all the ties of youthful friendship to promote the interests of their Alma Mater, and extend the influence of learning, science and taste in the Old Dominion. It was to remedy this defect that we instituted The Literary and Philosophical Society of Hampden Sydney College.

*(To be concluded in next number.)*

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(Concluded from page 9.)

THE remaining part of this Discourse will be employed in illustrating the objects designated by the Title of our association.

The value of Societies for the promotion of learning and philosophy has been so fully evinced, and is so well known, that this subject need not detain us for a moment. Such institutions convert the attainments and labours of the members into a common stock, of which each individual enjoys the benefit. This is a great advantage: But another, and perhaps a greater is derived from the countenance and encouragement afforded by the Association to every member in the pursuit of his chosen studies; and by the excitement produced when numbers meet together, all feeling a common enthusiasm in a noble cause. Nothing so carries men forward in their intellectual progress. It is an impelling power of great force. It is a temporary communication of genius. And if the impulse is often renewed, even ordinary minds under its influence make rapid advancement.

In selecting the objects to which our attention should be directed we have chosen to take a wide range, in the hope that sooner or later our Association would embrace great numbers; and to the end that free scope might be given to the enthusiasm of all.

We use the term *Literary* in distinction from *scientific*. Literature includes language as the means of expressing human thoughts and feelings; and the various particulars which grow out of the use of language, when cultivated and applied to intellectual purposes; such as *Eloquence*, *Poetry* in its various departments, the *Epic*, the *Tragic*, the *Comic*, &c. *History*, not as a record of political facts, but of men's thoughts, feelings and purposes, as expressed in language; *works of fiction* in the form of prose, and other things of similar kind.

From this statement brief and imperfect as it is, we see at once that this general division comprehends many subjects of great importance. It is erroneously supposed by many that

learning is mere knowledge of words ; and that all that is implied in literature is little more than a mere trifling about the arrangement of words, and the forms of sentences. On the contrary, it is in this way, we become conversant with man as an intellectual being ; we witness a development of his thoughts and feelings, his passions and affections, his tastes and mental habits. We are brought to an intimate acquaintance with all that is lofty in man's views and grand in his conceptions ; with all the forms of majesty and beauty, of grace and dignity that have been familiar to the greatest geniuses of every age. Such men as Homer and Virgil, Milton, Shakspeare and Cowper, Tasso, Dante and Ariosto ; and such as Demosthenes, Thucydides, Xenophon, Plato, Cicero, Sallust, Cæsar and Tacitus ; Burke and Chatham ; and such as Howe, Hopkins and Barrow : and, to go farther back and rise higher still, such men as David, Isaiah, and Paul, are brought into contact with us : we feel their mental power, rise on their imaginations, enjoy the beautiful creations of their fancy, kindle with their ardour, partake of their sympathies ; and in some degree are moulded into their intellectual and moral image. In a word he who is acquainted with the literature of a people, knows the mind of that people, whatever may have been its progress, with all its refinements and graces ; he knows the moral character of that people, as it is exhibited in their national ballads, their tales and fables, their comedy and tragedy, their novels and epics, the speeches of their orators, the dissertations of their philosophers, and the narratives of their historians. Surely a knowledge of mankind like this, is justly reckoned highly important. It gives a wide range to the thoughts, and elevation to the feelings. It is a fine preparative for the acting of one's part with dignity and propriety in any station to which man is called by his fellow-men. A most beautiful passage might be quoted from Cicero to show what pleasures are afforded by polite and liberal pursuits of this kind. It is doubtless familiar to every scholar, but such is its length that I forbear to introduce it here. It furnishes me, however, with an important part of my argument. These liberal studies are, in a high degree, subsidiary to virtue. Every man must by the very constitution of his nature, have something to create an interest in his mind, and exercise his affections. He cannot live without it. And either he will devote himself to those pleasures which are common to man with brutes ; or he will indulge in a degrading and sordid avarice ; or pursue the course of selfish ambition ; or be satisfied with the gratifications of learning and science—

unless indeed he should rise still higher and set his heart on the Source of all good. Warm hearted youth rarely feels the gripe of avarice or indulges in a debasing ambition. But alas, in that season the calls of passion are loud and urgent, and unless there are opened to the young, sources of pure and generous pleasure, they will drink of the troubled stream of sensuality, and swill in the sty of Epicurus. How happy is it for them, while surrounded continually by temptation, to have at hand, always, the facilities of pure and high enjoyment!—To be prepared for enjoying the sublimity of Homer and Milton, the tenderness of Virgil, or the warbling wood notes of “Sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy’s child!”—To hold high converse with the minds which have most adorned human nature, and have added to the dignity of man as an intelligent Being. This familiarity with the intellects of men who have been the brightest emanations from the Eternal Mind, that have ever appeared on earth is a mighty safeguard to virtue. He surely needs not an animal stimulus to quicken his spirits and enable him to bear the tediousness of time, who can rouse his mind and gratify his taste by such means as are always to be found in the storehouses of literature.

But it ought to be observed that studies of this kind prepare those who pursue them for enjoying in a high degree the pleasures of social intercourse. Men who love books, and delight in literary research always have interests and feelings in common; and can converse on subjects which create no unfriendly collision, awaken no bad passions, produce no debasing effects. The communion of minds replete with information, and refined by taste, is next in purity and sublimity to that of Christians in the interchange of fraternal love.

There is too a connexion between mental improvement and national prosperity, which deserves the most serious consideration of every patriot. The historians have always noted a decline of literature as one of the surest symptoms of decay in a state. Greece and Rome afford memorable examples of this. And one of the first tokens that modern Greece was rising to shake off her chains and break the rod of the oppressor, was afforded by her increased attention to education, and to the literature of the ancient age.

Indeed there must be a degree of intellectual elevation to capacitate a people for liberty. A grossly ignorant nation is incapable of self-government; and therefore cannot be free. They who must look to others to govern them are always slaves. The chains may be of silk or of iron; nevertheless they are chains; and they who wear them, are slaves. Still,

however, there must be government ; or all the miseries of anarchy will ensue. It is necessary then for the perpetuity of the republic that mind should be cultivated and improved : that there should be wise and faithful men to do the business of the people, and that the citizen should be so enlightened as to see the necessity of wholesome laws ; to understand when they are good and when bad ; and to feel the propriety of obeying them.

This hasty sketch will show the importance of literature to the well being of the country ; and the reasons why the society has made its cultivation a primary object.

Still, however, not at all to the exclusion of another department of human knowledge, which is justly esteemed in the highest degree important : I mean philosophy. And here it is necessary that I should employ a little time in explanation of the term, and showing the range of inquiry implied in it. The propriety of this is the more urgent, because many confine the term to a mere investigation of the laws of material nature, and a classification of the phenomena which occur in that department of creation : While others associate with the term the idea of a cold and unfeeling stoicism ; which regards pleasure and pain, wealth and poverty, honour and shame, life and death with equal indifference. Of these two classes of persons, the former will find, on a little inquiry, that they have improperly restricted their views to a narrow range of thought ; and the latter will discover to use the language of Milton,

How charming is divine philosophy ;  
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,  
But musical as is Apollo's lute,  
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,  
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

Philosophy teaches us to ascertain, and bring into a regular and digested order the various laws by which mind carries on its operations, and the changes in material nature are produced. This definition shows that the range of philosophy is wide, and that it seeks its proper objects every where throughout the material and spiritual creation. There is a philosophy of mind, a philosophy of language, of eloquence, of poetry, of history : or rather the philosophy of mind runs through these various departments ; so that they all afford means of forming an induction respecting the operations of that greatest of all created wonders the human mind. He who studies language merely for the words, he who reads poetry merely for the rhythm and cadence, only wastes his

time. But he who carries the spirit of philosophical research into these and similar subjects, deduces from them most valuable conclusions respecting the operations of intellect; and establishing principles on the firm basis of induction.

Indeed there is no department of human knowledge into which philosophy does not extend her researches. She is seen busily engaged in systems of legislation; and discovers how the great principles established in human nature operate on human laws; and conversely how laws operate on man, and modify his condition. It is also by pursuing researches according to rigorous philosophical principles that political economy has been reduced from a chaos of conjectures to something like the regularity of a system. In the same manner history is made to afford instruction both to the statesman and the private citizen; and has been changed from a mere narrative, such as it was in ancient days, into a most valuable source of information respecting the motives of men, and the causes of the revolutions which have taken place among civilized nations.

I can only glance at these important subjects on the present occasion. But even these few desultory remarks serve to show that the man who has not ascended into these higher walks of philosophy, does not deserve the name of a politician, is not fitted at all for the management of national affairs, and does not even know how to make the proper use of history.

Now if these things are so;—and no competent judge can doubt of them—this society will render important service to the state, by exciting and cherishing in the bosoms of its members a spirit of philosophical research.

It ought to be observed, too, that the student who investigates the laws of mind, and ascertains the principles of human nature, is alone prepared to understand the true principles of moral science. While others dogmatize, he reasons, While others theorize, he builds on the sure foundation of rigorous induction.

But if we descend from the higher parts of nature, and consider philosophy as conversant with material things, how vast and rich is the field which is opened to our research! Philosophy discovers those measures of beneficent wisdom, which the great Creator has adopted to regulate the movements and preserve the harmony of the whole system of nature. She ascertains the few simple laws by which worlds are held in connexion with worlds, and systems with systems; and she perceives the same mighty influence running through

every department in this great kingdom of Jehovah. The views presented here are of the sublimest character : not simply because of the grandeur and majesty of the objects ; but because we every where trace the operations of a mind, whose will is clothed with omnipotent energy, whose wisdom and knowledge reach beyond all limits, and at the same time are directed by a benevolence infinite and inexhaustible.

But when we confine our views to earth, we find an innumerable variety of objects, on which philosophy may exercise her skill, and among which she may pursue her investigations. The three kingdoms of nature abound in subjects. Minerals, vegetables, and animals, all afford abundant opportunities for the researches of the philosopher, and he is making continual discoveries, which not only gratify curiosity, but subserve the interest and comfort of man. I here speak things so well known, that it is waste of time to dwell on them.

But it is not duly considered by many among us, how greatly science aids industry and provides national wealth. Had it not been for two mechanics, the kingdom of Great Britain would have been utterly unable to make the efforts and take the stand which she has done during the last thirty years. I speak of Watt and Arkwright, who gave to their country the full use of the steam engine and of spinning machinery. It was by the application of philosophy to the mechanic arts, that these distinguished inventions were made. To select a single instance. Arkwright I think may be considered as the inventor of the spinning machinery. Now it has been calculated that this machinery produces more than could be produced by the manual labour of more than two hundred millions of hands. Here then is a clear addition to the productive labour of the country of that which equals at least one hundred and eighty millions of hands, without the expense of feeding and clothing them ! It has been calculated that the machinery at work in Great Britain is equal in the whole to 480 millions of hands. This, then, is an addition to the productive labour of the kingdom, of at least 460 millions of hands. It is easy to see that this must be a prodigious advantage. Another instance of the advantage derived from the application of philosophy to the use of man, may be instanced in the construction of steam-boats. I advert to this, on account of the very important effects of the invention on our own country. It affords facilities for intercourse, and for the carrying on of internal commerce, which will exert an important influence on all parts of this great nation. In effect, distance is almost annihilated. New-York is placed

near to Richmond; and Pittsburg is brought into the neighbourhood of New-Orleans. The citizens of different states feel their relationship; and are drawn together by kindness as well as by interest. The inhabitants of the western states, it may be added, find the advantage in the comparative cheapness of many of the comforts of life.

Hence it is apparent that all classes of citizens are deeply interested in the cultivation of the various branches of Natural Philosophy in their application to the arts. I will take a single and very simple instance which may perhaps more fully illustrate this truth. The man who first made knives and forks has added incalculably to the comfort of civilized life. But the science of Chemistry by inventing facilities for their manufacture has put it in the power of all classes of individuals to procure this convenience. In like manner, every article of clothing which we wear, and every part of our domestic apparatus, shows the interest which all classes of men have in the cultivation of Philosophical science. I have offered these remarks for the purpose of combatting an opinion but too prevalent in this country, that the institutions of learning and science are for the benefit of the rich. The truth is, that every class of society is deeply interested in them, and if the advantage belongs more to one description of persons than another, it is peculiarly to the poor; because cheapness is indispensable in the conveniences and comforts procured by them. If then the money which is every year employed by the state in tempting our fellow-citizens to acknowledge themselves to be paupers, were expended in the endowment and support of institutions, where the advantages of sound learning and true science might be fully communicated at a cheap rate; if practical philosophy in its various departments were duly cultivated, we should find a new impulse given to the mind of Virginia, her sons in every rank of life would gradually but certainly be awakened to a spirit of improvement; agriculture directed by science would enrich our exhausted plantations; every waterfall among our hills would furnish power for the movement of labour-saving machinery; every mountain would be compelled to render up its hidden treasures; and every stream would be a feeder for some canal on which our thriving and happy sons could see borne the products of industry and skill. Our bland atmosphere would no longer be poisoned by mephitic exhalations from undrained marshes; and extensive plains would no more be darkened by the sombre shades of the volunteer pine, where the mournful sighings of the western breeze,

awaken the lonely traveller in the midst of his musings to a sense of his solitariness. The fox would no longer burrow in the graves of our ancestors; the screech owl and the great owl would no longer utter their dismal bodings in temples once vocal with the praises of the great Redeemer.

But above all the awakening of a right spirit is that which is indispensable to the preservation of our republic. An ignorant and vicious population cannot be free. This is now a first principle. We all know its truth. But if we do not feel its force and act under its influence, we shall each one in his place, be accessory to his country's downfall.

It is a fact, which, on account of the consequences with which it is pregnant, ought to be continually reiterated, that our population doubles in 25 years. How shall provision be made for the intellectual and moral improvement of these swarming millions? Within twenty-five years from the present day provision ought to be made for the education of ten millions of young citizens. My countrymen, look along the line of time. Anticipate the future. Contemplate your country as filled with two hundred millions of citizens, educated, virtuous, manly, high-minded freemen; all living under equal laws, all happy and ministering to each other's felicity.—Think with what power America will then be invested, what glory will surround her. The fairest forms that ever presented themselves to the eye of the poet, in the hour of highest inspiration, and when the most enrapturing visions broke on his imagination, do not exceed in grace, and beauty and glory, those which our country may assume in the enjoyment of a truly virtuous and well regulated liberty. But there is a painful contrast to this scene. It is mournful to behold, yet the sight may be salutary. Suppose then that ignorance and vice should extend their deadly influences—and that the mass of population should become the poor miserable victims of indolence and dissipation; should be such creatures as we find on the margin of our great waters, or in the hearts of some of our interminable forests—what then would be the state of the country? Where now the freeman raises his manly front, and shows a countenance conscious of inward dignity, and an eye beaming with intelligence we shall see the poor, abject crawling flatterer, the pander to a great man's lusts, the minion of power. Is this impossible? Look at Rome. Where once the eloquence of Cicero poured its blaze of light and beauty; and where once a higher spirit than he rose, refulgent from the stroke of Cesar's fate, and shook his crimson steel, and called on Tully's name, and bade the Father of his country

hail, for Rome again is free ; even there men who have dared to call themselves priests of the living God, and representatives of the meek and benevolent Saviour, under a hypocritical pretence of religion have ever forged chains for the mind, and bound the conscience in fetters. There slavery in the most degrading form has prevailed, and has branded with its disgrace the image of the Most High in man. Look at Greece, where eloquence moulded at will the fierce Democracy ; where Leonidas fought and Demosthenes spoke ; even there the cross itself has been the emblem of subjection ; and the descendants of Greeks have worn the chain even amidst the sepulchres of their fathers. Athenian and Spartan mothers have sent sons to serve in the palace of the Pachas, and daughters to the Seraglio. What has been, may be. Vice and ignorance will always pave the way for despotism and slavery.

Seeing these things are so—what is our duty ? Are we not urged by every motive of patriotism to unite and exert our very uttermost in promoting that virtue and knowledge without which, America must sooner or later be numbered with fallen republics. *Fuit Ilium et ingens gloria Teucris.*

But our country is not alone concerned. The world looks on us. There is now a public opinion of the world, a moral sense of nations. Our example will tell with mighty influence on the destiny of the human race. If we fulfil the designs of our brave and virtuous forefathers—the last of their generation is fast going off the stage—may they leave their mantle to their sons !—if we fulfil the designs, I say, and grand conceptions of our forefathers then will America stand forth as a glorious example, affording instruction to the nations. Her voice will be heard from the equator to either pole, and her moral influence be felt over the whole earth. But should she fail, alas, her history will be cited to prove that the people are incapable of self-government. Philanthropy as well as patriotism call us then to unite in giving elevation to the moral feeling, and improvement to the intellect of our country.

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SERMON FROM ECCLESIASTES xii. 10. FIRST PART.

(Concluded from page 26.)

“ *The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words.* ”

II. I proceed, brethren, in the second place, to offer you my arguments for the observance of good taste in the preaching of the gospel.