

8156
CHURCH & STATE.

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED

ON THANKSGIVING DAY,

November 28, 1854,

IN

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

BY REV. BYRON SUNDERLAND,

THE PASTOR.

Si Deus nobiscum quis contra nos?

WASHINGTON:
WM. M. MORRISON & CO.
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1854.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1, 1854.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

The undersigned, having had the gratification to compose a part of the large congregation that listened to your able discourse, delivered on the last day of Public Thanksgiving, on the "Mutual Relations of Church and State and their legitimate functions in the Reformation of the World," and cordially concurring in its excellent sentiments and clear analysis of the duties of the christian-Citizen and Patriot, respectfully request a copy of it for publication in pamphlet form, and remain

Most respectfully your friends

and obedient servants,

O. R. SINGLETON,
ELISHA WHITTLESEY,
JOHN DOUGLASS,
OTIS C. WIGHT,

THOS. BLAGDEN,
THOS. L. SMITH,
JOHN WILSON,
WM. H. GILMAN,

THOMAS J. JOHNSTON.

"Nec temere, nec timide."

WATERS, Print.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 10, 1854.

GENTLEMEN: Having several days since received your communication requesting a copy of the Discourse to which you allude for publication, I embrace the earliest convenient opportunity, in submitting the discourse to your disposal, more formally to express to you my grateful acknowledgements for your approval of the sentiments which I had the occasion to announce.

I desire also to include the young men of my congregation, as well as several other gentlemen who listened to the discourse, and from whom, subsequently to your own solicitation, letters with the same design have been received. In consenting to the publication, under your auspices, I am sure they will accord to me an observance of the usual courtesy, and appreciate the circumstances which have given you the priority.

Though sincere in my convictions of the truth, I have not the vanity to suppose that my judgment, especially on the grave topics with reference to which I spoke is at all infallible. It is, therefore, with no ordinary degree of confidence and pleasure that I rely at this time on your endorsement of the soundness of the doctrines which I have attempted to expound.

In justice to the subject and myself, I ought to add, that the discourse was prepared in the daily round of multiplied duties and with no thought whatever of its final publication. On this account I have hesitated, not from fear of animadversion, but because with a more favorable opportunity I might have succeeded in

giving a clearer and stronger utterance to my convictions on those grave and momentous topics, which may well demand, in these excited times, the most mature deliberations of the patriot, the philanthropist and the christian. I am well aware that I have omitted many of the distinctions and modifications which might guard from misapprehension the sentiments of the discourse, nor have I had time to give it more than a cursory revision, preferring to let it stand in substance as it was pronounced.

Such as it is I herewith transmit to you a copy for publication, sustained at least by the consciousness that with all its imperfections it is an honest testimony for the kingdom of our glorious Redeemer, for our beloved country, and for the final reformation of the world.

Very truly,

B. SUNDERLAND.

Messrs. O. R. Singleton, Elisha Whittlesey, John Douglass, Otis C. Wight, Thos. Blagden, Thos. L. Smith, John Wilson, Wm. H. Gilman, Thos. J. Johnston.

A DISCOURSE
ON THE
MUTUAL RELATIONS OF CHURCH AND STATE,
AND THEIR
LEGITIMATE FUNCTIONS
IN
THE REFORMATION OF THE WORLD.

DANIEL 2: 44—And in the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

This is a prophecy of things to come. There is in it a sublime metaphor. If we search that metaphor, what else there may be, we shall find those three grand ideas—State, Church, and Reformation.

The reformation of the world—what is it? I shall answer the question upon assumption. If it be assumed that there was ever a time when our globe and our humanity were in a condition of positive good without any admixture of evil—if it be assumed, that they are fallen from that supposed condition and now lie prostrate under the power of a curse—if it be assumed, that their restoration shall take place, in which event, all extant evil shall be separated from our globe and from its populations, then, upon these assumptions, I can partially, at least, comprehend the meaning of that phrase, “the reformation of the world.” In theory, I have a more definite notion of the grand process and the still grander result. I see that it implies a change for the better over the whole territory of human interests. Whether that change be equal or unequal in different quarters and at different times, whether it be sudden or gradual, or whatever may

have been its procuring causes, I perceive that the completed process will be in effect, the reformation of the world.

On such a speculative view of the subject, I suppose there is no dispute among men. But a difference of opinion immediately arises when they proceed to apply the principles of reformation to its actual accomplishment. This has been the conflict of ages. What one mind has held to be an absolute progress, another has pronounced to have been only a delusion. Ideas full of promise, at the first, have been subsequently exploded. Schemes of great hope in the outstart have, afterwards, sunken in the midst of unexpected troubles. The structure which was reared by the fathers, has been often torn away by the sons. The history of the world in this aspect, is only a record of opposing views and warring elements, which, like the gusts of the tempest, or the surges of the sea, have swept over the track of centuries in perpetual and fruitless vicissitude. Meanwhile, the great currents of evil hold on their course. If sometimes checked in a given direction, they still break forth into new and other channels.

All human labor to dry them up, seems but the realization of ancient fables—the daughters of Danaus filling their seive-like vessel; the panting Sisyphus rolling the everfalling rock; the son of Apollo guiding the chariot of his father to destruction.

One might suppose that in such a struggle, the last hope would die out of the hearts of men. Yet, hope lingers, and is therefore a symbol of the predicted consummation. The reason of the repeated failures of mankind to reach that consummation, lies in their misconception of the source of power and of the secret of its application. They seek the remedy in themselves. They consume toil in superfluities, in side issues, and partial

undertakings. As the student of astronomy, not reading his lesson from the face of the broad sky, but peering down some sunken slime-pit where only vague glimmerings of the stars appear, so they, bewildered, too fondly grope in the ruins of a fallen nature for that pulse of life which is to reanimate the nations, for that theory of truth which is to solve the vast problem of human restoration. The result, therefore, is one tissue of error and of inconsistency. It is the dream of the finite to *gauge* the circle of omnipotence. It is the conception of men, whose purest motives are fearfully alloyed, and whose keenest perceptions are of course profoundly darkened, so that terrific passions mix with the gigantic aspiration, and that which was to have been heaven-born, turns out to be earth-born. What was designed for strength and endurance is found to be altogether impotent and perishable. Even where there has been in the soul a glimpse of the great necessity, or a pulse of the higher life, it is the misery of our common nature to find how soon the loudest shouts of reformation are mingled with the wildest din of fanaticism, and how certainly, that which rose with the fresh purity of the morning is overcast by the gloom of mid-day storms and the deeper blackness of the terrible sunset.

In addition to the misconception of the true source of power and the true secret of success, the very means, also of reformation, are mistaken. Men heretofore and now, are too often like the Rebecca of antiquity. They like her, often seek to forestall the providence of God, by taking his own work out of his own hands. As a matter of course they, like her, are driven in their headlong haste to the resorts of deception. As she cherished her favorite son, so they nurse, for years together, that imaginary hope which becomes at length the object of their idolatry. As she, in her mistaken zeal, covered

him with the shame of a lie, and by that moral poison defiled his nature and embittered his life, so they, in their infatuation, pollute the very principles in which they profess to confide, and scatter mildew and corruption by the very agencies they had fondly hoped should have triumphed. As she was thus separated for all time from the idol of her affection, so they are continually missing the aim of their endeavors, and in the recurring disappointment, abandon themselves to recklessness and despair.

Such results are not hypothetical. There are communities, I had almost said whole continents, once flourishing as the garden of the Lord, where now the principles of the Gospel are dying out of the hearts of men; where the very sanctuary has become a court of moral dissipation, and the very pulpit a forum of infidelity. Nay, the Levites themselves, as if smitten by some sudden panic, are scattering away from their vigils at the altar, to struggle and contend for place and preferment, as men do who have never been bound, by the sacred oath of ordination, as the ministers of the Almighty! Alas, such are the vicissitudes of human nature, and such also its blindness and its madness, that under the boast of superior enlightenment and sanctity, men shall be found to run to every excess of riot and scruple at no means for the attainment of their purposes. And, so it happens, that falsehood and blasphemy, made still fiercer and darker by the most outrageous violence of every principle of probity; by the most insane recklessness of representation; by the most foul-mouthed scandal and vituperation; by the most base and villainous chicanery; by the most bitter and relentless hatred, go hand in hand together on the mission of a world's reformation. Is it not amazing, that men whose conduct shall convict them of a breach of every line of the decalogue—is it not amazing, that communities

stricken with the leprosy of skepticism and plunged into the moral midnight of a practical atheism, where the common humanities sue in vain for admission, and the common moralities lie cankered and prostrate—where the great behemoth of that covetousness which is idolatry, swallows up every human sensibility, and the glitter of gold sanctifies every enormity; that such, I say, should assume to be the special apostles of reformation to the world!

Oh, until men shall have deeper views of human life and destiny; until a more tender spirit shall come over the human soul; until the communities shall be imbued with such a chastened and serene temper as shall dissipate forever the vain effervescence of human prejudice and arrogance; until the high and mighty elements which rise only at the fiat of Jehovah, and stand around humanity to sober and to steady it, shall descend upon society, this world shall witness no work of reformation which the next whirlwind of popular tumults shall not prostrate in its course of desolation.

And this leads me to remark, that the hope of the reformation of the world cannot rest on anything short of a divine purpose and agency. It is not in man, unaided, to reform himself; it is not in any set of men or combination of human measures, to reform the fallen world. Nor is it the object of created power. None but the infinite Architect of the physical universe—He who stretched the firmament abroad and garnished it with suns—He who founded the earth and scooped the ocean's bed—He who built the rock-ribbed hills and poured the streams all singing from their sides—He who tunes the organ winds and sends the sunbeam searching through the plastic elements, making all nature prolific of successive growths—He who quickens the irrational creation and makes each corner of our globe so populous with instinctive life—He who guides the providence of the world and holds in his

direction the hearts of the children of men—He alone shall be able to probe the wounds of our abused humanity, and spread upon the diseased and swollen limbs, the mighty cataplasm of recovery and salvation.

Again therefore, I put the hope of this august event upon an assumption. If it be assumed that there is such a God having such divine power and wisdom. If it be assumed that He is the Father of our spirits and the Creator of the world. If it be assumed that He is pledged to rectify this world and this humanity. If it be assumed that He can and does communicate to the individual and to society a sanative and saving influence. If it be assumed that He is directing all his supervision to this great consummation, and that the history of our earth, which otherwise is an incomprehensible riddle, is but a development in part of that purpose which He has staked the resources of his empire to accomplish; then, the hope of reformation founded on this assumption, is well founded. But it has no other basis, and if this be not its basis, then that hope is an idle dream; man is but a plague to himself, and life but an agonizing abortion.

In this view, we may estimate all the schemes of reformation now extant or that ever existed—all the loud-mouthed proclamations of new light and higher advancement. What are they but mere human expedients, temporary expedients, deadening the distemper of the world in one part, only that it may break out and rage with more violence in another.

In this view also, we may see the reason of their failure, nay, the cause of their power to aggravate and inflame, rather than to heal and sooth—the grand generic quality of the whole of them, is atheistic. They practically deny God, the God whose divine presence and influence is the only catholicon. Oh, think you, that with all the heraldry of reformation which has been sounding in our own country for the last fifty years, if the few who have professed to

conduct it, and the thousands who have blindly followed in their foot-steps, had been really good men—that is God-men—that is men of God—that is men of faith and prayer, drawing their inspiration from the felt sense of the Almighty presence, and not from the miserable cisterns of earth-born conceptions, where crime and virtue are exchanged and sold like meats in the shambles; had they been such I say, think you we should have beheld the present confusions or had to deplore the alarming condition of morality and religion among the masses of living men.

The reformation, which has the saving power of God in it, proceeds upon different principles in a different spirit and by a different method altogether. Its great power is in the silent influence of individual example. Its first power is with man, segregated and set apart by himself, so that no reform shall finally succeed and abide the disasters of our being, but that which attaches man in his personal soul to God, renders him to live in God, walk with God, and find in God all his power and all his pleasure. Yet in the name of God and of all that belongs to God, an attempt is made at reformation by those who appear to have in themselves no more of the spirit and no more of the wisdom of God, than a dumb man has of speech, or a blind man of vision. And so their expedients are doomed to perpetual discomfiture, as they will be, as they ought to be, and as the stern unbroken course of nature and of providence will ever prove.

Still, when we speak of these human expedients, trifling, temporary, and mischievous as they are, we do not deny the necessity of all expedients. God himself has established them, and those which He has endorsed, we ourselves may endorse with safety. The *force* that would recover the nations, must proceed from the Almighty, and must so operate through outward manifestations, as

to accomplish the aim of the divine economy. As a wise physician, considering the constitution and condition of society, as well as the power of remedies, and the most desirable process of recovery, God has set up two leading institutions in the present disordered earth, and among its still more disordered inhabitants. They are the *Church* and the *State*. As expedients of divine wisdom adapted to the subverted condition of the world, they are alike of divine authority. Being of the nature of expedients, they will both pass away when the world shall have been wholly rectified; or rather, on the event of that assumed restoration, they will both vanish and be absorbed into one sublime and glorious theocracy! Until then the word of God has pronounced them alike indispensable, and declared a curse on him who does not hold them alike inviolable.

Let us then, for a moment, consider the functions and relations of the *Church* as a divine institution, and so far as its visible existence on earth is concerned, as the outward symbol of that everlasting kingdom which the prophet foreshows in the text. But let us first of all, distinguish between the church of God, as it stands revealed in the oracles of inspiration, and those merely ecclesiastical supremacies which have at one time or another, attained to greater or less ascendancy among men. It is not in those human inventions which the craft or the ambition of religious orders has heaped in all ages, upon the simple and majestic body of the church of God, that her true progressive power subsists. On the contrary, these inventions have been a source of discord, shame and weakness, giving a wide scope everywhere for bigotry, superstition, and sectarianism. The religious controversies of the world have been mainly chargeable to that human presumption which seeks to improve upon the divine original, or labors to subject the understanding of

mankind to some given form of ecclesiastical dominion. The strength of many generations has been wasted in that conflict. There are countries which at first were favored with the light of revelation, but where, through the curse of this exclusive and monopolizing principle, that light is now extinguished and the very structure of the church has been either profanely transformed, or else entirely demolished. The wrath of man has there suspended for a time, the legitimate operation of this divine expedient.

What then is the function of the Church, according to the divine design? It operates in two methods, chiefly in its invisible character, and secondarily, in what embraces its outward manifestation. But in all its mission, God has assigned to it bounds and a sphere which it may not pass. Those bounds and that sphere have particular reference to the regeneration of the human soul by the spirit of God, on the plan of the atonement by Jesus Christ. To make that great doctrine patent and practicable in the earth, is the only proper function of the church. Nor can she adopt any other principle of operation without falling from the grace of her divine commission. Nor can she employ any other auxiliaries, which in theory or in effect, tend to contravene or to neutralize her power in this single vocation, without weakening, if not entirely destroying her influence among men.

But, it is alledged, that the church is bound to testify against the sins of the world. And so, upon this pretext, a wide door is opened for her disciples, and especially her ministry, to range in whatsoever field, and pursue whatsoever end, provided it be only not so far from the reach of the human imagination, as to be incapable of connection with any aspect of the Gospel, even by that excursive faculty. Nay more, the adherents of the Cross may, under that title, descend into any controversy

which may happen to be waging at the time, may intrude themselves upon whatsoever circle, into whatsoever sphere, as though God had constituted them the sole vicegerents of the world. Yet, if we are to judge from the sacred history of the primitive christians and apostles, we must come to a very different conclusion. Compare those records and see what a lesson they read out to us. Oh, that we had in these days one fraction of that wisdom and understanding, which characterized the master spirits of the primitive church. Do we read in the accounts of church action in those days, of holy convocations, to discuss the principles of Roman legislation, to pass resolutions against the Roman Government, or to dispatch memorials to the Roman Senate? Do we find the apostles harangning the people upon questions of State policy, and even endeavoring to excite them to the violence and fury of a mob? Do we find them turning aside from the self-denying labor of publishing the story of salvation, to defame the rulers of the empire, and to prostrate by bold and unscrupulous denunciations the arm of the civil power? There is nowhere a syllable of all this. On the other hand, we hear them declaring sentiments like these. "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for the powers that be are ordained of God," "wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." We discover comminations against those who "*despise government*," and "are not afraid to speak evil of dignities," against those who dare to "speak evil of things which they understand not." Of such as are obnoxious to this high criminal charge, an apostle testifies, "these are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh and wantonness those who were awhile escaped from their

error. While they promised them *liberty*, they themselves are the servants of corruption." Can any description be more truthful and life-like of the state of things when the church and the ministry have been tempted aside from the legitimate functions and duties of their mission?

I believe, with trembling, that in this country there is still left some primitive and apostolic sense and comprehension of the only appropriate business of God's chosen expedient in the establishment of the church. But it cannot be concealed that in some quarters her moral power has been let down to an extent that is appalling, and those who bear an intelligent love toward Zion, her mission and her cause, have to bewail the loss of that high spiritual tone which, unmixed with secular elements, has constituted her real strength in her purest and palmiest days. Sure I am that she must be brought back and maintained in her special sphere and function; she must be winnowed from this chaff of secularities, or there is danger of her total disappearance before the reckless spirit of these times—and if not sturdily defended in her original principles we may well wonder if she be not utterly burlesqued and driven out of the world!

In contrast with this abuse however, we may perceive the true relations of the church to the progress of reformation. It is her province to promote that progress by stimulating in man the functions of faith and worship towards God—by putting him in that spiritual frame whereby he shall cleave to God, breathe, move and have his being in God, according to the measure of the moral requisition. The man so exercised is a living power of the divine law. This is the very soul and essence of reformation. A man cannot love God, live in Him and walk with Him, without being himself a *reformed man*. In this way only shall he be able to separate himself "from all things which offend." This is the true answer to that

suggestion that the church is to testify against the sins of the world. It is the method of her testimony. If she comes to every man and testifies to him of the gospel of the grace of the son of God, pressing him up with the necessity of its reception in consideration of his own defilement with sin, she does in effect and much more effectively testify against the sins of the world. I do not deny that the Gospel has an incidental and general influence on the state of the world. There are a thousand processes by which it ameliorates the condition of mankind, but they are involuntary in their nature. They form no part of its direct and appropriate aim. It is just here that men by a ruinous mistake confound the essential principle with the contingent result, vainly supposing that general and indiscriminate philippics on the corruptions of society and especially of such portions as are distant a thousand miles and can be reached only at arm's end, is the philosophic method of the world's reclamation. It is like admitting the doctrine of a general providence while that of a special and particular providence is denied. Now the propagation of reform in the earth by the labor of the church cannot proceed in the way of a vague and indefinite expansion, without reference to local contacts and personal applications. The Gospel is a germ to be transplanted, striking its roots down about the homes of men putting forth its foliage and its fruit in the neighborhood, correcting domestic evils and personal imperfections. It is rather a conflict of small-arms hand to hand, not so much the roar of loud-sounding, far-echoing, but vain artillery. Its first action is to turn the soul in upon herself, and then away to the supreme God as the fountain of cleansing. Men must be brought face to face with it and not simply hear of it through distant murmurs. This is the true work of the church in her appointed times and places. Let it once be established that there are unlaw-

ful channels, improper associations, and forbidden undertakings to the church and her ministry; let them at once and universally, abjure to be thrust aside from their heaven appointed labor; and then we should behold the institution of the Church as a divine expedient rising up in a new strength and majesty. Then would her mission be accomplished and her trophies be multiplied in thousands and hundreds of thousands of converted and regenerated men.

But, I wish to speak also of that other divine expedient, the *State*, in its appropriate sphere of equal authority from God. It will not be necessary to inquire into those grounds and reasons of the State which have so often been put forth. Nor shall we attempt here to discuss at large, the nature of this institution. That the State must have organization and a form of government, is inseparable from its idea. It is too late in the history of the world to dwell now upon the comparative merits of the older and the later forms. We, as a people, have struck out our own polity, and in that polity all our fortunes seem to be bound up. In what I shall say therefore, I shall have reference only to the idea of a State founded upon those popular principles which have obtained among ourselves. Nor do I conceive that there is any practical difficulty in stating the question of loyalty and of revolution, which has been so great a perplexity in the treatment of this subject. The beginning and rise of national polities is often amid scenes of violence, slaughter, and blood. It is a simple question of power, and practically the dominant power in any country, or among any people, is the State. Resistance to established forms, if successful, becomes not only revolution, but the State itself; if unsuccessful, it is treason to the government. All the deeper questions of the justice and morality of these things must be finally settled in a higher than any human tribunal.

Now, confining ourselves within the range of sentiments suggested by the history and condition of our own Confederacy, there is one broad distinction in the outset, which we must never overlook. It is the distinction between the State proper and mere partisan politics. I shall use the term politics in the present discourse, to characterize the demagogue-spirit, than which, there can be no greater evil in the commonwealth. There is all the difference between the State and politics in this sense, that there is between the church and sectarianism. The State was designed for a blessing, but politics are fraught with curses to any people; nay, those evils are greater and more threatening in proportion to the freedom of the Government.

For first, no sooner is the government settled for a term of years, than a crowd of eager applicants invest it, whose patriotism appears to be summed up in a desire for their own promotion, and whose loyalty is kindled only by the spirit of self-aggrandizement. Disappointed as they evidently must be, since, if all had office or emolument, the body should become all head and no trunk or limbs, they turn away with bitter reproaches and gnashing of teeth, to villify and break down if possible, the very administration they had helped to elevate. There is no more degrading or humiliating spectacle in America, than the caprice and corruption of this partisan selfishness. There is no more dangerous element at work among our countrymen, than that which prompts the unlicensed abuse which they heap upon their own government.

Again it is imagined, that the popular suffrage gives omnipotence to the spirit of party on all questions, and that therefore, all things, whether sacred or profane, the removal of local evils, the disposition of sectional disputes, the reformation of specific vices, yea, and the very existence of morality, religion, and the Church of

God, must be brought to the test of the ballot-box. The arena of partisan violence is then thrown open, and the canvass reeks with unbridled defamation. Corruption is blown abroad from the lips of travelling mountebanks, and from the engines of a still more venal and vitiated Press. Before this blast, everything lies prostrate—character maligned, reputation sacrificed, the sanctities of private history and domestic life torn open, and a scene of confusion and chicanery presented, from which the mind turns away, sickened and revolting. Meanwhile, the rising generations come up with the wide spread example before them, and through an unheard of precocity, partake of the general audacity and licentiousness. And this too, is the result of American politics.

Now, can any man suppose for a moment, that these things form any part of the divine expedient of a State? What then is the function of the State? It is undoubtedly true, that as a divine expedient, the civil government should be founded, not simply in the dictates of nature, but also, and much more, upon the clearer principles of divine revelation. All the legislation of the State should be at least, not in contravention of the general tenor of the Sacred Oracles. All the administration of the State should be to maintain the Constitution, and to support and execute the laws, so that the aggregate tendency of the Government may be to the establishment and confirmation of good order, morality, and piety, both towards God and man. To sum it up in a single proposition, the State has it in charge to supervise the national economy of her people and afford a just and equal protection to all, according to the requisitions of its fundamental organization. It has, for this purpose, a mode of operation peculiar to itself, through its legislative, judicial and executive functions; and therefore the State is chiefly an engine of *physical*, in contradistinction from *spiritual*

power, to enforce subordination to law. This is the exact *animus* of its function as announced by the apostle himself. The State "bears the sword of civil power for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of them that do well." That is the sphere of this great expedient.

It must take cognizance of the material interests of the people, of their overt acts and their civil rights. And because it is charged with these, it may not be forced into the by-ways and the high-ways of other modes of operation. It is not therefore, within the proper function of the State, to go out upon eleemosynary expeditions, to abet all manner of benevolent and philanthropic associations, to absorb into its own structure whatsoever corporations are likely to spring up on the field of human sympathies. And herein I conceive, the function of the State to verge upon the question of reformation. It cannot become an immediate instrument of reform, but it can and ought to protect by its power, all the true progress of reformation. Its position then, is mediatory, for it stands between the *morale* of reformation and the assaults of outward violence. Like the church, therefore, it has most strength and most efficiency where it keeps to those things only, which God in his wisdom, has devolved upon it. The example of a State is, consequently, at its highest pitch of sublimity and of influence for the good of the world, or in other words for its reformation, when it enforces, if need be, by the arm of civil power, obedience to the constitution and the laws. This is a necessity arising from the subverted condition of society. There is no other solution to the question. Rebellion or resistance to the government must be met, not by moral suasion, but by the rigors and penalties of the law. It is treason, not only to the State, but also to that Supreme Being who devised the institution of the State, and appointed the sphere of its opera-

tion, for any man to flinch or to waver one hair's breadth from this great principle.

But, it is asked, shall the citizens be forced into submission to bad laws? This question assumes an important point—it pronounces the law unlawful, perhaps on the single authority of a private conscience. But, even with this assumption, I am prepared to answer. By all means, let the citizen be subjected to the law—for even this is better, and on the whole, fruitful of more good to mankind, than anarchy.

Is it said, that men may be thus persecuted for conscience sake? Then let them go out of the country. If any man is so pure and the government of his country is so pernicious and corrupt, that in his estimation, to remain under it and submit to its administration, amounts to a persecution for conscience sake, then let him retire beyond the limits of its jurisdiction and cease, under it, to claim the rights of citizenship. But so long as he remains enjoying the immunities and privileges of a citizen, and protected in them equally with his fellow-citizens, by the strong arm of the government, then let him feel the weight of its laws, and let obedience be exacted, though his conscience cries out against it a hundred times.

I challenge a refutation of this proposition. It may look harsh at first, but the man has yet to live who can give any other solution of the problem of human government.

And now, I come to speak of these two institutions in their mutual relations. We have seen that they have distinct spheres and separate functions, by the equal and undisputed authority of Inspiration. And for this cause, they have in some fundamental regards nothing in common with each other. They cannot safely therefore, trench or trespass upon their respective missions. All attempts to confound them must prove suicidal to both, and subver-

sive also of all true ideas of reformation, to which each of them bears a relation, after its own kind. Their positions relative to each other are then, much the same as that which, on a broader scale, the kingdom of Nature bears to the kingdom of Grace—that is, the provisions of the State include the provisions of the Church, quite as the circle of providence surrounds the circle of redemption. While therefore, the State, as the outside circle, has it for a duty to protect the Church, and by what power it can, to prevent destruction from without—while the Church, as the inside circle, has it for a claim to be defended by all the lawful power of the civil government—and while the one is not to interpose nor to interfere with the organic functions of the other, as God has established them; they may and can, upon this principle and only upon this principle, coalesce and co-operate in the accomplishment of that grand result—the full and the final reformation of mankind. But wo betide the insane dream of success upon any other calculation. It shall make confusion worse confounded. It shall defeat reformation on a principle similar to that by which the animal economy would be frustrated, were there a schism among the members.

I know it may be asked if the people, in a popular government like our own, are to have no part either in Church or State?—or if, having a voice in those matters, they shall not speak out their sentiments and declare their will? Is it possible that a christian man is to be denied the privilege of carrying his religion to the polls? Shall human character chameleon-like, change back and forth between the Sabbath and election-day? This no doubt, is a very plausible and epigrammatic way of stating the question, and the fallacy which lurks under it, has misled thousands of superficial and unreflecting minds. One of the first principles of good citizenship, as well as of sound piety, requires that a man shall foremost and forever sep-

arate the spheres of the Church and the State, and distinguish between the appropriate duties of each. To act out the character which is appropriate in one capacity, when a man comes to perform his duty in a totally different capacity, is not to maintain a man's religion, but to violate and impair it. Let a man be religious everywhere—let him know his rights, and knowing dare maintain them. Let him carry his conscience and his Bible with him on election-day as well as on the Sabbath. There is no objection to all this. But we must inveigh, and we cannot too strongly inveigh against that construction of the rights and of the religion of men which at the ballot-box, or elsewhere, can but render them to stultify themselves, to confound their own relations, and utterly to disregard their complex life and their complex nature. If this be the effect of piety at the polls, it had better be left behind, for it is spurious. It is not the principle of the Bible and no refinements of casuistry, no power of eloquence, no wand of human genius, shall save it from the damnation which awaits it. A man's religion not only, but his common sense and his general intelligence, ought to determine between the duties which belong to him as a member of the Church and those which belong to him as a member of the commonwealth, and if they do not, he is to that extent disqualified for membership in either.

I have dwelt perhaps too long already upon these points; but without extending the discussion further at this time, allow me to express it as my firmest conviction, that as the world grows older, and there comes to be a more thorough comprehension of the fundamental principles of that divine economy, which has authorized the Church and the State, as the two great co-ordinates of human progress and perfectibility, and which has assigned to them their separate functions in relation to the reformation of mankind, the sentiments which in substance, I have now been permitted to ex-

press, will gain ground and obtain a wider and a deeper hold on the judgement and intelligence of mankind. Not that I pretend to have made any new discoveries, or to have a foresight superior to those, who are looking with a prayerful and an anxious spirit into the stupendous question of the destiny of this world. But as a reader of the Bible, I do so believe. I confide in the lessons of this Book as my infallible guide. On this, and this only, do I rest every conclusion; by this, and this only, shall the world be judged.

And moreover, there is a light sent down from this quarter which kindles our expectation and bids us look forward to some better dispensation. In that light, I would fondly trust, notwithstanding the evils which prevail everywhere on the globe, and notwithstanding our own perils from fanaticism and faction and mobocratic violence, those boding signs which hang upon the sky of our national existence, threatening the integrity of these sacred institutions—that there is yet left among us such a sense of our great inheritance, such a remembrance of our fathers, and such a reverence for the teachings of the Bible, as may render us impregnable, on the whole, against all the convulsions of these times. I fondly trust, notwithstanding this occasion of animadversion, yea, and of patriotic and christian solicitude, that still those two great institutions of Church and State, those divine expedients for the reformation of the world, do exist in this Confederacy in a form of greater purity and progress than in any other country upon the face of the whole earth. And, more than all, it is a conviction full of satisfaction and of grateful recognition this day, that the watch-care of the Almighty is upon this people, as it has been hitherto, and from the beginning. By His favor, the manifest design of those great expedients shines out more clearly. The outlines begin to be revealed, the elements are taking form, and the great pulse is seen to beat! It is true

that a mighty principle, whether of Church or State, is long in coming to be fully understood, and slow in embedding itself into the judgment and the heart of the nascent millions. Yet, we fondly hope that God is, in his providence, year after year, taking out these great principles from his revealed word and planting them down in the minds of the masses of our countrymen as the cornerstones of the Republic, yea and of the Church also, out of which and through which shall spring at last the perfected temple of mankind's deliverance. They are our hope for the future of the world, and for this cause also, I love my country. They are our vital existence as a people, to which all physical blessings are but the complement and decoration.

Let us then, on this day of public thanksgiving to Jehovah, be grateful to him for these two fundamental institutions, without which all earthly possessions were indeed superfluous. Let us be grateful for the favor of God in all our past history. Let us be grateful for the promise of the future. Let us be grateful for the bountiful provisions of nature, and for all the ministers of peace, of plenty, and of prosperity, which he has sent to encamp over against us, not to destroy, but to protect us. Let us be grateful that while in many respects, the past year has been a year of disaster, still our cup has been mingled with mercies, and while the thunders of war have shaken the continents of the Old world, we have been so far permitted to escape the horrors of that dire necessity. Let us be grateful, that over all the territories of the nation, there may be seen to-day so much general happiness, comfort, and intelligence, and that in so many places there will be gathered to-day, in concert with ourselves, so many rejoicing families. Let us be grateful, that notwithstanding the violence of the spirit of party and those sectional and political feuds which do spring

up to remind us of our remaining imperfection, there is still a stern love of country lingering among us, and that upon that country's call there would rush to her support so many millions of freemen. Let us be grateful that the invisible spirit of the mighty God is blowing upon hearts long dead, and that the signs of a new life appear, presaging that our American Zion shall have peace in all her borders. Let us be grateful that we here, the people of our country's Capital, have been so especially favored and protected during a year which to others, has proved so full of peril and destruction, and that the Metropolis has stood, unsmitten by any of the great scourges of the nations, looking so queenly over a land which stretches from ocean to ocean; a land whose benignant mission is whispered in the fragrant breezes of the sunny South, whose symbol of enduring power is the Northern hymn of the thundering cataract.

Let us, in the festivities of this day, commemorate our gratitude, not in a spirit of thoughtless levity, or of hilarious excesses, but with a sober conviction of our unworthiness, and with a solemn joy. Let us commemorate it with a just view of our mission and our duty as individuals, and as a people, and in the remembrance of the poor. Let us commemorate it with hope and expectation for the future, commensurate with those high events which the prophecy of our text foretells, and in which we, as a nation, no doubt are to bear a mighty part—for oh, indulge me as the vision rises to my mind.

When the world was old and many deeds were done, that vision sprang up out of the progressions of the past. The mist of ages rolled aside and a radiance like the sun broke forth from the darkness of centuries. I saw a form, bloody at first, but full of power and glory ascending on the face of the earth. There was carnage at its appearance, and I heard the shoutings of captains and the

thunder of battle; and where the death storm fell and the iron hail, there rose moans of the dying, and I saw at length unnumbered mounds and the dark cypress waving above them! Then I beheld a procession of mourners—the widows and fair brides of the dead, crape-clad, bewailed the slaughter, and millions of tears watered the flowers they had planted in the places of sepulture. But they were proud in their desolation, for their heroes had died bravely. Whereat I saw the form first rising, as if it had been a woman full of charms, rising upward still more beautiful and majestic. And there was a garment of light about her, and she had a golden girdle as of a constitution, and a wreath of laws was on her brow, and a mighty sword was in her uplifted hand, and scales as it had been, of justice! And power was given to her and great attractions! Then new motions of life began to stir among the human masses, for the ark of God's covenant was with her, and it bore the seed of immortal hope to the generations of the world! And *stars* became the symbols of her dominion, prophesying of the future, as the *stripes* were of her struggles, telling of the sorrows of the past! And the people hailed her as they would a great deliverance, and mighty plaudits and greetings of fervent joy rose up to heaven. Then I saw the genius of that form beating, as the life blood beats in the heart of a giant when a large work is to be done. And geography had to be rewritten to correct her boundaries, and political arithmetic and economy had to change their data to give a wider scope to her problem of human destiny; for she held forth the first fruits in her hand, of the unchangeable Kingdom of God, gathered from the harvest of the world tumultuous!

And still that form first seen abundantly prospered. And there went up a mightier shout as she triumphed over oppression and the infernal arts of faction and sub-

version. And there away in the van of universal liberty and light, of law and religion, I saw striding on the pathway of ages the *form* of the powerful, a Titan strength pulsing under her breast-plate, and the smile of the Almighty impressed upon her brow! The emigrant came to seek protection from her arm and the exile to find sympathy and succor by her side! Manhood was inspirited and ennobled in her presence, and from her countenance the dignity to dare and to do all things of deep philosophy and of unquailing heroism suffused the eyes and pervaded the souls of her ever increasing millions! The children, gleesome, saluted her with morning benisons, and the old men left her their benediction when they died. And, as that form fairer and mightier rose upon my gaze, I wept and clapped my hands for joy, for I discerned in its greatness the spirit of my country! Amen.