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REV. C. VAN RENSSELAER'S

ADDRESS ON

THE ORGANIZATION OF AN ACADEMY.

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True Organization of a Christian Institution:

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT

THE CLOSE OF THE WINTER TERM

OF THE

GENESEO SYNODICAL ACADEMY, N. Y.,

APRIL 7th, 1853,

BY

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CORRESPONDING SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

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NOTICE.

THIS Address was delivered last spring, by the appointment of the Trustees of the Geneseo Academy. When a request was subsequently made for a copy, with a view to its publication, the author gave himself the benefit of a doubt, and withheld the Address from the press. The request, however, having recently been informally renewed, through the Rev. F. DE W. WARD, who has been as a father to the Academy, he now commits the Address to his brethren, with the expression of interest in the particular institution under the care of the Synod, and with the desire to assist in illustrating the principles of its organization.

Philadelphia, Oct. 10th, 1853.

C. V. R.



CITIZENS OF GENESEO,

AND FRIENDS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

AN inheritance in the midst of schools, churches, quiet homes and fertile fields is among the favoured allotments of Providence. If Paul, in defence of his rights, was bold to claim, "I am a citizen of no mean city," who more than you may declare, in acknowledgment of great privileges, that you are residents of no mean town, and citizens of no small State?

A few historical and general glances will bring us in sight of the range of topics, selected for particular observation out of the varieties of a great landscape.

About the year 1792, Geneseo was the only organized township west of the Seneca lake. It comprehended at that time the whole of western New York. Its boundaries were from the pre-emption line to Lake Erie, and from Lake Ontario to Pennsylvania. Six millions of acres were its domain; and a mighty future lay wrapped in the cradle of its early origin, like a child in the garments of a great destiny. This large territory, which in 1790 had only 1081 inhabitants, is now occupied by 14 counties and by more than half a million of people—a population greater than that of half the States of the American Union. So rapidly has the old township of Geneseo fulfilled its mission of pioneer activity and of westerly expansion! It was originally called the "Big Tree" township, after the nomenclature of the Aborigines and in deference to the "big tree" which yet stands in the mystery of Indian nobility and in the glory of centennial years, to survey the numerous seedlings of the forest which have sprung up on every side.

The original inhabitants were of Puritan and of Scotch origin—the two best friends of the Anglo-Saxon kindred. First came the men of Connecticut and Massachusetts, those mothers of States, who like two venerable New England matrons, yet occupy the old homestead, whilst their children and grandchildren are States, counties and townships, far away from the landmarks of Puritan geography. The general characteristics of New England settlers, not always indeed exemplified, are a regard for religion and worldly prudence, for schools and churches, for all that gives worth to families, prosperity to the Church and State, and glory to God. Soon came the emigrants from Scotia, equally trained for "the chief end of man," men of hardy soil and hardy soul, indomitable men, whether in contending for the principles of the Reformation embodied in Bible, Catechism, and Covenant, or fighting for the liberty of their hearths and moors, or working for the means of subsistence on Sutherlandshire hills or Genesseean fields. The union of such men with a large predominance of the Puritan stock, must needs have given to the

population within the boundary of this old banner township an advantage richer than the mould of its far-famed valley.

The inhabitants early paid a degree of attention to religion and education. In 1795 an Academy stood "on the high ground a little back of the village of Geneseo."* The eye, in searching for it, is directed to the very site of the building, now occupied by the Synodical institution. This, then, is primeval ground, the granite of the educational strata of Western New York. Here the early pioneers first showed their thoughtful care of the best interests of the rising generation, by selecting so beautiful a location for a seat of learning. "Temple Hill," overlooking the village and the valley, is an apt emblem of the elevation, merited and won in all ages by mental and moral culture.

The old Academy, where the worship of God was first celebrated, has long since passed away, and is not remembered by any of the surviving inhabitants. Its place was supplied by a school-house located in the lower part of the village. The present Academy, incorporated in 1824, owes its origin to the liberality and enterprise of the Wadsworths,† and other worthy citizens. After a series of vicissitudes, it was transferred by a liberal arrangement to the care of the Synod of Buffalo. May religion and learning long flourish within its walls, in a fraternal communion foreshadowed by the early use of the old Academy as the house of God!

The best thing that western New York can do for its own prosperity and for the cause of religion, is to give to its hundred thousand youth a Christian education. It is not enough to have school-houses and schooling; the school teachers must be of the right character, and the matter taught of the right kind. The tendency of the present day is to pay too indiscriminating deference to universal education. The idea of educating *all* seems to have engrossed much more attention than the *mode of conducting the work*. Now in ploughing a field, the great point is not how you can get through the work, but how you can best do whatever is undertaken. The quality of the harvest does not depend upon the number of acres, but upon the process of cultivation. So, in education, there may be thousands of school-houses, ten thousands of teachers, and hundreds of thousands of scholars; and yet universal education may be very deficient education just as universal agriculture may be very deficient agriculture. "What *kind* of education is it?" is a question of greater moment than "*how many* are educated?" The two points ought evidently to be combined in a perfect system. First, there ought to be the best kind of education; and secondly, it ought to be

* This is stated on the authority of the Rev. J. H. Hotchkiss, in his history of the churches of Western New York, p. 374.

† WILLIAM AND JAMES WADSWORTH were the first settlers of the Genesee valley. They came out to the Big tree tract in 1790, and by their energy and enterprise led the way to the successful settlement of this part of Western New York. JAMES S. WADSWORTH, Esq., of Geneseo, is the worthy and wealthy representative of his pioneer ancestor.

extended to the greatest practicable numbers. No system of education, to whatever *extent* it may be carried by the State, can ever command the entire confidence of Christians, or of thoughtful men outside of the Church, if it be deficient in its very *nature*. Such a system may be infinitely better than none; it may have many compensations; it may train well to the extent of its imperfect aims; it may command the support, so far as it goes, of all classes of men; but if it come short in principle and in practice, of the Bible standard, those who make the Bible their rule of truth and life ought to endeavour to improve the old, or devise a new system.

The Presbyterian Church has always been in favour of education. She is in favour of common-school education; of academical education; of collegiate education; of theological education; of every kind of education, which deserves the name, however low or high degree. But she is not *satisfied* which any education which undervalues, divine truth, and which cuts off the communication between God and the soul. Hence she desires to establish institutions of a definite evangelical character. Hence, too, all denominations of Christians, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, &c., seek to establish seminaries and colleges where religion shall go hand in hand with learning. The Geneseo Academy has an honest, Christian purpose. It has no contention with any institution. It has praise-worthy objects to accomplish, employs lawful and wise means in their execution, and in blessing others has the hope of being blessed itself. Sectarianism is not the end of the institution, but religion and learning—a holy culture—the harmonious development of all the powers of our nature, exemplified in young men and maidens, who shall be worthy of the Church, of the State, and of the age.

As this is one of the public occasions of the Geneseo Academy, my remarks shall converge to the principles of its organization. Let, then, our subject be—*The true principles of the organization of a Christian institution of learning*, as exemplified in the Geneseo Academy.

The true CHARACTERISTICS of the plan of a Christian institution are threefold; viz., the *union of religion and learning*; the agency of *Christian teachers* in imparting instruction; and the *kindly influence of the Church* in watching over the great interests of education.

I. It is a characteristic of the Geneseo Academy, as a Christian institution, to EXALT RELIGION TO ITS TRUE PLACE IN THE ACADEMIC COURSE. If man needs instruction at all, religion, the chief subject in the creation of God, cannot be rejected as an unimportant branch of knowledge. Arithmetic must be taught whilst figures endure, and reading as long as letters last, and astronomy as long as stars shine; but what are figures, and letters, and stars, in comparison with a priceless soul and the Lord of its life? Rather let our children be educated on the Bible alone, without the sight of another book, than their minds be occupied by all things else except the great things of eternity. Were angels permitted to come down and be teachers in

our schools and academies, with what diligence would they mingle religious instruction with all the miscellaneous appliances of mental cultivation! Religion is the mysterious point in the heavens whither all systems are tending; whilst the forms of secular knowledge are but satellites of a planet, held in honour by the law of their subordination. A subject so great in its nature and relations as religion cannot be lawfully banished from places of instruction. A great deal has been said about the *index expurgatorius* of the Pope; but American educators, who mark religion among the subjects to be expurgated from schools, are doing what even anti-Christ himself has never dared to attempt. Religion is the rebinding of the soul to God; and ought to be included in all human training. So far as religion is distinct from other kinds of knowledge, it is incomparably the *most important of all*; and a wise system of education will, on that account, give it its due place among the acquisitions of early life.

The *Bible* permits no alternative. The Bible is the standard of life; and to set up human wisdom against its precepts is to dispute the authority of its inspiration. Now not only does the Bible exalt religion as the object of chief concern throughout the entire range of its history, doctrines, precepts, prophecies, exhortations, but its special teaching in regard to education is in behalf of education in religion. The language of the Old Testament is, "Train up a child in the way he should go," which is coincident with that of the New Testament, "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The whole stress of scripture, so far as education is concerned, is to the securing of *religious* education. Mental cultivation is a comparatively inferior aim—a duty to be duly discharged, and fairly inferential from our general responsibilities—but still it is not the specific subject of divine precepts and promises. The whole weight of scriptural injunction is upon the inculcation of religion into the youthful mind. "These things, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up." No such passage can be quoted in favour of any secular knowledge whatever. And what God makes primary, man has no right to make secondary, much less to exclude altogether. The inherent importance of the subject is thus enforced by positive command. We have no more authority to banish the things pertaining to God from our literary institutions, than we have to train up our children for the world. The Bible is a standard and universal class book in education, according to the record of its own inspirations.

The *nature of man* is a plea for the same truth. Thou wonderful being of soul and body, of marvellous spirit-work within and of curious matter-work without, complex creation of infinite wisdom, give the testimony of thy constitution to the explication of our theme. Come, let me single out a bright-eyed youth of this Academy—a maiden shall it be?—a living witness, before the tribunal of reason.

Nay, shrink not abashed before the gaze of sympathizing friends; for thou art to tell us of the gifts of God to our common nature. And the maiden lifts her voice and speaks: "The Creator of my soul has given to it a moral as well as an intellectual nature. My conscience needs cultivation as really as my mind. As one who is to live forever in bliss or in woe, I ask for a training suitable to my wants and my nature, as an immortal." Oh, ye educators, can ye deny a plea which has a response in our common constitution? What is education? It is to draw out, discipline, and equip the powers of human nature—to develop, strengthen, and furnish them for the duties of a mortal and immortal existence. On the plainest principles of philosophy, therefore, religion is to be comprehended in a course of education. As long as the soul has moral faculties, which need to be trained, they ought to be trained; and to omit training the moral faculties, and to train only the mental, is a demi-education, as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural.

Further. Religion furnishes *materials of the highest intellectual interest and discipline*, and is thus worthy of a place in literary institutions. What book so mind-enkindling as the book of God? Try the experiment with a little child; and you will find no subjects that will fix his young mysterious eyes like the creation, the fall, Cain and Abel, the Ark, Abraham, the history of Joseph, Moses, the Red Sea, Sinai, the wanderings, Jordan, Jericho, the conquest of Canaan, Sampson, Samuel, &c., &c. And as is the child, so is the youth. The Bible, in its history, geography, biography and general interpretation, may be made altogether the most attractive book in the language. Shakspeare, Milton, and even Bunyan, are comparatively sealed books to children and youth. But the Bible is the book for all ages of men, in all ages of time. What fine mental exercises, also, are connected with its collateral studies, such as the evidences of Christianity, Butler's Analogy, and similar works? There cannot be a doubt that religion and its themes afford the richest materials for high intellectual development.

And where does religion more appropriately *belong* than to the place of instruction? Schools and academies are founded for the improvement of the rising generation. They are the training places. As iron is welded in the furnace heat of the shop; as the cloth receives its texture amidst the wheels and movements of the manufactory; as the harvest matures under the plough, the harrow, the sunshine and the rain; as every thing that is made, or grows, has processes adapted to give it being and nurture, so the teaching place of the soul is the very place to teach the soul what concerns its immortality. The arrangements of an Academy are well adapted for religious instruction. With its stated hours, its retirement, its mental discipline, its rational subordination, its facilities for having a place for every thing and every thing in its place, a better opportunity could scarcely be desired for the inculcation of the sweet and glorious truths of the Bible. The exercises of religion harmonize, not only with the objects of an institution of learning, but with its internal

arrangements and plans. It is just as easy to assign time for prayer, reading of the scriptures and other religious exercises, as for the classics, geography and history. The variety, too, of such exercises is soothing to the mind, and well adapted to promote attention to other studies. There is no greater perversion in the world than to regard religion as interfering with the plans of the school-room. To maintain that the things of God cannot be wisely introduced into a course of regular study, is to assume that religion is neither intellectual in its nature, important in its aims, nor worthy of notice in its tendencies. The best results flow from Christian studies, even if simply their humanizing influences are taken into the account. Prayer, the songs of Zion, and other Christian exercises, make their power felt among sailors on the deep, soldiers in the camp, convicts in the prison, and on all classes and conditions of men, whatever their occupations. It would be strange, indeed, if there were no time for such things in an institution of learning, or if they were too incongruous for admission. Good order and discipline always follow in the train of Christian exercises. Wherever else religion may be deemed out of place, it can never be rationally so regarded in an institution designed for the education of the human soul, and relying for success on the spirit, the principles, and the rewards of religion itself.

The *neglect of household instruction*, and the necessity of carrying it out, even where religion is attended to at home, furnish additional considerations for attending to this great subject at school. It is frequently said: "Let religion be attended to at home, and at the Sabbath-school, and let secular knowledge be imparted at schools and academies." That home is the chief place for the training of the soul in religion is among the axioms of this whole discussion. The family is the kingdom of parental sovereignty, the providential constitution which God has established for the royal object of preparing the race for all their duties, present and future. The promises run through families. Grace magnifies the provisions of providence, and makes use of home in the training for glory. The very nature of household responsibilities, however, is an argument for teaching religion in the school. For why does a parent send a child away from home? Simply on account of advantages for education which cannot be secured there so well as elsewhere. For the child's good, it is committed to other guardians for a season, who are invested in many respects, with the authority and responsibility of the parent. The duties of the latter are transferred to the former. Hence, nothing is more common or more popular than for a prospectus of an institution to state that the youth shall be regarded as "members of the family of the Principal;" "the government is strictly parental." This is the true theory. Gentlemen and ladies, teachers in the Geneseo Academy, you stand in the place of fathers and of mothers! The pupils of this institution are committed to your care; and you, together, constitute an aggregated family, bound together by temporary but sacred ties!

It follows, from this view of the subject, that the same great objects are to be pursued at the public training place as at the private one; and that the same general principles of administration are applicable and obligatory. What! shall the dear youth of his mother's prayers and of careful instruction be sent away from his home and kept away from his God at the same time? Shall not the great purposes of household training be followed out in the larger family of the public institution? Do the principles of education change with the place of education? Are our youth to be brought up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" at home, but in a different nurture when they leave home? Christianity abjures such a thought!

It is astonishing how large an addition to a youth's religious knowledge can be made in a public institution. Whether in a school, an academy, or a college, important accessions can be realized, above and beyond home teachings. Such accessions are auxiliary in their nature and supplemental in degree. The youth not only retains what he knew, but receives more. And he returns to his parents with a mind better stored with religious truth, and with a conscience more enlightened in its duties to God and man.

Leave religion exclusively to the teachings of home! What is, then, to become of the great majority of children and youth, who learn nothing about God at home? It may do for the worldly to deny that this evil is a proper subject of Christian interference; but the Church cannot pacify her conscience by such a plea. The whole spirit of our divine religion aims at the evangelization of individuals, of families, of tribes, of nations. We establish churches and schools in heathen lands for the conversion of the ignorant and degraded; and can we consistently remain unconcerned about the uninstructed youth at our very doors, in the dwellings surrounding our institutions of learning? Nor will it do to say that youth may be left to form their own opinions on the subject of religion. On the contrary, religion is of all others the subject in regard to which the human mind needs guidance. And usually it is susceptible of right guidance, if instruction be begun early. The utter destitution of religious instruction in so many households is one of the strongest pleas for its incorporation into a course of public instruction.

Let it be remembered, too, that *experience* has set its seal upon the wisdom, the propriety and the advantages of uniting religion and learning. This Academy is undertaking no new experiment. Its principles are tried principles, upon which the blessing of God has ever rested. Whilst merely secular institutions have failed in training the soul for its chief end, the Holy Spirit has been poured down in copious affusions upon those which have inculcated the truths and duties of religion. In Mary Lyon's famous Academy in Massachusetts, there was a revival almost every year of her zealous Christian superintendence. Hundreds of the precious youth of her charge were brought to an experimental acquaintance with Christ. The records of the General Association of Massachusetts, the year before last, show that the only place in the District Association, which enjoyed a

revival of religion, was the Mount Holyoke Seminary. In that institution the Bible was studied more than any one book. In one of the earliest circulars which give an account of the institution, Miss Lyon states: "It is to be based entirely on Christian principles; and while it is to be furnished with teachers of the highest character and experience, and to have every advantage which the state of female education in this country will allow, its brightest feature will be that it is A SCHOOL OF CHRIST." One of her associate teachers says of her: "She made instruction in religion as systematic, as thorough and as personal, as instruction in literature and science." An institution, founded on such principles, has the fragrance of heaven's bloom about its seats of literature, and crowns of immortal joy for its rewards.

Christian friends! the Geneseo Academy is, in the Providence of God, such an institution. No attainments in science or literature could ever have excited the interest of the community like the recent religious awakening, which has been a greater glory to the institution than all mystery and all knowledge." The practicability of wisely introducing religion into a course of public instruction has been demonstrated here. This academy is the witness of blessings which will outlive the things of time, and be perpetuated in the eternal education of another world.

The Presbyterian Church, in recommending the union of religion and learning in her institutions, does not love learning less, but religion more. The whole course of instruction in her Seminaries will be conducted on an elevated standard of literature as well as of piety. Henry Martyn, in complaining of the prevalent neglect of religion in public institutions, remarked that in them "Christ was crucified between two thieves—classics and mathematics." The aim of our Church is to exalt the crucified One in his mediatorial offices; and to train up men who shall say with the centurion, "Truly this was the Son of God," and women, who shall have the devotion of the Marys to be last at the cross, and first at the sepulchre.

Religion, as taught in our public institutions, is opposed, in the first place, to an *exclusive secularity*. Even the heathens taught religion in their schools. The Greeks, the Romans, the Brahmins, the Chinese, never thought of rejecting the gods whom they worshipped from the course of training for their children. Alas! shall poor Pagans honour the gods of ignorance more than Christians the God of revelation? The spirit of an exclusively secular school is almost of course an exclusively secular spirit; and it is the more poisonous because it comes in contact with the susceptible mind of youth, and with that mind, whilst engaged in the actual process of development.

The religious instruction of our Church is, in the second place, opposed to the teaching of *mere morality*. Moral instruction is good so far as it goes, but the only true source of morality is faith in Christ. And why aim at a result without preceding it by its ordained cause? Seneca could teach morality; but outward morality is not

religion, except in the language of men void of Christian understanding.

In the third place, the religion taught by our Church is evangelical as opposed to *error*. The teaching of sound morality is better than false doctrine, but nothing can supply the place of evangelical truth. The truth, held in common by all evangelical denominations of Christians, is the substance of our instructions. The great doctrines of the Reformation are inculcated on the minds and conscience of our youth; "the incorruptible seed of the word" is sown in the young soil of the natural heart.

In the fourth place, our religious teaching has some *distinctive* characteristics, in opposition to the idea that denominational peculiarities are of no account. Believing as we do that our doctrines, worship and form of government approach as nearly to the Bible standard as the human mind is likely ever to attain, we are under the obligations of conscientious conviction and covenant love to propagate our views on these great subjects with "meekness and wisdom." Ecclesiastical peculiarities are not, however, offensively set forth in our standards. The Presbyterian Church makes no claims which exclude sister churches, which savour of infallibility, which foment strife, or which are dangerous to the salvation of the soul. The Shorter Catechism, whilst it is thoroughly Calvinistic in its spirit and letter, exhibits doctrinal truth on the broad principles of the Reformation, is substantially identical with the Articles of the Church of England; and may be freely used by all orthodox Congregational churches; and, with the exception of a single answer about infant baptism, by the Baptist churches. The peculiarities in other portions of our standards are not inconsistent with the mutual demands and concessions of Christian charity.

The Presbyterian Church aims at introducing into her system of education a religion which has borne its fruits in all lands. It is believed that men of every faith respect her sincerity, her purity, her aggressive energy, her conservativeness, her desire to do good to the souls of men, and the general beneficial influences of her schemes and operations. And in no one particular is our Church likely to do more good at the present time, than in her emphatic testimony to the necessity of uniting religion and learning in public institutions for the training of the young.

II. Another characteristic in the organization of a Christian institution is, that its instructions should be communicated through CHRISTIAN TEACHERS.

There may be the most perfect system of agriculture on scientific principles, and yet without proper implements, and the right kind of men to use them, the fields will be comparatively barren, and the harvests small. The cultivation of the Genesee country depends upon the character of the farmers. But not more, Gentlemen, than the inculcation of religion depends upon the character of its teachers.

The maxim that an unsanctified ministry is an unprofitable ministry, is applicable in its general principles to the ministers of education. A person may possess all the other qualifications and accomplishments of his calling, but he is deficient in the qualification of teaching religion just in proportion as he fails to possess, or to exhibit, its true spirit. Whatever be the branch of study, the teacher is incompetent to teach it adequately, unless he himself fully *understands* it. The simplest process of arithmetic demands a knowledge of first principles. The great truths of Christianity cannot be presented in their relations to Christ and holiness, without heart-knowledge answering to head-knowledge, and confirming its enunciations.

Another principle, brought into operation in the selection of religious teachers, and which can never be safely dispensed with, is that of *sympathy*. The possession of knowledge, without aptness to communicate it, is necessarily inefficacious, especially in religion. The eloquent help in impressing divine truth upon the human soul is the sympathy of the living teacher. Even a stammering utterance has compensations of power in the zeal of a soul, alive with the love of Christ. A tender interest in the salvation of others is a blessed help of the truth. Never does the word go to the heart so influentially as when spoken with a religious spirit, and, like a present to a friend, sent with love. In teaching religion, so much depends upon gaining the good will of the pupils, that the whole course should testify to an earnest affection, a Christian concern, a pure compassion, a religious interest on the part of the instructors. It is not enough to appeal to the reason of the scholar; his heart must be reached; and nature has ordained that it can be best reached by the power of sympathy. To teach the holy truths of religion in the same spirit as many teach grammar, or writing, has a tendency to harden rather than to bless. Christ taught with sympathy. The soft, loving breathings of divine compassion, mingled with the majesty of his doctrines and the authority of his presence. In like manner, every teacher of religion should endeavour to communicate the truths of religion in a tender, Christian spirit.

Closely connected with this thought is the power of a godly *example*. "How does he live?" is a stronger argument than "What does he say?" A Christian example is the visible witness of God to the truth; it is a representation of God to the human mind; a living personification in human form of the attributes which are the glory of Heaven. It not unfrequently happens that the life of the teacher exerts an influence far greater than his formal instructions, either fatally counteracting them, or enforcing them with direct and genial energy. An immoral life is an impeachment of religion itself; and even an outwardly moral one, that lacks a living faith to give it animation, comes too far short of divine requirements, to confide to its keeping the instructions of religion. Every teacher of religion ought to give to the truths he communicates, the full benefit of a consistent Christian example.

This suggests another consideration, which every Christian will own to be essential to the objects in view; viz., that the spiritual interests of the pupils in every institution should be *daily remembered before God in prayer*. The ordering of all events is of God. The sun in the heavens is His, and His is the youth in the school-room. Not a lesson, but He hears it; not a rising thought, but He sees it; not a motion of conscience, but He knows it. The every day affairs of the Geneseo Academy are much better known to God than to all the teachers combined. His omniscience, like a flame of fire, kindles a light around every soul for His all-seeing inspection; and His omnipresent power shapes and controls every thing. The favour of such a Being is all-important in an institution of learning; and that favour is secured by prayer. Behold the faithful teacher, rising with the beams of the morning, to supplicate the needed blessing at the throne of the heavenly grace! During the toils of the day, the breath of ejaculatory prayer goes upward from a communing heart; and at night, remembering still the dear pupils of his charge, he pleads once more for the Holy Spirit to convert and sanctify them. Oh, my Christian brethren, if there be power in prayer, we need teachers who pray. We need men of God in our institutions, servants of Jesus Christ, who will bear precious seed, weeping; who will invoke the divine blessing upon youthful hearts. Says Richard Baxter—"Oh, how great an upright and godly Christian's prayer is! how powerful with God! That a poor, human creature should speak with God's high majesty in heaven, and not be affrighted! but, on the contrary, knoweth that God smileth upon him for Christ's sake, His dearly beloved Son!" Revivals of religion rarely, if ever, occur in institutions where the teachers are not pious. Such seasons begin, and are carried on, with prayer; and even when unusual outpourings of the Spirit do not take place, the general religious interests of a Seminary are always intimately allied with the prayers of them that love our Lord Jesus Christ.

The importance of having religious teachers in institutions of learning is also seen in the simple fact that a *Christian is the highest style of man*. He possesses endowments, superadded by divine grace to human nature, which qualify him in an eminent degree for the discharge of the general duties of instruction, government, counsel and social intercourse. The natural man lacks the element, essential to the perfection of human character. Religion makes a better husband, wife, sister, friend. It makes a better statesman, jurist, physician, merchant, workman, citizen. It makes a better teacher. It not only inspires new confidence in integrity, but it improves the judgment, softens the heart, nurtures disinterestedness, expands the views, and gives an elevation of aim and a strength of purpose, which find constant scope in action. At times when formal religious instruction is not communicated, the Christian teacher may by his explanations or illustrations judiciously suggest thoughts related to the great theme. In the exercise of discipline—that important and responsible work in the management of an insti-

tution, who can be so safely trusted as those who have learned to submit to the authority of God, and to do all things for his glory? There is something, even in the very manners of a true child of grace, that is commendatory to all with whom he comes into contact. In short, religion forms the basis of a higher character than can be constructed without it.

When we consider the teacher's practical knowledge of religion as a pre-requisite to his teaching of it, his sympathizing concern, his example, his prayers, and his general superiority of character, few will probably question the wisdom of employing in a Christian institution teachers, whose souls are in communion with God.

III. Another good characteristic in the organization of a Christian institution is that it be under THE CARE OF THE CHURCH.

The alliance of the Church with education is natural and intimate. Religion stimulates the intellect, enforces accountability, is the source of expansive charity and activity, has a special interest in the young, and is the guardian of the truth. All the early Christian institutions of education sprung into life under the guardianship of the Church of God. One of the redeeming traits of Popery during the dark ages, was its connection with the perpetuation of learning. The revival of letters was contemporaneous with the Reformation. The grandest impulse ever imparted to education, was under the power of that great movement which gave to Christianity new life among the nations of the earth. Luther at Wittenberg, and Calvin at Geneva were at the head of institutions, whose influence was felt throughout Europe. In Germany, France, England, Scotland, and other countries of the Reformation, the old universities were reformed, or new ones established, and such measures were taken for the education of the young as indoctrinated them in the truths of religion as well as in secular knowledge. In Scotland, in particular, John Knox and the Reformers were careful to introduce a system of schools for the "youth head" of the land, which has contributed to make Scotland the best educated nation in religion, throughout the world. In New England the same system in its essential features originally prevailed. Church-teaching and school-teaching went together, and the Shorter Catechism formed a part of that great common school book of the olden time, called the "New England Primer." In the Presbyterian schools, the doctrines of religion were always taught as necessary branches of human knowledge. In 1766, the General Assembly or Synod, of the Church passed the following resolution:

Resolved, That special care be taken of the principles and characters of school-masters, that *they teach the Westminster Catechism and Psalmody*; and that the ministers, church sessions, and foresaid committees, (where they consistently can,) visit the schools and *see these things be done*; and where schools are composed of different denominations, that said committees and sessions invite proper persons of said denominations, to join with them in such visitations.

About the beginning of this century, schools began to be more and more disconnected from religion; and since that time the State has continued to exercise increased control over the subject of education, until the rights of the Church have been almost disowned, in theory as well as in practice. That the State has interests in education, which it is bound to protect, is cheerfully admitted. Our system of common schools, faulty as it is in religious influence, we desire to see unimpaired, at least until a better one is devised. The higher institutions of learning, however—such as the Genesee Academy—are situated above the field of discussion which includes the common schools. This Academy stands upon its own, undisputed ground. It sustains relations to the Church which cannot be condemned, with much show of reason or magnanimity. The abstract question of the right of Church superintendence will not now be discussed; but I may briefly allude to *its advantages*, as practically connected with the Institution, whose patrons and pupils I have the honour to address.

1. One of the advantages of Church superintendence is, that it *secures in a more effectual manner the inculcation of religion*. If the true end of education be the conversion of the heart to holiness, as well as the enlightening of the mind in knowledge, the Church ought to guard interests so manifoldly coincident with her own work and destiny. The State can never watch over the doctrines of Christianity. Nor can individual Christians be always relied upon to make religion sufficiently prominent in private institutions of education; the temptations are all the other way. Teaching, as one of the honourable professions, is commonly entered upon with a view to worldly maintenance; and as the patronage of all denominations, and the good will of worldly men, are important objects, it has happened that comparatively little of distinctive Christianity has been taught in most private institutions. There are, indeed, honourable and happy exceptions. But even where religion has been professedly taught, it has not received that share of time and that substance of inculcation which it has a right to demand. The superintendence of the Church is a higher security for the acknowledgment of the just claims of religion than can be elsewhere obtained. Such a point requires no reasoning.

2. Church superintendence, as *a security against error and perversion*, is an argument, to which Providence is calling the attention of the American public. Private corporations, however wisely they may be managed in one generation, are in danger of becoming corrupt in another. *Harvard University*, founded on as pure a faith as the world has ever seen, has been for the last half century a prominent school of error in the United States. The *Theological Seminary at Andover*, whose establishment was hastened by the necessity of counteracting Socinian teachings, has already, within the very half century of Harvard defection, itself departed in a serious degree from the faith of the holy men of God, who gave their wealth to its buildings and its professorships. An academy, not far from my own residence,

originally established by Presbyterians, and committed to a Board of Trustees, almost all of whom were of the same faith, relapsed by degrees into different hands, until in 1852 there was but a single Presbyterian in the Board, and the majority were Infidels and Nothingarians. The Church, indeed, has had her own periods of religious decline; but whilst human infirmity is visible in all institutions among men, it is certain that there is no guardianship of the truth so reliable as the Church of God, divine in origin, sustained by the Holy Spirit, ministered unto by the ambassadors of Christ, enriched with ordinances and sacraments, and purchased by blood.

3. Another advantage of a Church connection to institutions of learning is the *greater guarantee of their perpetuity*. Some of the finest Academies within the territory of the Presbyterian Church have perished from among men, simply because they were not pervaded by an organism, insuring a transmitted life. Individuals die; but institutions should live. Academies are the work of time; age gives to them veneration; and they should be shielded, as far as possible, from the destructive contingencies which overtake private affairs. A charter from the State, indeed, prolongs the life of institutions beyond that of their founders; but, aside from the hazard of secularity and perversion, occasions arise which require the self-denial and energy which men of the world are not often willing to encounter. Mere secular academies, although under chartered protection, dwindle and die in times of trial. Pecuniary disaster is apt to extinguish them. On the other hand, the Church has an energy of defensive power, which, under God, can succour and re-establish institutions in the day of adversity. The general subject of endowments affords an illustration somewhat to the point. Institutions of learning need, in order to place them beyond ordinary contingencies and upon a prosperous foundation, a certain amount of endowment, or permanent resources. But what principle is there so strong, first to obtain funds, and secondly, to protect them, as the principle of religion? The public good, and especially the public good in a spiritual sense—the eternal interests of men—this is the strongest motive to appeal to, in promoting the endowment of literary institutions.* If the Church has any agency in appointing the guardians of such funds, and aims at applying them to the sacred objects of religion as well as learning, a generous community will be forward in placing institu-

* It was this conviction of the Church's capacity to establish and superintend institutions of learning that led *Mary Lyon*, in the midst of the trials which attended the founding of the Mount Holyoke Seminary, to exclaim—"Oh, that the Church would take our highest Female Seminaries under her direct control, protection, and support! And do you not believe that this will be done at some future time? But this cannot be done, unless means are used to secure the confidence of common Christians." p. 198. This eminent Christian teacher was right on both points. First, Church superintendence is desirable; and secondly, its condition will be the adoption of methods of instruction and of general operation, which will commend themselves to the people of God.

tions, which are in need of funds, in a position of influence and usefulness. The Church has an element of vitality no where else to be found. It has a power both to establish and to perpetuate institutions for the training of its youth, which is peculiar to itself as the household of faith and the sanctuary of God.

4. One other, and a most important advantage of Church superintendence is that its influence reacts, in strengthening the *official and private ties which bind children to ministers and parents*. The main reliances of true Christian nurture have always been, and must ever be, in the educational work done at home. There is immense family power in the dwellings of the rich and of the poor! Here mind is first developed, the affections unfolded, character formed. Here the soul receives the original impulses of its unending destiny, and takes the start of life, the motions of immortality. It is important, therefore to arrange the system of public education so that it may foster and strengthen home influences; and one of the helps to the performance of this work is the maternal agency and sympathy of the Church in the management of institutions of learning. There is no country in the world where so great attention is paid to the domestic religious instruction of children as in Scotland. Some might have supposed that where so much religious instruction was given in the public schools, the interest would have expended itself there. Just the reverse. The coincidence between the public and private systems of education strengthens the foundation on which each is upheld. The harmony of home and school carries forward the great purposes of both; and the reaction of the Church's general interest in the training of her young is felt at all the hearth-stones of the land. We verily believe that our own Assembly's measures of education, by enlisting the Church publicly in behalf of her children, will powerfully stimulate all other appliances of Christian nurture. Our ministers will attend more to their commission, "Feed my lambs;" our Sabbath schools will become more effective; and home instruction will put forth its activity with renewed and hopeful zeal.

Such are some of the more obvious advantages, resulting from a connection of the Church with institutions of learning.

And, here, permit me to remark that there is an historical fitness that the Presbyterian Church should bear her part in superintending educational institutions in Western New York, and especially in this place. The first church, organized west of the pre-emption line (which runs through Seneca lake) in the State of New York, was organized by a missionary of the General Assembly, and was located in the township of Geneseo.* That church met for worship in the academy on the high hill, just out of the present village of Geneseo.

* Mr. Hotchkiss, in his history of the churches, refers to a tradition that the Congregational church at Canandaigua, was organized first, in 1790. The organization, if indeed it was regularly made, he admits, became extinct; and the present church at Canandaigua was organized at a later date.

The General Assembly, in 1795, appointed as missionary the Rev. *Daniel Thatcher*, of North Carolina, who proceeded up the Susquehannah to Tioga Point, Newtown, and Great Flats to Seneca lake, and from thence to the settlements in the Genessee country.* In July, 1795, Mr. Thatcher organized the church in Geneseo township; which church originally worshipped here and included this locality in its territory, although it now has its true succession in the neighbouring Presbyterian church at Lakeville. This, then, my brethren, is the *original soil of Presbyterianism in Western New York*. Here the old landmarks were first set up. The meridian line of our ecclesiastical geography runs through Geneseo; and the site of this Academy is the Greenwich of the Synod. Long may the institution here flourish as an observatory in Zion, furnished with all the apparatus of terrestrial and celestial learning, and filling the world with the fame of its achievements!

I cannot close this address—long though it has been—without adding a few thoughts first to the pupils of this academy, and then to the trustees.

PUPILS OF THE GENESEO ACADEMY:

This has been an eventful session. A glory such as earth knows not of, has rested upon this institution. The gospel seed, which was sown in the furrows of the winter of 1852, has yielded a harvest more beauteous in tint than gold, and abundant far beyond the mea-

* Minutes of Assembly, p. 98.—DANIEL THATCHER studied theology under the Rev. Dr. James Hall, at "Clio's Nursery," near Statesville, N. C. He was reported to the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, by the Presbytery of Orange as a candidate in 1780, p. 486, of Records, and as being ordained in 1782, p. 494. He first attended Synod in 1785. Dr. Foote, in his history of North Carolina has placed "Ga." opposite to the name of Mr. Thatcher, intimating either that he came from Georgia, or acted as missionary in Georgia, probably the latter. He was a member of Orange Presbytery in 1788, at the formation of the General Assembly. He afterwards joined the Presbytery of South Carolina, and doubtless laboured in Georgia. Whilst a member of this Presbytery, he was appointed by the General Assembly a missionary to Western New York, in 1795. He was the first missionary appointed by our Church, who gave up his whole time to the work. "Resolved 1. That Mr. Thatcher be appointed a missionary *till the next General Assembly*, to commence his labours as soon as convenient at Wyoming, [Pa.]; to proceed up the river to Tioga Point, Newtown Point, Great Flat, and to the Seneca Lake, &c.; and to visit the several settlements in that course, and in the Genessee country," &c. Minutes, p. 98. In 1796, he was reappointed for another year to the same route, and again in 1797. In 1796, the Presbytery of South Carolina dismissed him to join the Presbytery of Hudson; but it does not appear that he ever joined the latter Presbytery. His death, which occurred in 1797, is thus recorded in the Minutes of the General Assembly of 1798. "It appeared that Mr. Thatcher went out on the mission assigned by the last General Assembly, and died in the month of August, in the discharge of his important trust, *to the great loss of our Church*," p. 139. His narrative as missionary "could not be found," p. 155. But the records of his life abides in the churches he was instrumental in organizing in Western New York, and perhaps in the Carolinas and in Georgia.

asures of commerce to calculate. The community, the Synod, the Church, the friends of Christian education throughout the land, have rejoiced that the Holy Spirit has here won youthful hearts to the knowledge and love of Christ. The better instruction of heaven has been added to the good lessons of earthly wisdom. Keep that whereunto any of you may have attained, and press forward for an increase. There are parents here, who have no higher earthly joys than those which are blended with yours. Like the rivers of Eden—which many suppose to have intermingled their waters, and then flowed out separately again from the garden—the joys of their hearts mingle with the joys of your hearts in the Eden of household love, and the stream of their lives flows on with a tide gladdened from its contact with yours. Remember how much your future is depending upon present improvement. Study diligently, pray earnestly, live righteously. Take care what principles you adopt, what books you read, what companions you choose. Honour your teachers. If any of you have not commenced a religious life, begin without delay. May you all possess the hopes and the enjoyments of pure and undefiled religion. Then shall the true aim of a Christian education be fulfilled, when you shall be prepared for the duties of this world, and of the world beyond it. As youth is the period of academic instruction, so the whole of life is the term time of a preparation for eternity. May God bless you in your youthful pursuits, and cause you to reign with Him on the Temple Hill of the New Jerusalem!

GENTLEMEN, TRUSTEES OF THE INSTITUTION :

It is said that Cardinal Pole, in the early days of the English Reformation, offered the Pope to subjugate the nation back to the Roman Church, “by dealing with the consciences of dying men.” The idea was that he could recover the lost temporalities of the Church by extorting death-bed charities, and by leaving impressions of peculiar sanctity in his ministrations in families. Gentlemen, yours is the task, more pleasing and more hopeful, of superintending an institution which deals with the consciences of the living young. Instead of exacting temporals in a dying hour, you aim through grace, at imparting in life spiritual gifts which shall be eternal. Your academy offers the richest legacy that can be bequeathed to an immortal soul—a training in learning and in religion, in the qualifications for an immortal existence.

Gentlemen! Your institution appeals for public support. Its success should not be hindered by the want of an adequate endowment. Even after the present efforts of endowment have been crowned with success, more should be added to enable the academy to pursue a still higher career. Cardinal Pole’s plan might be acted upon with Protestant propriety, so far as a legacy from friends, freely bequeathed for the glory of God in advancing Christian education, may be regarded as a suggestion (by contrast) from the Roman practice of extorting from the dying. Let no effort be spared, gentle-

men, to finish the work of endowment, so far as your own agency shall have the privilege of superintending it. The Geneseo Academy, organized on the true principles of a Christian institution, **MUST BE SUSTAINED.** Its blessings who can describe? Who can count the stars of a glorious night? The more magnificent the telescope, the more difficult the work! As the gazer, rapt in the calculations of his earnest task, would be overtaken by the glowing beams of the morning, so those who would attempt to enumerate the blessings of a Christian institution, and explore the expanse of its unfolding destiny, must count, and watch, and pray, until "the day breaketh," and the eye of sense is met with the light of glory.



GENESEO ACADEMY

GENESEO ACADEMY.

UNDER THE CARE OF THE SYNOD OF BUFFALO.

THE Synod of Buffalo having taken this Institution under their care, design to place it upon the best possible foundation, and make it an efficient instrument in advancing the interests of Education. They have secured an able and effective corps of Teachers, and provided ample facilities for a most thorough and extensive course of study.

The Trustees of this Institution will throw around it those healthful, moral, and religious influences, which cannot fail to inspire confidence in the minds of parents and guardians, and make it a seat of Literature and Science, as desirable, as its location is distinguished, for its grand and beautiful scenery.

EXPENSES PER QUARTER—TWELVE WEEKS.

Tuition in First Class,	\$6 00
“ in Second Class,	4 50
“ in Third Class,	3 50
Room Rent,	1 50
Incidental Expenses,	38
Drawing,	2 00
Modern Languages, each,	1 00
Chemical Experiments,	1 00
Instrumental Music, with use of Instrument,	10 00

Board may be obtained in the Hall at \$1 63 per week; in private families at prices ranging from \$1 75 to \$2 per week.

Fuel will be furnished to those who may desire, at prices only sufficient to meet the actual expense.

Washing, three shillings per dozen.

The NEXT TERM commences on Monday, November 28th.