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ARTICLE I.

PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORK OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

AN ADDRESS TO CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY.

I ask your attention, my respected young brethren, to the subject of personal engagement in the work of Foreign Missions. I have no apology to offer, and I presume you have none to ask, for claiming your attention to a matter of such unquestionable importance. It may be taken for granted, that in taking the necessary steps for fitting yourselves for the work of the ministry, you have already settled the question of your call to this sacred office. It is to be hoped that, in adopting this conclusion, you were guided by the Holy Ghost; and that the only object you had then, and the only desire you have now, in seeking this office, is to honor your Redeemer in the salvation of your fellow-men.

The next question which will naturally occupy your thoughts, and especially of those of you who are approaching the close of your studies, is, where you are to exercise those ministerial functions for which you are now fitting

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Nations suffer the punishment of their sins in this world. Individuals suffer both in this world and the world to come. Public sentiment is the aggregate of individual opinion. Public morals is the aggregate of individual morality.

Let thoughtful and sober men consider, and take hold of this matter, and endeavor by all lawful means, through the pulpit, the hustings, and the press, so to mould and control public opinion, that we may be saved, as a nation, from the crime of Sabbath-breaking, and thereby saved from God's righteous wrath and indignation.



ARTICLE III.

THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN THE CLASSICS.

Homer and Hesiod flourished, probably, near the time of the prophet Elijah. That was about nine hundred years before the Christian era. Sappho is placed by the chronologists three hundred years later. That was about six hundred years before Christ. Then come Anacreon, Æschylus, Pindar, and Herodotus, in the sixth and fifth centuries before our era. Then come Socrates and his successors, and with them the real commencement of the classic epoch, about four hundred years before the birth of Christ. This is just about the date of the prophet Malachi. The voice of prophecy ceased among the Hebrews just as the light of letters began fully to shine among the Greeks. At the time of the birth of Christ, when the light of the New Testament was about to dawn upon all nations, the classical epoch was approaching its sunset. Whatever is

most valuable in Greek literature, with the poems of Virgil and Horace among the Romans, had already been produced. The classics seem to be an interlude between the two Testaments.

If we regard the rise of the nations of the world as arranged in a great scheme of divine providence, it is difficult to believe that this exquisite classic culture, which arose in Greece and Italy during this period of the significant silence of inspiration, had no meaning in such scheme of divine providence. Among the Hebrews, a vast and splendid system of types, shadows, and prophecies had been long preparing the faithful among that people for the reception of the Redeemer. True, the Hebrews were the chosen people. The Greeks were not. But all nations then, as now, rightfully belonged to Jehovah, whether He dwelt among them seated between the cherubim in the most Holy Place, or whether they ignorantly worshipped Him as "the unknown God." If the Spirit of God employed the language of the Hebrews for the Old Testament, He employed that of the Greeks for the New. It is difficult to believe that a literature thus elegant, chiefly developed after the Old Testament was ended, which was well-nigh completed when the New Testament began, which furnished the language in which the words and works of the Saviour and His apostles have their permanent record, had no more meaning in the scheme of divine providence than is usually ascribed to it, and was no step forward in preparing the world to receive its Redeemer.

Among the Hebrews an illustrious line of kings pointed steadily forwards to the crown and sceptre of a Divine King. A gorgeous succession of high priests indicated the coming of a High Priest of nobler nature. A sublime series of prophets gave assurance, both as types and by express prophecies, that the prophetic mantle was to fall on a Divine Prophet in the latter day. Among pagan nations, other than the Greeks, the blood of sacrifices was per-

petually flowing on their altars, as an involuntary prophecy of the Redeemer. Did Plato and Aristotle, Sophocles and Euripides, Pericles and Demosthenes, mean nothing in the world's great chant of prophecy and of preparation, during that four hundred years?

The operations of rural life were so ordered as to be mirrors, ready for the great Teacher when he came, in which he showed the form and lineaments of the truths which accompany man's redemption. A sower goes forth to sow his seed, and as it falls into its various places, gives us a picture of the preaching and reception of the Gospel. A merchant-man seeks goodly pearls, and shows us how a wise man understands the worth of his own soul. By hiding a little leaven in three measures of meal, a woman exhibits a picture of the spread of the Gospel through society. Men go fishing in the Sea of Galilee, and draw a picture of the Church of Jesus Christ. An enemy sows tares in a ploughed field, and we are thereby shown the mixed state of things in this world, awaiting the fearful searching of the great judgment day. A shepherd followed by his flock, is an image of the Good Shepherd and his chosen people.

Not only were these common operations of life employed in the structure of parables for the illustration of religious truth. Almost precisely the same use is made, in the Scriptures, of the objects of nature around us. The sun is an image, in a certain sense, of Jesus Christ, on the pages of one of the prophets: "Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." The rain, also, speaks Him forth, when it descends to refresh the ground: "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth." Before those whose hearts do not love Him, He shall "grow up as a tender plant, as a root out of a dry ground." To those who see some thing of His glory through His lowly guise, He is the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys.

The power of His Spirit in the regeneration of the hearts of men, is like the wind which "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth."

As has been remarked by John Foster, there seems to have been established around us a great system of things of various descriptions, adumbrating to us the things which concern our salvation. Some have understood as applying to this parallelism of the world without and the world within us, that deep, dark saying of the wise man, in Ecclesiastes: "He hath made every thing beautiful in His time: also He hath set the world in their heart;" as if there were within a man's soul just such a reflexion of external things, as there is of the stars in the sky on a clear night in the surface of a tranquil lake. We do not understand that every fulfilled prophecy of the Old Testament must necessarily be quoted as such in the New Testament; that every thing that was really a type of Christ in the Old Testament had to be mentioned as a type in the New, before we would be justifiable in recognizing it as such; that every operation of human life which throws light on divine truth is introduced in the parables of our Saviour; or that every object of nature is mentioned in the Scriptures, which may properly be made an illustrative image of Christ, or of His grace. Nor do we believe that the Old Testament, the operations of common life, and the natural objects around us, are the only sources from which inspired truth may receive illustration. Ample room and verge is left for the pulpit, and for uninspired literature. We have hardly heard richer, more appropriate, or more effective illustrations in the pulpit than those drawn, if skilfully and pertinently drawn, from the classic mythology and history. We utter no hint against the delightful and instructive practice of illustrating Scripture by Scripture. We only plead for a wider range of thought, a field of illustration richer, because embracing that and some thing more be-

sides. And we feel that this is some good, at least, which the Greek and Roman culture have done to religion, in the providence of God.

Because some Deists have formerly, in the blindness of unbelief, turned away from the clear light of the Christian revelation, and attempted to construct for themselves a religion made out of the crudities and superstitions of the ancient philosophies, therefore, too often, Christian writers have adopted a strain of jealous depreciation in their reviews of the Greek philosophy; and have fallen into the temptation of treating Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Seneca, as if they were rivals of Jesus Christ, or of John, or of Paul. We do not think that this is to magnify the Redeemer and his apostles, but to degrade them in fact.

The mistake is simply a misconception of the reason why Divine Providence has put the ancient classics into our hands. It is only by regarding them as revelations of moral and religious truth, that they can be made, in any sense, rivals of the Scriptures. Such a pretension is set up for the Greek classics in these days, we should imagine, by extremely few thinking minds. On that ground we should have to make battle even with grand old Plato himself, but the victory would be extremely easy. Yet the result of such battle usually is, that the Christian combatant loses sight, by means of false issues, of the real object of the divine munificence in transmitting the classic authors from age to age—that is, the culture of the human mind in the forms of natural and beautiful thought.

Let us a little further explain what we mean.

A Christian apologist, of severe metaphysical temper, meets with a cold Deist, who asserts that “the Christian Fathers received their notions of the Trinity, not from the New Testament, but from Plato. The remedy is that easy one, to prove that the doctrine of the Trinity is taught in the New Testament; in the forms of baptism and benediction, for instance, and clearly enough otherwise, also; to

say, in fact, as one of the Christian Fathers said: "*Abi, Ariane, ad Jordanum, et vide Trinitatem!*"

But such apologist sits down thoroughly to search the magic pages of the poet-philosopher, not for those beautiful conceptions of nature with which they abound, but to prove that his tenets on morals and religion are not to be compared with those of our Lord, or those of the apostles Paul, or Peter, or John. He concludes his search, like Dr. Enoch Pond, by saying: "Such is the religion, the philosophy, the morality of Plato. And now who will venture to bring a system like this, contradicted at a thousand points by the decisions of reason, conscience, and truth, into comparison with the Christian Scriptures? Could Platonism endure such a comparison for a moment? And yet Plato was a learned man; and most of the writers of our Scriptures were illiterate men. Plato was a noble Greek, trained in the very focus of ancient wisdom; while the writers of our Scriptures were poor, despised Jews. How, then, did these Jews attain to their superior incomparable light and knowledge?"

Of course, by speaking and writing as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The triumph is easy and complete. But we feel as if it was not much more complete after this depreciation of Plato than before; and we feel doubtful whether Dr. Pond has done as much good by winning over again a battle so often fought and thoroughly won before, as he has done harm by trying Plato upon an erroneous issue. Not one man in ten thousand, we should suppose, searches the Greek Philosophers now-a-days for opinions to be embraced as religious doctrines, or sets their teachings, as sources of truth, into comparison with the clear certainty, the pure sanctity, the self-evidencing majesty of the Holy Scriptures. But how needlessly unjust to the Greek this Christian apologist permits the Deist to make him? Did not the Lord Jehovah raise up Plato in this world, and send him into life, for his own wise purposes,

just as much as He raised up Pharaoh, and Cyrus, and Darius? He had a purpose in the life of these kings. So He had in the life of Plato. But it certainly was not as revealer of correct views of morals, religion, or theology. One of His purposes may have been to show that unaided human wisdom can not attain correct opinions on those subjects. But we submit that in that point of view, it is not the proper logic to decry and depreciate Plato, but to extol him as the very acme and crown of the Greek culture. But Dr. Pond has weighed him in balances which were never intended for him, or he for them, and has only therefore found him wanting. For all that he has shown, Plato was, and was splendidly and gloriously, another quite different thing; inferior, indeed, but a good thing, and a beautiful thing, which the Lord Jehovah purposed that Plato should be. Why not depreciate Bonaparte, because he could not preach like Massillon? or Washington, because he produced no philosophical works equal to the *Novum Organum*? or Chalmers, because he could not have written *Hamlet* or *Paradise Lost*? It may be said that Plato *dealt* in discussions on moral, religious, and theological subjects. True. But no one who had so little light from revelation ever sighed for such light more earnestly than did he; as may be seen in the *Second Alcibiades*, where he pines for a heaven-descended teacher to dispel his doubts and darkness, till we almost think we hear the echo of the voice of Isaiah: "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down." And, for all that we know, had he been on Areopagus when the great apostle to the Gentiles stood there to declare to Athenians the unknown God, whom they ignorantly worshipped, he might have enrolled his name with that of Dionysius the Areopagite, as a ready receiver of that heavenly revelation which he so coveted. Surely, Plato is no rival of the apostles, except in that blind and half-demented species of unbelief, which made the "Lord of Irony," Edward Gibbon, after sneering for a

life-time at the purest and most sacred truths, declare himself a Montanist! a believer in one of the most vulgar corruptions of the early centuries!

In the exordium of his sublime oration for the crown, the Athenian orator, Demosthenes, prays to all the gods and goddesses that the Athenian people may bear such good will to him in that fearful contest as he has ever borne to their city and to themselves. Plato, in his ideal republic, sets up the Fourierite doctrine, that wives shall be in common, that all children shall be the property of the State, and, of course, that no man shall know his own offspring. The Greek poems are all more or less imbued with their pagan religion. Probably one of the most consummately beautiful productions in existence is the first ode of the chorus, in the *Œdipus Tyrannus*, to the Delian Apollo. Now, when a Christian father, justly solicitous what reading falls into the hands of his gifted, imaginative, susceptible son of eighteen years of age, sees that son devote himself with almost a passion to the pages of Demosthenes, of Plato, and of Sophocles, does he fear that that son will imbibe from those pages the worship of the thirty thousand divinities of the Athenians, embraced in the appeal of Demosthenes, or the Fourierite doctrine taught by Plato, or the special adoration of the Delian Apollo, as the god of sooth-saying, so beautifully praised in Sophocles? When his son reads Homer and Virgil, does such a father fear that he will adopt the views of the unseen world given in the accounts of the descent of Ulysses and Eneas into Tartarus, and their visions of the miserable *dantes poenas* in those doleful regions? We never heard of one single instance of either description, among all the youths who have been engaged in the study of the classics among us.

What book takes a deeper hold upon a thoughtful mind advancing to manhood than Horace? How many passages of his calm, stoic philosophy we bear away from school with us! How the "Tu ne quæsieris, scire nefas, quem

mihi, quem tibi;" the "Persicos odi, puer, apparatus;" the "Equam memento rebus arduis;" the "Rectius vives, Licini, neque altum;" and the "Eheu! fugaces, Posthume, Posthume, labuntur anni," sing themselves through our minds in after years! But none of us, we venture to say, can mention a single instance among the companions of our years at school, of a youth converted to the creed of what Milton calls "the budge doctors of the stoic fur," by the perusal of the odes of Horace. And we can name many instances in which more of the life of the stoics would have brought them more within sound of the voice of the inspired apostles.

"But there is nothing of Christ in the writings of the Greeks and Romans. Augustine could not relish his before so much admired Cicero, because he could not find the name of Jesus in all his pages." Our hearts warm towards him who says this. We feel towards him like Cowper towards the man whom he saw singing a hymn very heartily in a church close by him: "Bless you for praising Him whom my soul loves." It would be an overwhelming argument, and would not leave another word to be said, if we brought forward the classics as books of doctrine, or of devotion, or of tenet of any kind, on any kindred subject which we expected or feared to imbibe. And in reference to books which the Christian fondles, and admits freely to intercourse with his inner emotions, it has a proper weight, and ought to be permitted to exert its influence.

Precisely the same objection, however, may be substantially raised against Shakspeare, Thomson, Byron, and Walter Scott. There is nothing like godliness, or true Christian spiritual life, in the works of either of them. Perhaps Thomson's Hymn to the Seasons might be uttered by a Christian heart; but one would wish to see some thing of Christ in it, before accepting it as Christianity. We verily believe that Sophocles and Euripides were every way as good men, and as near to the kingdom of heaven, as Lord

Byron and Sir Walter Scott. If Tyre and Sidon shall rise up in the judgment against the men of highly favored generations, because those heathen nations would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes, and have entered into the kingdom of heaven, if they had enjoyed such privileges, we see not why the Greek tragedians may not stand up in the judgment against the English misanthrope and scoffer, and the Scottish caricaturist of religion, and condemn them, on the same grounds of judgment. And we would a thousand times rather see a son, if gifted, imaginative, susceptible, and eighteen years old, devote himself to Sophocles and Euripides, than to Byron and Scott. And we solemnly believe that there is verily little more idolatry taught, and not half as much apt to be imbibed, from the pages of these two Greeks, as from those of these two Britons.

But the objection will lead us too far. There is nothing more of Christ in the lofty mountains, the clear lakes, the green meadows, the swift rivers, the mighty ocean, the gorgeous clouds, and the blue sky of heaven, than there is in the Greek classics; except as the eye of faith may see Him in them all, as the Author of all the works of God. We mean to say, with the author of the Epistle to the Romans, that it is only "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world" which "are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." But of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ, and of salvation through faith in His name, there is nothing revealed in the natural works of God. This life and immortality through our Saviour Jesus Christ, is that which is "brought to light in the Gospel."

The principle, therefore, which would lead us to deny our children the riches of the classic pages, would not only lead us to keep from them the writings of all unregenerate men in their own language, however splendid their genius or instructive their thoughts; but if we have fairly appre-

hended it, it would also commit Paley's Natural Theology and the Bridgewater Treatises to the Ephesian fires, as mere worthless implements of those who "use curious arts."

Nor is this all. If it is not allowable for our sons to read, in the pages of Plato and Sophocles, descriptions of Mount Hymettus, and of the plane-trees on the banks of the Ilissus, and of the twitter of the cicada, and of the calm discourse of the philosophers amid the beautiful scenery of Athenian summer, it is hard to see how it can be allowable for them to see our own mountains, to seek our own shade-trees, to listen at home to the chorus of the summer bird and bee and insect, or to live amid the beautiful air of our own summer scenery. So, then, the wonderful variety of hues and tints and shades of colors around us, in the mountains, and the fields, and the meadows, and the orchards, are made in vain. They are to be held as forbidden and ungodly luxuries. The splendid pictures which the sunbeams draw with colors of ray and shadow, and mild light, and deep shade, on the hills, in the valleys, in the morning, and in the evening; the countless different faces of the sky, in summer and in winter, in sunshine and in storm, in the fair day and in the starry night; all the sublimity of the ocean, in calm silence or amid the wild roar of the storm, are to go for nothing. We must teach our son to shut his eyes and stop his ears to these things, because they do not directly teach the story of redemption! Christianity is a more independent, a broader, a more benign, and a more fearless thing, by far, than this narrow principle would make it.

We believe we might safely venture the remark, that the religion of few generations of men any where has been injured by their excessive perusal of the Greek classics. The only probable exception remembered to this remark, is to be found at Alexandria, in Egypt, during the time of the New Academy, under Ammonias Saccas and his succes-

sors. There arose there a hybrid mixture of Christianity and the monstrous oriental cosmogonies with the philosophical opinions of the later Platonists. But it is as unfair to call Proclus, and Plotinus, and Iamblichus, followers of Plato, as to call Carlstadt, and Bœhmen, and Münzer, followers of Martin Luther, or to consider Hymeneus and Philetus followers of the apostle Paul.

There is said to have been a large and valuable collection of books, chiefly Greek and Roman writers, made by king Ptolemy Philadelphus in Egypt, which might have been of incalculable value had it been preserved. It was, however, burned. The pretext for this stupid act of vandalism is reported to have been, that if what was in those books was in the Koran, then they were useless; and if what was in them was not in the Koran, then they were false. There were, at one time, Christian men in this country who indulged, even in the pulpit, in wishes that all the books in the world, except the Bible, were burned. They indulged freely, and apparently with the full approbation of their hearers generally, in flings and sneers at the ungodly pride of those "who had rubbed their backs against college walls," in the peculiar phraseology of that day. For a while they exerted a powerful influence. There was a great show of godliness about these utterances. They actually generated a pride of ignorance, far more thick-skinned and incorrigible than the pride of learning, against which they spent their thunderbolts. "They read nothing but the word of God, not they." (Some of them that with difficulty.) "They knew nothing but the word of God. They did not want to know any thing. They did not believe in book-learning to preach from. They believed in religion in the heart as the qualification of a preacher. And for their parts, when they preached, they went into the pulpit and opened their mouths, and God filled them." (Nonsense and all!)

Who could argue against such great devotion to the word of God? Who could maintain that a preacher ought not, above all things, to be devotedly and experimentally a pious man? It was all in vain to plead for piety *with* education. That was a contradiction in terms, in their logic. There may be some of this leaven still lingering among us. Probably not a great deal, avowedly. Increasing light has made it rather an object of amusement than of serious combat. These were, in all probability, conscientious men, who may have honestly thought they were doing God service. It was an error which had to die by the logic of events. Probably a good deal of a similar feeling, not so gross, lingers, unperceived by its possessors, in many minds. With all its outward appearance of peculiar zeal for the word of God, it was a thoroughly false position. Intelligent men dropped off from church. The minds of those who did attend were sadly uninstructed in both the doctrines and duties of religion. And the very infidelity to which it intended to place itself in direct and special antagonism, grew rank and thick around its path.

“The classics are very seldom referred to by the inspired writers.” True. But the only one of them whom we know to have been acquainted with classical literature, the apostle Paul, twice quotes the Greek poets; once in his sermon at Athens, “As certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring;” and once in his Epistle to Titus, “One of themselves, even a prophet (*vates*—poet) of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.” In both cases it is for his own support, and not in condemnation of the books, that he makes the quotation.

The great revival of classical learning in Europe at the commencement of the sixteenth century, just as the Reformation was about to break forth, is an act of Providence to be deeply pondered. The name of Desiderius Erasmus cuts a very poor figure in the history of those times, if we

think of him as to the voluntary influence which he exerted on the great religious struggle of the day. He appears to be a sort of centaur, of half-human and half-bestial form. He is half reformer, and can laugh heartily at the superstitious prayers of the ship-load of papists to their saints when they are expecting shipwreck. But he still adheres to the papists, it would seem, from a mere disinclination to move. He can by no means advance with Luther to the full light of a simply scriptural religion. But considered as an involuntary instrument of Divine Providence to introduce classic learning just at that time, as a means of education, and as a preparation for the inspired word, just as a faithful company of those that publish it were about to spring up, Erasmus played a most important part. We can give him but little honor in the matter, except that he had the good taste to love and to patronize elegant letters. But he had little intention of benefiting Luther or the Reformation thereby. Never was there a figure in the drama of providence who saw less himself what he was doing, or who acted more for an end which he neither intended, desired, nor perceived.

The rise of the classic learning in Europe at that time was a most important and valuable preparation for the bursting forth of the word of God, and the outpouring of His Spirit, at the Reformation. If we have judged correctly, the classics, in the hands of Melancthon, Calvin, Lady Jane Grey, and a host of other eminent classical scholars of that day, of whom these are specimens, served exactly the part which they were designed by Providence to serve in the plan of redemption, that is, as instruments of the culture of the mind, to bring it to a higher, and clearer, and nobler ground of thought, and so nearer to the Gospel of Christ.

We should by no means shrink from a comparison of those writers who are the most classical with those who are the least so, or who are little so, as to all good influences

on the human mind from their writings respectively. In the great seventeenth century, Howe, Owen, Bates, and Baxter, were the princes of the pulpit of the one party, as men were then divided in religious opinion; South, Taylor, Barrow, and Tillotson, were the princes of the pulpit of the other party. Baxter was too deeply awed and impressed by the visions of eternity to deal much in literary charms. Tillotson was too much bent upon soothing the tempers of men, and withal too much of a politician, to be a very profound classical scholar. But the other three, on each side, are astonishingly replete with the riches of the classics. They have been found in many a library and in many a hand, in this generation, solely on that account. "South tells the truth with the tongue of a viper," as Richard Cecil says of him. Owen is devoted to the establishment of doctrinal truth by patient and persevering study, by all holy labor, and the deepest personal experience. Taking the other two, on each side, as more appropriately the writers of that day for after ages, Howe and Bates, Barrow and Taylor, what a wealth of classic learning they have embalmed by binding it about the sweetest and purest Christianity! How their lofty genius, especially that of JOHN HOWE and of JEREMY TAYLOR, revelled with the Greek philosophers and poets! How they lead the kings of the west, as the star led those of the east, to lay the richest of their gifts at the feet of Jesus Christ! Their pure religion is no doubt the highest element of the life of their writings. But their classic wealth lends no unimportant aid to their immortality.

As to the poets of our language, it may be questioned whether, in general, those who are most purely religious are not, also, those who are most thoroughly classical—Spencer, Milton, Cowper. Some one has said that Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is a bridge over the gulf which divides the ancient history from the modern. So Spencer's *Fairy Queen* is a bridge,

with festoons of the most beautiful and fragrant flowers hanging over the parapet all the way, between the ancient poetry and the modern, leaving no one long to doubt that the poet is a Christian, even when he most luxuriates in the antique and the mediæval romance.

The exhaustless classic wealth of Milton in the productions of his youth, *Comus*, *Lycidas*, *Arcades*, *L'Allegro*, and *Il Penseroso*, can have escaped no attentive reader. To do the proof justice by quotations, would be to cite nearly the whole of these poems. There is, however, a passage in the *Arcades*, probably not so hackneyed to the common eye, which may be cited for its peculiarly Platonic spirit. It is in the speech of the Genius of the Woods, where he is telling what his business is in this world :

“ But else, in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath locked up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial sirens' harmony,
That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
And turn the adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of gods and men is wound ;
Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie
To lull the daughters of necessity,
And keep unsteady nature to her law,
And the low world in measured motion draw
After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
Of human mould, with gross unpurgèd ear.”

If it be thought that he does not carry his classic spirit with him into the productions of his riper age, and into those places where he speaks more distinctly of the things of revealed religion, we shall give two proofs to the contrary, taken almost *ad aperturam libri*; and which might be indefinitely multiplied. The one is from the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*, where he is describing the Garden of Eden. He says :

“ Not that fair field
 Of Enna, where Proserpine, gathering flowers,
 Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
 Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
 Castalian Spring, might with this Paradise
 Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle,
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Lybian Jove,
 Hid Amalthea and her florid son,
 Young Bacchus, from his step-dame Rhea's eye.”

The other is from the *Paradise Regained*, when he is relating the setting of the Saviour on the pinnacle of the temple at Jerusalem by Satan, and the failure of that temptation :

“ But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.
 As when Earth's son, Antæus, (to compare
 Small things with greatest) in Irassa strove
 With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foiled, still rose,
 Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,
 Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joined;
 Throttled at length in air, expired and fell:
 So, after many a foil, the Tempter proud,
 Renewing fresh assaults amidst his pride,
 Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall:
 And as that Theban monster that proposed
 Her riddle, and him who solved it not, devoured;
 That once found out and solved, for grief and spite
 Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian steep:
 So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the fiend.”

Indeed, a pretty thorough classical reading is requisite to understand Milton's poetry. Admit that he says that

“ The Ionian Gods, of Javan's issue, held
 Gods, yet confessed later than heaven and earth,
 Their boasted parents,”

were the fallen angels, come up to this world to escape their prison-house, and to obtain, after a sort, that worship as gods to which their wicked ambition led them to aspire

in heaven ; admit that he puts into the mouth of Satan that splendid eulogy on the city of Athens, in the *Paradise Regained* :

“ Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
Westward, much nearer by south-west ; behold
Where on the Ægean shore a city stands,
Built nobly ; pure the air, and light the soil :
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts ; ”

though the poet saw and admitted “ the trail of the serpent ” over all classic letters, as over every thing else here below, he put them to their proper and beautiful uses, to praise and to adore the higher truths of God. The classics are no doubt the productions of fallen human nature. Shall we reject them for that ? We might as well refuse to admire the spring bloom of the orchards, because there is a worm at the root of many a tree ; or the green forests in their thick robes of leaves, because in some rocky cliff beneath their shade a rattlesnake may lurk ; or the smooth enamel of the meadow, because in some spot the grass may cover a viper ; or the endless gorgeous glory of atmosphere and cloud, because there the quick cross-lightning is bred ; or the ocean in its solemn roar, because sometimes its shores are lined with shipwrecks.

For the bard of Olney, all his readers know how he refreshed his tried and holy soul by a translation of Homer, and of pieces from Horace, and even by renderings of the cricket-chirpings of Vincent Bourne.

The opposition of good men to the classics, has probably sprung from confounding two different species of education—the natural, or secular, and the religious education. These two species of education flow side by side, while they are both located in the family. It is necessary to teach a child to spell and read, in order to teach him properly “ the principles of our holy religion, as contained in the Scriptures and in the Catechisms.” But when they leave this first divinely constituted seat of education, the Chris-

tian household, then they part, and go to two other divinely constituted seats of education, but very different ones. The natural education goes into the hands of the State, or the civil authorities; or, which is about the same thing, into the hands of voluntary neighborhood associations of parents, united to sustain particular schools. The religious education of the child, when he ceases to be under family training, goes to the Church, with its Bible class and its pulpit.

It is the duty of natural education to teach our children all wholesome knowledge, such as will both discipline and inform their minds—the civil authorities being ever conceded to have their eye on those things chiefly which will train up good and enlightened citizens—the mathematics, the classics, the practical sciences, all arts of reasoning, and all philosophies of life, or of truth. It is the duty of religious education to teach our children whatsoever God, in His revealed word, has commanded us—no more, no less; or, to express it otherwise, she must teach the “principles of our holy religion, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, of which the Catechisms are recommended as summaries.” The Church has no right to control natural education; or, if she has a right at all, it is just such a right as she would have to control the food which a man might give his children. She might arraign him for inhumanity and barbarity, if it could be proved that a parent under her authority gave his child a stone for bread, a serpent for a fish, or a scorpion for an egg. But it would be a gross act of immorality, such a one as she ought to punish in connexion with any other duty, which the Church would judge of in this case. It would not be a particular scheme of education, of which she assumed to judge. It was the obvious and radical mistake of the parochial school movement, to assume for the Church a control over natural education, except as she always has controlled it, by breathing a healing breath, and diffusing an enlightened atmosphere

around it. She has as much right to err by defect, and refuse to teach the Epistle to the Romans, as she has to err by excess, and teach mathematics, or sciences, or classics. The Church, it is believed, actually suffered by the parochial movement. She has ever had an indirect, and just, proper influence on natural education, as she has a deep interest in it. Much of this she lost by the appearance of a spirit of open sectarian defiance in that movement. She can never be indifferent to the cause itself. The more education, other things being equal, the more peerlessly comes the word of God before the minds of men. The wider the circle of motive, the greater the power of truth.

Christianity, as it seems to us, abstains, every where in her revealed oracles, from meddling with the sphere of natural education. She does not teach the sciences. She gives no system of rules for the secular training of children; she commands them to no special trades or avocations. The truth is, that she takes the whole thing for granted, as the business and the duty of men acting in secular relations. She takes it for granted that every Christian parent will give his child the very best natural education which his means will command, just as she takes it for granted that every good and wise parent will guard the pecuniary interests, or the sight and hearing, or the general bodily health of his child. She leaves the parent himself to be judge of the best means of each.

The providence of God was preparing a wondrous and precious gift for man during the four hundred voiceless years between the cessation of the voice of the prophet Malachi and the awaking of that of the Baptist in the wilderness. It was, in another sense, preparing the way of the Lord. It was producing the best means of natural education; the most valuable ally of the sciences which were to rise after many centuries. It was giving birth to Euclid of Megara and the mathematics. It was rearing the gorgeous edifice of the Greek Tragedy, in which that great

cross to the proud mind, the coexistence of divine predestination and human freedom, receives a stronger corroboration than almost any where else in the grand and stately march of events on their predestined way, upon the wheels of the freest human choice, the merest human contingencies, the most unconstrained of human actions. The beautiful mythology was forming in that four hundred years. The philosophers were dreaming dreams which, though they contained very little objective truth, would yet enrich the imaginations of men for ever. Statues and pictures came into existence, which elevated the spirit of man, and have given it ideas of perfect beauty of form in all subsequent ages.

We deny the Church the right to legislate directly on the subject of secular education. But, so far as she can speak to her people as citizens, she ought to let her voice be heard at this time, (or as soon as the dark war cloud may, in the good providence of God, roll away from us,) calling aloud for a deeper infusion of classical learning into the mind of the coming generations.

There was an education meeting held at Augusta, Georgia, one evening during the sessions of our General Assembly in that city last December, to discuss the subject of a higher education among our people. It was not a meeting of the Assembly at all, but of such friends of education as might and did willingly come together, chiefly composed of persons brought there by the sessions of that body. Nor was it a meeting held on the subject of the education of indigent students for the ministry. The plans of the meeting seemed to crystallize in the form of a University for the South, of a non-Episcopalian type, and to give a more thorough education than those now in existence. The adjourned meeting was not held, as appointed, at our General Assembly in May last past, for obvious reasons. We hope it will not be forgotten, when future opportunity shall offer.

The Presbyterian church can say, with far more truth, and with a far deeper meaning than the ambitious poet :

“I must run glittering in the sunshine or I am unblest.”

Learning must ever be her indispensable ally. She has never undervalued piety in the ministry. “The Bible, the Bible alone, the religion of Christians,” has ever been her maxim. She has maintained the importance of sound doctrine to a holy life, with a faithfulness quite as strenuous as has been shown by any of her loved and respected sister churches. But she has never slighted the classics. She never dreaded that her children would be wiled away from the great and dread Jehovah, and His loving, and dying, and glorified Son, and all the holy grandeurs of revealed truth, by the beautiful toy Jupiters, and Apollos, and Minervas, of the classic mythology. She has ever nurtured herself deeply and richly with the Grecian letters. We trust that she will continue to do so; that she will make her escape from all fanatical ideas on the subject of education. We trust she may revise several of her plans in this general connexion; so that when she presents herself to God for a renewed and richer baptism of the Holy Ghost, it may be that both then and thereafter she shall purpose and resolve a deeper possession of all valuable and all elegant human learning, with which to serve Him and to adorn His doctrine.