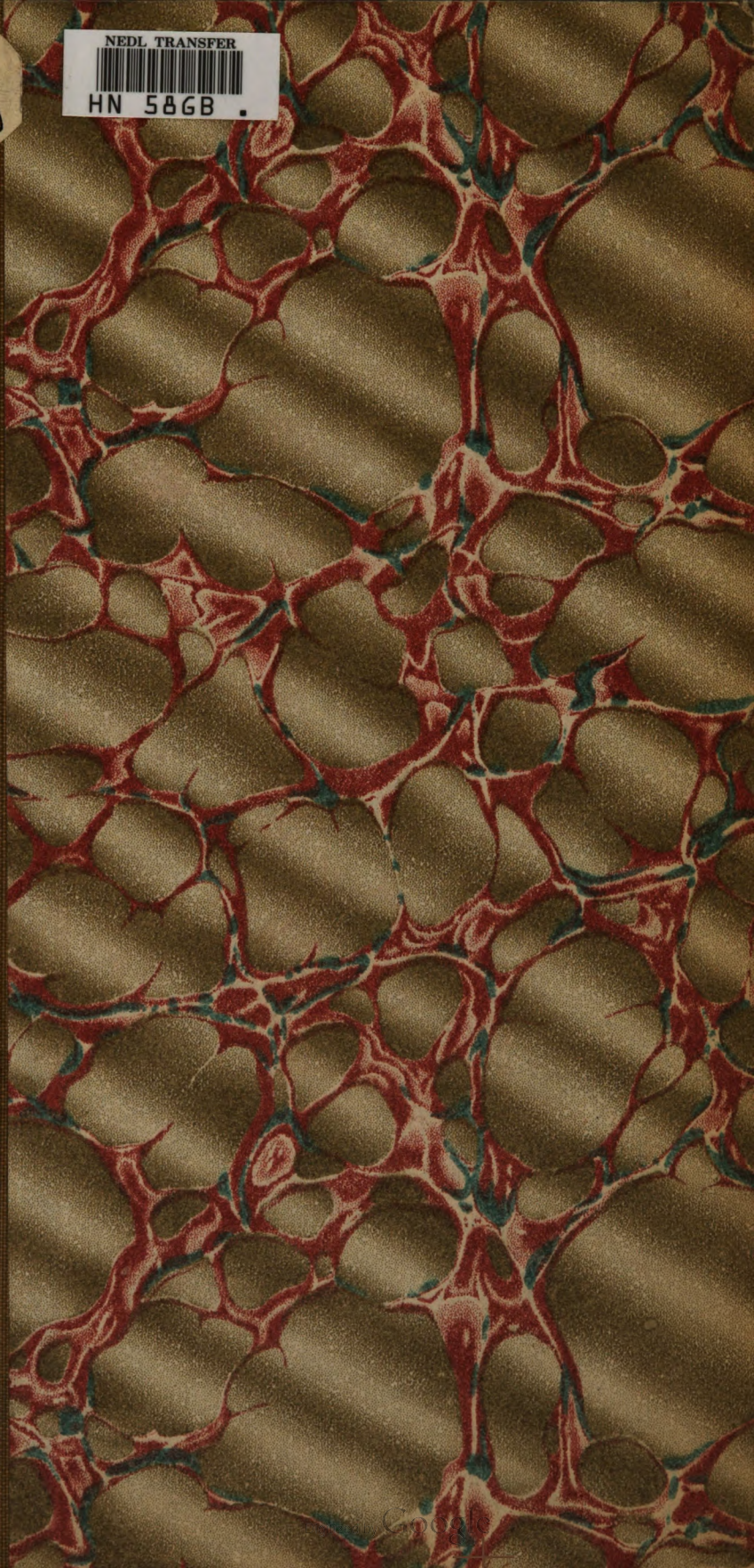


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FROM

Hon. John Gorham Palfrey
Class of 1815

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Sparrow, P. J.

Educ U 4150.390.10

THE DUTY OF THE EDUCATED YOUNG MEN OF THIS COUNTRY.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

EUMENEAN AND PHILANTHROPICK SOCIETIES

OF

DAVIDSON COLLEGE, N. C.

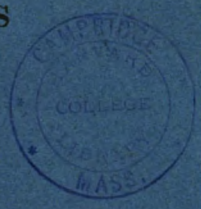
JULY 31st, 1839.

By REV. P. J. SPARROW, A. M.
Professor of Languages in Davidson College.

RALEIGH:

PUBLISHED BY TURNER & HUGHES.

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Educ U 4150.390.10
1863. April 30.

Bill of
Hon. John Gorham Palfrey,
Cambridge.
(class of '55.)

DAVIDSON COLLEGE, July 31, 1839.

REV. and DEAR SIR:—We are authorised by the Eumenean and Philanthropic Societies, to tender to you their sincere thanks for the excellent Address delivered by you on the 31st inst. and respectfully request of you a copy for publication.

Yours with the highest respect,

L. Q. SHARPE,
R. N. DAVIS,
W. H. MOORE,
H. H. KIMMONS.

Rev. P. J. SPARROW, A. M.

DAVIDSON COLLEGE, August 1st, 1839.

GENTLEMEN,—The Address, a copy of which you request for publication, was written under great disadvantages. None, so well as yourselves, know the short time allowed for its preparation, and the press of other indispensable duties in the mean while demanding attention. With the hope, however, that it may, in any degree, contribute to the advantage of the interesting class of young men to whom it is addressed, it is at your service.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, with the highest esteem,

P. J. SPARROW.

Messrs.

L. Q. Sharpe, R. N. Davis, W. H. Moore, H. H. Kimmons.

DUTY OF EDUCATED YOUNG MEN.

AN ADDRESS.

YOUNG Gentlemen of the Eumenean and Philanthropic Societies, and my respected auditors :

There is something interesting in the very words "Young man." In the minds of those whose claim to the appellation has ceased, and across whose path of life the lengthening shadows of evening begin to thicken, they excite sensations mournfully pleasant. The hopes and fears, the plans, and prospects, which we then entertained, for a moment rise to view. For a while we almost fancy ourselves surrounded with the merry companions of our youth. Former scenes, and former amusements crowd around us, and the recollections of the past, like the songs of other times, steal upon us with a harmony rich though pensive. It is not, however, to such romantick illusions as these that the terms "young man" owe their principal interest. They excite interesting anticipations in regard to those to whom they are applied. We experience sublime sensations when standing at the head waters of a mighty stream, which we know measures the length of a continent. We speculate on the fertility which it diffuses along its course—the commerce which rides upon its bosom—the towns which deck its shores and

glitter on its surface—its ebbs and flows, and inundations. Youth is the commencement of a stream destined to measure the length of eternity, and, as it rolls along, to influence others, and be influenced by others—to diffuse happiness, or woe—to pour a flood of life, or a flood of death. Viewed thus, how solemn a thing it is to be a man! how pre-eminently solemn to be a young man!

The interest is still increased, if to the words “young man” we add the epithet educated. An educated young man! We have, then, an immortal mind fitted to operate most effectually on others, and thus prepared most effectually to do good or harm. An educated mind! Who shall write its history? What pen may record its achievements? What a dread interest invests such a mind as that of Byron, rich in original genius, and improved to some considerable extent, at least, and all-perverted—standing, like Mount *Ætna*, in lonely grandeur, and, like Mount *Ætna*, pouring forth streams of lava withering, and desolating every thing fair and lovely with which they meet! A sensation equally powerful, and much more interesting is excited by contemplating the brief career of Pollok. With talents little, if any, inferior to those of Byron, and learning vastly superior, he spends the few years of his sojourn on earth, not in poisoning the streams of truth—not in fanning the fires of lust, but in weaving an immortal poem, richly imbued with the spirit of the Gospel, dedicated to the cause of truth and righteousness, and destined to stand by the side of “the *Paradise Lost*,” when the impure strains of

Byron shall have been "cast to the moles and the bats," or shall have "utterly perished in their own corruption." With all the loveliness of the morning star, the youthful bard rises on our view, and, like that star, he sets not in the shades of evening, but is lost amid a flood of light.

Again: if it be interesting to be an educated young man, the interest, as we think, is greatly increased, if the educated young man be a son, a citizen of this country. The country itself is in the very prime of its youth, and justifies the brightest anticipations, similar to those which we are fond to indulge in regard to a talented young man. Comparatively but a few years ago, it was one vast wilderness, known only to the wild savage, and to the beasts of the forests. It then, indeed, possessed the same grand and lovely scenery, and the same vast natural resources which it does now; but there were none to admire and appreciate its scenery—none to call forth its resources. It has been visited by civilization—by science—by taste—by religion, and the change has, well nigh, realized the gorgeous fables of the East. Splendid cities, and beautiful villages, and schools, and academies, and colleges, are scattered over the length and breadth of the land. Embracing a territory of two millions of square miles, containing a population not much short of fifteen millions of souls, affording almost every variety of climate, soil, and productions, intersected by innumerable canals, railroads, and navigable streams, possessing a form of government superior to those of Greece and Rome, in their best days, and illuminated by the holy

and benign religion of the Prince of Peace, our country affords the finest field for the exercise of intellect which the world has ever seen. The educated young man may here find ample scope and ample inducements for the display of his talents and acquirements. Here the field of laudable exertion is open before him, and if he has merit, it will, eventually be acknowledged, and rewarded.

Once more : the interest thrown around the educated young men of our country is increased by the character of the age in which we live. A certain class of writers and speakers have said so much about "the glory of the nineteenth century," and "the march of mind," as to excite prejudice against the very terms. And yet, in all soberness, it must be allowed that the present enjoys advantages superior to those of any preceding age. We have the intellectual treasures which have been accumulating in all past time. The perfection of science is greater than it has ever been before. At no former period have civil liberty and the rights of conscience been so well understood, and so generally acknowledged. No previous age has afforded such opportunities for the exercise of individual influence. A spirit of enterprize is abroad well calculated to quicken intellect, and call forth its mightiest exertions. Improvements are rapidly going forward. Intellectual and moral light are banishing the savage barbarities of war, and thus calling away the energies of man from that subject on which they have been so long, and to so great an extent wasted, to be employed on others more worthy of them.

It is obvious that the educated young men of our country, and our day, enjoy great privileges, and that these privileges involve high responsibilities. In view of these facts, I have selected as the subject to which your attentions will now for a short time be invited—*the duty of the educated young men of this country*. As addresses of this kind are generally understood to be chiefly intended to amuse the imagination, perhaps, to some the word duty may sound harshly. Such I would remind, that by a sense of moral obligation beyond every thing else man is distinguished from the other animals, and that therefore we are worthy of the name of men only whilst we keep in view our accountability to God and our fellow men. An important part of an education is to teach men their duties, and how to perform them. To this part we profess here to pay primary regard. Let it be recollected, that in this Institution it is our aim to fit men, not for the *palaestra* of amusement, but for the actual service of life, and let that be our apology for the use of the old fashioned word duty.

In the prosecution of this discourse it will sometimes best suit my purpose to adopt the form of direct address, and speak as if all the young men in our country aspiring to the character of men of education were within the reach of my voice.

1. The first duty resting upon you which I shall mention, is to be educated. It is much to be regretted, that very many who pass through the forms of education, and who have the name of being educated, are far from deserving the appellation. This beyond every thing else is calculated to bring the cause of education

into disrepute. All men of sense can feel nothing but contempt for graduated ignorance. Those who are of this character deserve contempt. They are trying to pass off a deception, and, like all other deceivers, should be exposed without mercy.

It must be confessed that the grade of scholarship in this country, generally is still far below what it is in Europe. The reasons are obvious to all who will make the matter the subject of reflection. They are to be found not in any incapacity for literary and scientific acquisitions, but in the circumstances of our country. We have, as yet, been doing the work of settlement, and like the man who settles an estate, we have had but little time for improvement in those things which are not absolutely necessary for subsistence. The country was in the first place to be reclaimed from a savage state. When that was, to some extent, effected, and matters were becoming sufficiently settled to attend, with a good degree of advantage, to literary improvement, it became necessary to throw off the yoke of tyranny. That led to a long and difficult struggle, and the breaking up of most of the established forms of society. The agitation produced by, and consequent upon that dread concussion has scarcely more than subsided. In the rapid growth of our country, the demand for professional men has been so great, and so many inviting fields of enterprise have been opened as to cause the adoption of abridged courses of preparatory study, highly unfavorable to sound and thorough education. These are some of the causes which have heretofore rendered the scholarship of our country su-

perficial, and under their operation a different state of things could not have been expected. During the times to which we have just referred finished scholarship was not so indispensably necessary as at present. Excitement in some degree supplied its place. The trying scenes through which men had to pass, not only called forth the powers of the mind, but gave to it much of that training and discipline, in calmer times to be obvious only by a course of thorough education. But the time has now come when a change is imperiously demanded. Our National character requires it. We believe the day is not far distant when intellectual and moral superiority alone will give ascendancy both to nations and individuals. Be that as it may, our country under its present form of government must look to the intelligence of its citizens for a title to a high place on the scale of national grandeur. Many of the distinctions which other nations possess we cannot have; nor do we covet them. The field of literary and scientific competition is fairly open before us, and if we do not successfully enter it, the fault will be our own. Again; it is frequently said that a republican form of government is unfavorable to scholarship of a high order. We are bound to show that this allegation is not founded in truth,—which certainly we can do. We have, at present, a few individuals in our country, who have acquired an acknowledged title to rank with the finest European scholars; thereby proving that there is nothing in our form of government incompatible with acquirements, both literary, and scientific, of the highest order. But we may find a reason for advancement in the character of our scholarship nearer home than the

one to which we have referred. Without it, those who claim to be educated men can no longer retain their respectability and influence. A smattering of knowledge will not now suffice for this purpose. In the general diffusion of intelligence, the people at large are pressing hard upon those who claim to be the literati; and will outstrip them too, unless they hasten to occupy higher ground. Educated men can expect to retain their pre-eminence only by skill in the more severe departments of literature and science. That is right. We rejoice to see it. We hope that all classes of citizens will continue rapidly to advance in knowledge, but that there will ever be found a class who shall stand high above others, and who shall deserve to be called *the scholars*.

If the young men in our country now pursuing a course of education, would become ripe scholars, they must have more patience than has characterized most of those who have preceded them. It is absolutely preposterous to suppose that men can become scholars in six or eight years, however judiciously and diligently those years may be employed. One principal reason, as we think, why education is so superficial amongst us, is a mistake in relation to the object of an education. By many it is regarded chiefly as a kind of passport into a profession. When that object is attained, if we may judge from the conduct, it is supposed to have accomplished its purpose, and the aspirant for professional honors and emoluments bids it a long farewell. His classicks and books of science are cast off, like shabby friends in whose company it would be ungentle to be found. You would make him blush should you inquire

for Homer, or Virgil,—Cicero, or Euclid. All such certainly forget, or rather never knew, that education is the business of a life-time, and, that the eight or ten years spent in the Primary School, the Academy, and College are only intended to remove elementary difficulties, impart elementary principles, and train and discipline the mind, and thus prepare it to prosecute the work through subsequent life, with pleasure and success. That there should continue to be much superficial scholarship must be expected whilst so many finish their educations before the razor passes over their chins. I may be told that men engaged in the duties of professional life cannot find time to continue their literary and scientific studies. My reply is, that if they would rise above the dead level of vulgar mediocrity, they must find time; and, that all may find time, if they will thus employ that which is frequently spent in frivolous amusements or in absolute idleness. Few, if any professional men in our land, have such a multiplicity of professional duties as Cicero had. And yet, Cicero found time every day to prosecute his literary studies. It was these studies that made Cicero what he was—the first man of his age. This he acknowledges himself. He assures us that these studies constituted, not only his amusement, but also his resources.

2. Another important duty to which the educated young men of our country are called is to elevate professional character. That the standard of professional character should be high is, for several reasons, a matter of primary importance. The duties growing out of these professions are difficult and highly responsible,

and if a man assumes them without the qualifications fitting him to perform them, he will not only certainly fail to do what he attempts, but, in all probability, will do great and irreparable harm. Another reason making it important that the standard of professional character should be high is the influence for good, or evil, which professional men exert in society. Society has been frequently and aptly compared to a machine consisting of various wheels and springs. If one wheel fails to perform its office, the entire machine experiences derangement. This is preeminently true of professional men, as they are in the social machine wheels occupying peculiarly important and influential positions. We venture to say, that, in all ordinary cases, the moral and intellectual character of any community may, with a good degree of certainty, be graduated by the standard of professional character amongst them.

It must be conceded that in all the professions there is a great deal of quackery, and that too not simply among those who have not entered by the regularly constituted way. There is many a quack with a diploma in his pocket. Every man is a quack who enters a profession the principles of which he does not understand, and the duties of which he is unable to perform. That there should be quackery in the professions arises as a necessary consequence from the course of preparatory training to which I have referred. "From nothing nothing can come," is a philosophical axiom which applies in this case, as well as in others. The professional studies of such men will, of course, resemble their preparatory studies. They will be superficial, and prosecuted only so far as will be necessary to ena-

ble them to pass at all. In fact the meagre and inadequate preparation which they have made excludes them entirely from many important and interesting fields of professional investigation. Men of this character must necessarily fail to succeed ; or, if they do not entirely fail, whatever success they may have will be accidental, and unmerited, and, therefore, but temporary. Every observing man must be convinced that the learned professions are not accomplishing any thing like the amount of good in the world which they might accomplish ; and all young men who enter them are bound to inquire for the cause of this state of things, and so far as in their power, remove them. One great cause we have seen to be inadequate preparation. Another is found in the fact, that so few devote themselves to the professions which they have selected. The preacher, the physician, the lawyer, is often found merged in the farmer, the merchant, the politician. Now any one of the professions is of sufficient magnitude and difficulty to demand the entire and constant energies of the mind. No law of nature is more certain than, that if we attempt to do several things wholly different in their character, we shall fail to do any one to much advantage. The importance which I attach to this point must be my apology for dwelling on it a moment longer. Professional men would certainly regard farmers, merchants, mechanics, as intruders, should they assume the performance of the duties of the learned professions. Have not, I ask, these classes of men just as good right to regard as an intruder the divine, the lawyer, the physician, who, in addition to his profession, becomes a farmer, a merchant, a mechanic ? In consequence of the evil of

which we are speaking, the learned professions, to a great extent, fail to be profited by the principle of a division of labor. To that principle is owing the rapid advancement which the various arts are making at the present day. By division of labor each man is required to devote himself to the doing of one specifick thing. Of course he will acquire greater perfection in it than he would, if he had to expend his time and his skill in attempting to do a number of things. If this principle was brought to bear in the learned professions it could not fail to be attended with most beneficial consequences. Professional men are, in moral honesty, bound to devote themselves to their professions. They assume the professional name, and expect us to employ them. We, in our turn, have a right to expect of them that they be qualified to be employed. That they cannot be unless they devote themselves to their professions. The time which they take from their professions and give to other business is, in fact, time which belongs to the community, and for which the community has paid them. It may be said, they cannot be supported by their professions. If that be true, it is pretty good evidence that they have mistaken their calling, and they had better give it up, and try something else. The few who devote themselves to their professions are not the men who complain of want of support. I believe it will hold good sufficiently often to deserve to be called a general rule, that those who are worthy of support receive it. In common with all the friends of general improvement, I wish to see the professions occupying high and commanding ground. That cannot be whilst the state of

things on which I have now been remarking exists. Should all who enter these professions conscientiously aim at the most complete success of which they are capable, we should find them occupying a grade, and wielding an influence, such as has never been witnessed in this country. Most certainly all are morally bound thus to aim. Duty to themselves, their profession, their country, their fellow-men, and their God requires it.

3. To the educated young men the Literature of this country looks up for patronage. The English tell us that we have no literature; or, if we have, it is to be found in such works as the life of Davy Crocket, and Jack Downing's Letters. The arrogance of our mother country on this subject deserves to be rebuked. To much of the best English Literature we can put in a claim equally as good as the English themselves. Shakspeare, Milton, Addison and Johnson no more belong to the English on the other side of the Atlantic than they do to those on this side, who speak the same language, and are descended from the same stock. Since we have become a separate nation it must be conceded that we have produced no great literary work, the immortality of which we can certainly predict. There is nothing, however, in our country to preclude the production of such a work. We have as grand and impressive scenery, and as thrilling themes as any nation under heaven. Nor do we believe that there is any deficiency of native talent. Shall we suppose, that here where every other work is on nature's grandest scale, the human mind is a dwarf? All analogy and all history forbid us to entertain the

thought. The mind, unless chained down by despotism, or superstition has ever risen and expanded to the size of the objects with which it has been surrounded. In fact, we might suppose that our country would be the very place where the highest literary efforts would be called forth. In the natural and moral worlds we have abundance of objects well suited to produce the noblest conceptions. Our institutions are eminently favorable to the cultivation of Literature. Here the heavy hand of despotism is lifted entirely from off the mind. Here no effort is made to restrain the freedom of thought. Under institutions similar, in some respects, to ours, the amaranthine flowers of Grecian and Roman Literature sprang up, and expanded in all their beauty and loveliness. May we not anticipate that Genius, the twin-sister of Liberty, who has, for so many ages, been wandering over the earth, in loneliness, without being able to find a resting place, will here fix her final abode, and here, under the combined influence of Freedom and Christianity, breathe such inspirations as the most gifted sons of the ancient republics never enjoyed? If we inquire for the reasons why no great Literary work has been produced in our country, we shall find them to be the same which have hindered us from occupying a stand of advanced scholarship—the unsettled state of our country—the spirit of restless enterprize consequent upon our settling in this boundless and luxuriant wilderness—and, we are bound to add, the love of gain leading men to devote all their time and talents to the acquisition of wealth. Perhaps in no country under the sun has Mammon so many, and such faithful devotees as in this young republic.

Whilst it is probable that the enterprize which this disposition fosters is friendly to general intelligence, it certainly is not friendly to the more matured fruits of Literature. We cannot be said to have a Literary order of men—an order who make the cultivation of Polite Literature a profession. In all probability it will be years before such an order exists. In the mean while, every educated young man may do something for the advancement of general Literature, and every one is bound to prepare himself to accomplish the most in this way. Much may be done indirectly by fostering and calling forth Literary talent in those who possess it. And, although few can hope to acquire great eminence as writers, all should cultivate the use of the pen. The man, who, at this day holds the pen of a ready writer possesses the means of wielding an extensive influence.

Our Periodical Literature looks for patronage to our educated young men. The present age is much distinguished, and more influenced by the Periodical press than by the application of steam-power to purposes of locomotion. By means of the two combined the address that is delivered, or the essay that is written to-day, to-morrow is sent over the length and breadth of the land on its ten thousand wings. The Athenian orators addressed their ten, their twenty, and their thirty thousands. In our day, he that is qualified, and is disposed to do so, may address his millions. From these considerations it is evidently a matter of great importance, what language the Periodical Press speaks. This is felt to be the

case in Politicks and Religion. Evidently literary taste is greatly influenced by Periodical Literature. Those intellectual caterers—the editors of Literary Journals, have it in their power, not only to say what kind of food shall be set before us, but also, for what kind the rising generation shall have a relish. Young men of education and taste may do much to elevate and improve our Periodical Literature, whilst at the same time they are cultivating their own minds, and fitting themselves for more important services. It is worthy of remark that two of the most gifted men that this age has produced—Canning and Brougham—first exercised their talents in contributions to Literary Periodicals. The career of the former was alas! brief as it was brilliant. The latter still survives, and often recurs with fondness, and with gigantic powers to his original occupation. Great as Brougham evidently is, as an orator, as a statesman, and as a philosopher, he is in nothing more great, than as a contributor to the Edinburgh Review.

4. To the young men whose duties constitute the theme of our Address the cause of general education looks for important aid. One of the most interesting characteristics of the present age is the general effort that is made to elevate the entire mass of mind. No preceding age has witnessed any thing like it. The ancient philosophers looked down upon the degradation of the mass of their species, as utterly beyond the reach of any means which they possessed. And indeed, the effort would be hopeless, were it not for the lever which Christianity puts into our hands. Possessing

that, we may not only hope for success, but regard it as certain as the sure word of prophecy guaranteed by Divine power can make it. This effort at the general diffusion of knowledge is in accordance with the genius of intelligence. Intelligence, next to religion, breathes a diffusive benevolence. Those who are themselves rich in knowledge have no disposition, like the miser with his gold, to lock up their treasure from others. With a liberal hand, they would scatter abroad the blessings which they themselves so highly prize. Hence, we may expect to find all the truly educated in the front ranks of that army which is warring it against the ancient empire of ignorance. I feel that I may with confidence address all the educated young men of our land as friendly to the cause of general intelligence. The positions which you will shortly occupy as professional men will give you, if you deserve it, great influence, and enable you to do much in this cause. You will be expected especially to bear an important part in rearing the many institutions of learning which the exigencies of our country are calling into existence. From you their teachers and professors will be selected. Thus you will have the moulding of them in your own hands, and may determine what shall be their pervading tone of morals and literature. Here permit me to present one thought, which to my own mind is exceedingly interesting. In all probability, during the present age, are to be founded those institutions which shall pour forth moral and intellectual light through this great empire for ages. The tide of population is rolling back to the West. Soon will it from the tops of the

Rocky mountains pour in torrents down to the Pacific Ocean. Provision must be made for the moral and intellectual wants of these teeming millions, and the long lines of their descendants. And there too is our youngest sister Texas, stretching forth her hands to the educated young men of our country, and uttering the Macedonian cry—"Come over and help us." These facts impose immense obligations on the men of education, who are just coming into public life, as they will certainly be called to act an important part in rearing all these institutions, and fixing their characters. From this responsibility you will not shrink, but rather feel yourselves greatly honored in being called to sustain it. You will bless God that it is your privilege to live in an age when so much is to be done, and so much may be done.

The influence of our educated young men in diffusing intelligence will not be confined to their country. God, I doubt not, will honor many of them in giving them the commission to bear spiritual and intellectual light to those "dark places of the earth that are full of the habitations of cruelty." "From the rivers to the ends of the earth," and "the multitude of the isles" belong to the Saviour. The day has come when they are to be rescued from the dominion of ignorance and superstition—when civilization, and science, and social refinement, and holy faith are to be given to them. On this enterprize of love a number of the best sons of America have already gone forth; and their success has been such as greatly to cheer the hearts of all who desire to see the Gospel with its rich blessings for

time, and richer blessings for eternity, known and prized by the whole family of man. It is a fact of which Americans may well be proud, that an American Missionary is now at Athens founding schools, diffusing intelligence, and, in the estimation of the resident British Minister, doing more for the respectability and influence of his country, than any Minister Plenipotentiary at that court. How enviable the distinction of that self-denying servant of the Lord in thus being permitted to bear intelligence back to Athens! Athens once the eye of Greece, and the city to which the world is indebted for so many, and such rich intellectual treasures. Who that has ever drunk of her classic streams does not deplore the night of barbarism by which she has so long been shrouded? and what American's heart does not throb with delight, when he recollects that his fellow-countrymen has been first to attempt to pay that immense debt of gratitude which the world owes her?

5. You are under obligation as patriots to perform for your country high and important services. The love of country is a passion seated deeply in the human bosom. It is found under every latitude, and every form of government. The Arab in the scorched and barren desert possesses it, and it burns with undying flame in the bosom of the Greenlander shivering amid eternal snows. With us the love of country is not simply an instinct—it is a principle founded in reason. We have a country which deserves to be loved—a country surpassing in loveliness the brightest visions of the poet—a country fraught with blessings, and rich

in prospect—a country, the institutions of which have been purchased by deeds of bold emprise, and costly sacrifice. The man who would not love it deserves to wander an exile from his species. This country looks to all her sons for protection—but especially to those on whom she has lavished her richest gifts—those who have intelligence to understand her interests, and pens and tongues to advocate her cause. When she makes her appeal to her educated sons, she addresses those who, we fondly believe, will not be slow in responding, whether she call them to wield the pen, or grasp the sword. Educated young men as a class have ever been the friends of liberty. The students of the German Universities continued to oppose Napoleon, and to evade the ubiquity of his vigilance, after all others had been chained in silence to the car of his despotism. You, young gentlemen, will be expected on all occasions to be the intelligent and firm friends of your country—to be ready not only to bask in the sunshine of her prosperity, but to foresee the gathering storm, and breast it when it comes. To fit you for this work, it becomes your duty well to inform yourselves in regard to your country—to make yourselves familiar with her history—especially with the history of that noble struggle, by which she won her present high rank among the nations of the earth—with her political institutions—resources, and true interests. This will be necessary to prepare you to act your own parts correctly. It will also enable you to give information to others, and warn them of approaching dangers. It has often been said, that the people of this country are dis-

posed to take the right course in public matters, if they knew it. I believe the position is correct. We certainly cannot think that the great body of the people wish to ruin their country. The misfortune is,—they are constantly in danger of being misled, and often the most honest and virtuous are most exposed. They are ever at the mercy of that class of beings called demagogues whose interest and whose purpose it is to deceive them.—Demagogues as numerous, as noisy, and as pestiferous as the locusts of Egypt, all over the land their croak is to be heard, and wherever it is heard, there you may be sure mischief is to be done. By solemn protestations, by loud professions of integrity, by base slander and misrepresentation by fawning sycophancy, and glozing lies they wind themselves into the affections of the people, and make them subservient to their base purposes. The love of country is a principle too pure and holy to find a place in their bosoms. The general good is an idea too sublime to be grasped by their dwarfish minds. Their highest ambition is to elevate to power some lion of their tribe, that they may fatten on the offals of his prey. If our country must go to destruction, and all the bright hopes which are entertained of it be disappointed, these are the creatures which shall achieve its ruin. They are fit instruments for such a work. They have just “head enough to conceive crime,” a sympathy for corruption, and no conscience to restrain them from the perpetration of any scheme of wide-spreading devastation which may originate in their darkened souls. It is the duty of every friend of his country to use all the influ-

ence which God may give him to counteract the schemes of these men. Especially is this duty of those virtuous and intelligent young men who are just coming on the stage of active life, bearing with them the hopes of parents and patriotick friends. Those who possess knowledge and integrity may render valuable service to their country by imparting information to others, within the sphere of their influence, less favored than themselves.

Our country has another foe to fear, if possible, more formidable than the one to which I have just called your attention. I see a cloud wild and angry, rising and darkening along all the horizon of the civilized world. From its bosom bursts baleful flashes of lightning, followed by deep and jarring thunder, monitory of utter destruction. The nations gaze in silent consternation anxious to know what it may mean. It is—Radicalism threatening to sweep over the world, like the deluge, effacing every vestige of former civilization. Radicalism is the more dangerous and the more terrible, because, like Satan himself, it comes to us clothed in the garb of an angel of light. It professes to be the friend of liberty and the people, and the determined implacable foe of despotism and prescriptive error. Its watch-word is Reform, on which it rings all possible changes—a reform, however, so benevolent as to reform every thing before itself. It abhors all restraint—would break down every distinction of society—dissolve every obligation, moral, political, social, and religious, and have man, like the wild ass' colt, roam the forest, and snuff the wind, in all the luxuriance of liberty. In the estimation of

fully initiated radicals, all law, and all religion are tyranny—all education but swaddling bands of the mind, which, in this nineteenth century of its manhood, it should cast away, as no longer necessary. In a word, radicalism is the fanaticism of liberty, more terrible than the fanaticism of religion, because entirely divested of that sense of moral obligation, which to some extent always attaches to the latter. I would not wish to be understood, as saying, that all who call themselves radicals, adopt entire the principles which I have enumerated. Such, however, is the legitimate and necessary operation of the scheme; and such is the sense in which it will be understood and carried out by the multitude should it ultimately prevail. Abstract principles in the hands of true philosophers serve a valuable purpose. They are to the enlightened politician what pure Mathematics is to the scientific mechanic. When employed by the ignorant and designing, they must be pernicious just in proportion to the value of the interests on which they are brought to bear. Many of the most terrible revolutions that have ever desolated the earth have arisen from misapplying, and pushing too far abstract principles. Some of the principles of radicalism are true in the abstract, but when applied to man in his present condition are absolutely false, and must, therefore, do harm, and great harm too, inasmuch as they tamper with the very springs and wheels of human action and human happiness. Radicalists may roll the wheels of the social system back to the gates of paradise; but there they must stop. There they are met by the flaming sword. Could they enter,

and place man where he was before the fall, all would be well. But as it is, they can only do the work of destruction. Because the building which their predecessors have raised does not comport with their abstract draught, they may pull it down; but they can erect nothing better in its place. If radicalism continue to increase as it has done for the last ten years, without a miracle of Divine interposition, it must swell to a flood that will sweep away all for which man has been laboring for the last fifty centuries. In this country a stand in opposition to this tide of devastation must be made chiefly by men of thorough education. In Europe it is met and rolled back by ancient families, hereditary estates and hereditary titles. These we have not, and educated men are called upon, in this matter at least to supply their place.

There is an especial reason why in these United States a speedy and firm stand should be taken in opposition to radicalism. Both monarchists and radicals maintain, that radicalism is but republicanism matured, and carried out to its legitimate consequences. This we are bound to show is a slander, and that the holy name Liberty is prostituted when applied by a radical to his scheme of disgusting licentiousness.

6. The educated young men of our country owe peculiar duties to religion. This is not the place to speak of the great and paramount duty of surrendering your hearts to God. What I principally mean here is, that you are bound to employ your entire influence in fostering the institutions, and advancing the interests of Protestant Christianity. This duty I might urge

upon you with great force, addressing you as patriots, as philanthropists, as Christians. But I address you as scholars; and I will therefore draw my arguments from those advantages which as scholars you derive from Christianity. Here time will permit me to do little more than mention some leading thoughts.

In enumerating the advantages which as educated men you derive from Christianity, I mention the Bible. You regard, and I think justly too, the Poems of Homer as exerting great, and beneficial influence in the cultivation of the mind. Why? Because the fertility of invention, sublime and beautiful imagery, and splendid and glowing diction to be found in them have a wonderful tendency to arouse and call into exercise the powers of the mind. Without any disparagement of the blind bard, we may say, that in all these particulars he is infinitely excelled by the Sacred Volume. No book contains such sublime subjects, such pure thoughts, such majestick and beautiful diction as the Bible. Hence no book exercises so great an influence in expanding and cultivating the powers of the mind. Wherever the Bible is studied intellectual improvement is a necessary consequence. It beyond all other books has called forth high intellectual effort. There is no book in the illustration of which so much mind has been employed.

Again: Protestant Christianity alone has freed the mind from the degrading, and paralysing influence of superstition. The force of this observation will be seen, if for a moment we turn our minds to the great men of heathen antiquity—to such men as Xenophon

and Plato, and Cicero. In Cicero we have, perhaps, an exemplification of the highest state of improvement to which the mind could be advanced under the ancient systems of education. It is humiliating to genius to know that the splendid oration "Pro Milone," and the medley of scepticism and superstition "De Natura Deorum" came from the same mind. Who can imagine the heights of pure and sublime thought to which the mind of the Roman Orator would have soared, had it been liberated from these shackles, and sanctified by Divine Truth.

Again: to Protestant Christianity we are indebted for the liberation of the mind from the influence of false philosophy. Had no Luther arisen to be the instrument under God of reformed religion there would have been no Bacon to reform philosophy, and we should still have remained bewildered in the thorny mazes of Aristotelian Dialecticks. All those institutions of learning in Europe and America in which a rational and liberalizing philosophy prevails are the legitimate offsprings of the Reformation.

Once more: it is only under the religion of the Bible that literature can grow to full maturity. For this I will mention two reasons. One is, that no other system cultivates all the powers of the mind in due proportion. Every one that is acquainted with the works of heathen antiquity must have observed, that in them the intellectual have undue ascendancy over the moral powers. Thus it is in every modern system of education from which the Bible is excluded. It is obvious that only when the various powers of the mind

act in harmony, and in due proportion the most valuable mental production can arise. Another reason why literature can grow to maturity only under the influence of the Bible is, that true religion alone affords the mind sufficient excitement of the right kind. The excitement produced by religion is like that in the human system, which is caused by the regular and healthy flow of all the fluids. Other causes often produce the excitement of intoxication or fever, disproportioned, violent, and followed by prostration of all the powers, Never until that universal triumph of truth foretold in the word of God shall have taken place, will there be witnessed the highest efforts of which the mind of man is capable, or the loveliest flowers and richest fruits of literature.

From this sketch, hasty and imperfect as it has been, I presume you will allow that learning both owes much to religion, and has much to expect from it. We would fondly hope, that, under this impression, you will go forth into the world, and into the several professions which you may select—not, as many have madly done, to war with the Bible and the God of the Bible, but, as Christian and patriot scholars, to employ the influence which your learning and talents may give you in favor of the institutions of religion. Acting in this way, whilst you will certainly increase your own respectability and influence, you will also become the more valuable members of society. The man who opposes the Bible, like the fabled giants, wars with heaven, and, at the same time, attempts the destruction of every thing most precious on earth. He lays his rash hand upon the very pillars of the social fabric, and

were he not impotent as he is wicked, he would, like Sampson, pull down ruin upon himself and all others. Let no one engage in this mad enterprize from the belief that to show his intelligence, and prove that he is above vulgar prejudices, he must sneer at the Bible. There was a time when men regarded scepticism as necessary to support their claims to the characters of scholars and philosophers. That time has passed by, and the day is rapidly approaching, whose strong light will show infidelity in all its forms to be nothing but driveling folly.

There are in the various Colleges of the United States about ten thousand students. This fact excites in the mind of the patriot-scholar most interesting thoughts. What important and far-reaching effects must they produce. Many of them will, no doubt, fail to accomplish any thing valuable, and others will do positive harm; yet after every necessary deduction is made, there will still remain a sufficient number to achieve an incalculable amount of good. It is to this band that, under Divine favor, we look for the permanency and prosperity of our country. We place but little confidence in the declarations of aspiring politicians; and as little in the windy declamations to be heard in our Halls of Legislation. Nor can we find satisfactory assurances of permanent national prosperity in the commercial enterprize with which the whole country is instinct. Many solemn facts to be found in the past history of the world, admonish us, that the only firm pillars on which a free government can rest are Virtue and Intelligence. This considera-

tion gives to the virtuous and educated young men of our country an importance, a sense of which ought to make them gird up the loins of their minds for high and noble deeds. Let these ten thousand men possess virtue and integrity of principle—let them, under a sense of the weighty obligations which rest upon them, improve whatever of talents God has given them to the very highest degree which their circumstances will permit, and let them honestly and heartily devote all to the best interests of their country, and I fear the croak of no demagogue, the sweep of no deluge of radicalism. God, we may feel assured will hear the prayers, and bless the efforts of such men. How interesting to contemplate this living mass of youthful vigor, and brightening talent, informed and guided by science, and instinct with the love of God and the love of man, going forth into the world! We will indulge the pleasing thought. We will forget for a moment that any of them may disappoint our hopes. Here we have an army ten thousand strong—an army of mind—an army of benevolence. True, we do not find many of the appendages of an army—the glittering weapons, and streaming banners, and nodding plumes, and champing steeds, and martial music; yet in the estimation of the philanthropist; they possess that which is by far more interesting than all the pageantry, the pomp, and circumstance, which usually invest armies. They go not forth on a mission of destruction—to ravage fields—depopulate towns and cover the country in the habiliments of mourning. Their only weapon is truth, but it is mighty—sharper than any two-edged sword. Their only object is to bless and save. They

go forth to war with error—alleviate suffering—shake the empire of darkness—rout the hosts of sin, and, with silver trump, publish the message of salvation. How sublime the spectacle! What patriot, what Christian does not invoke the richest blessings of heaven on the heads of the youthful warriors?

Students of Davidson College, you form a division of this army. It is your privilege to engage in this holy war. Whilst we feel a deep interest in all, we are especially concerned, that you should act well your parts. In this Institution we wish to train men to do any great and holy work, to which the Church and their country may call them. The obligations which constituted the subject of this address rest on you with as much force as on any others. In addition to these there are peculiar obligations, which you owe to this your Alma Mater. In forming her character to take her station among the Colleges of the land, she looks to you for important aid. This you can render only by a faithful performance of your duty, both here, and when you shall go out into the world. You are bound fully to equip yourselves, and then go forth determined to make your influence to be extensively felt in the cause of truth and righteousness. From unsanctified ambition I pray that you may be saved; but I would have you press forward with holy emulation to be among the first in every good word and work. Let it be engraven on your minds never to be effaced, that it is your duty, and one of your most valuable privileges, by knowledge and virtue to acquire an extensive influence, and wield it all for the glory of God and the good of man.

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