

OUR SAVIOUR'S EXAMPLE :

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT LA GRANGE, GEORGIA,

BEFORE THE STUDENTS

OF THE

LAGRANGE FEMALE INSTITUTE,

NOVEMBER 28th, 1847.

BY

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PRESIDENT OF OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY.

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LAGRANGE, GEORGIA, DEC. 1, 1847.

REV. S. K. TALMAGE, D. D.—

RESPECTED SIR:—The Students of the La Grange Female Institute are solicitous to have presented to them and the literary public, in pamphlet form, the chaste and eloquent Commencement Sermon delivered by yourself on the 28th inst., and desire that we, a Select Committee of their number, should earnestly impress upon your kind consideration their unanimous request, that you would furnish them a copy for publication.

1 ST SENIOR CLASS	{	A. E. BIGHAM, R. V. MARSHALL, T. HILL, M. SAUNDERS, VALERIA B. JONES,	} Committee.
2 ^D SENIOR CLASS	{	E. STINSON, S. CLAYTON, C. DOZIER,	

LAGRANGE, DEC. 2, 1847.

YOUNG LADIES:—

In consideration of the source whence the request emanates, I depart from a rule which I have usually pursued, and send you a copy of my discourse for publication. The sermon was originally prepared for a graduating class of young men in Oglethorpe University, which, together with a pressure of engagements, I must offer as my only apology for any want of adaptation to the case of the interesting auditors in whose presence it was delivered.

With my thanks to the Students of the La Grange Female Institute, for the kind terms of approbation which they have been pleased to bestow upon the exercise,

I remain, young ladies,

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL K. TALMAGE.

MISSSES A. E. BIGHAM, R. V. MARSHALL, T. HILL, M. SANDERS,
VALERIA B. JONES, E. STINSON, S. CLAYTON, C. DOZIER,
Committee.

OUR SAVIOUR'S EXAMPLE.

1st Peter—II : 21.

LEAVING US AN EXAMPLE THAT YE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS.

A PERFECT example and model of character has in all heathen lands been a great desideratum. It is not enough to have correct precepts set before us. Virtue is best illustrated, and men are more powerfully stimulated to duty, by example. The heathen had no safe standard before them. Their philosophy was, much of it, mystical, dry, abstract, impracticable. Their morals were loose—their best men full of defect—the very gods they worshipped capable of the perpetration of the foulest deeds.

In Christendom, no human example is perfect. Every life is stained with blots. Defect and aberration mar the brightest picture. So that a shrewd observer of human nature, and one versed in society and the ways of men, has said, “If you wish to admire a great man, keep at a distance from him.”

Example is better than precept, because it is something visible and tangible. Here we see one of the great benefits resulting from the mission of our Saviour to the world. He came to be a sufferer and an actor;—on the one hand, to lay down his life as a sacrifice to the justice of God, to make atonement for guilty men—on the other hand, to afford us in his life and conversation a perfect example.

As God, he is not our example; but, as man, his perfections are imitable. Of the great God it is said, “No man hath seen or can see him.” His greatness and glory would deter and discourage. He dwells in light inaccessible and full of glory. That light, by reason of its overwhelming effulgence, dazzles and blinds and becomes impenetrable darkness. “Clouds and darkness are round about him.”

It is through the veil of Christ's humanity that these beams are softened down and mitigated into a mildness that can be approached and imitated. He is the model of the perfect man, and his character is so beautiful and spotless that the infidel Rosseau, in spite of all his bitter prejudices against Christianity, is constrained to exclaim, "The character is so perfect that the conception of it by the fancy of man would be a greater miracle than the reality."

Your attention will be invited to the advantage of example as a method of instruction, and then to some particular lineaments which the pencil of Inspiration has portrayed in the life of our Saviour, worthy of our special notice and imitation. They will constitute landmarks and guides to those of you, my young friends, who are about to be surrendered to your own control, from the guardianship of parents and instructors, and to be ushered from these shades of academic seclusion upon the perilous and eventful theatre of life.

That we should feel bound to follow the example of Christ, is most evident from the divinity of his character, as well as from the beauty and attractiveness of his qualities. It is manifestly unreasonable not to imitate, as it would be impious to pour contempt upon the conduct of the son of God.

The sacred scriptures often hold up the condescension, the forbearance, the humility, the forgiveness, the love of Christ, for our imitation. They present it as a flagrant inconsistency for a man to profess to believe in Christ and yet not to follow his example. And as all are sacredly bound to believe in him, so none are exempted from the obligation to act according to his pattern. The lives of good men are also held up for our imitation. The Apostle Paul exhorts the churches to follow Christ, and to follow him so far as he follows Christ.

Example combines the advantage of giving instruction that is at once definite, expressive, comprehensive, stimulating and practical. Example in ethics is what maps are to

geography, or, as another has said, what “diagrams are to mathematics, experiments to natural philosophy, and drawings to architecture.” Precepts are like a skeleton—cold, cheerless, imperfect. Example is the flesh and blood and sinew and life, which move and interest. Hence history has well been defined as “Philosophy teaching by examples.”

There are a few striking passages in history which have probably done more to mould the sentiments and practices of mankind, than all the precepts ever written and inculcated by philosophers. In *secular history*—the bravery of Leonidas, the virtue of Lucretia, the justice of Brutus, the simplicity of Cincinnatus, the firmness of Regulus, the philanthropy of Howard, the disinterested patriotism of our own Washington, are instances that go at once to the heart—that make their way to the conscience. The facts are far more eloquent than words or arguments. The example of Washington is one of the richest earthly legacies that Heaven has deigned to bestow upon our beloved land. There was a veteran army enthusiastically, almost idolatrously devoted to their generous chief. Under his standard they had withstood the thunders of many a battle, and their weather-beaten cheeks had borne the peltings of many a storm. The destinies of the nation lay folded up in their hands. Had their leader only intimated the wish, ten thousand battle-blades had leaped from their scabbards to carve his way to a throne. But no. He loved his country, and I trust he loved his God; and he has invested the Presidential chair with a sacredness and an awe that will forever make selfishness in an incumbent gross and glaring profanation.

Sacred story abounds with examples. Whose confidence in God has not been quickened by the results of the faith of Abraham, offering up his son Isaac? And of the undaunted devotion of Daniel, prostrating himself and praying to the God of Heaven in the face of a stern royal mandate? Whose benevolence has not been enlarged by our Saviour's

picture of the good Samaritan, pouring oil into the wounds of his national enemy, whilst the Priest and the Levite of his own nation passed by on the other side? Whose sympathy for bereavement and orphanage has not received a new impulse from the scripture description of the scene at the funeral of Dorcas? When the Apostle Peter had arrived at the upper chamber where the dead body lay, "all the widows stood by him, weeping and shewing the coats and the garments which Dorcas made while she was with them."

Examples of great actions often infuse a new spirit into those who witness their exhibition. Thus Plutarch informs us that under the daring generalship of Cæsar, men of doubtful courage were found to fight with desperate valor. And the pen of Inspiration, when it would encourage and stimulate us to the duty of prayer, takes advantage of this susceptibility of the human heart, and tells us of the wonderful results of the prayers of Elijah; informing us "Elias was a man of like passions with us."

Still all human example is imperfect. The best of men have failed in duty, and therefore are not always safe examples. "Abraham equivocated, Jacob deceived, Moses yielded to violent passion, Eli criminally indulged his sons, David rashly imprecated vengeance on his enemies, Peter denied his master, Paul uncharitably assailed the high priest of God." And all these errors are candidly spread upon the sacred page, to teach us the humbling lesson of human infirmity, and kindly to warn us against presumption.

To relieve us from danger of mistake in following others, Deity has graciously furnished us with a perfect example in the gift of his Son, whose conduct affords us an unquestionable ground of obligation to follow his steps. Whilst, then, it is true, what Pliny informs us, that "Men are better instructed by examples, which prove that the things may be done which they enjoin," and what St. Bernard asserts that "The example of a work done is a lively and efficacious ora-

tion, easily persuading what we intend, by proving that feasible which we strive to persuade," so God has supplied us with a perfect example. View the example of Christ, then,

1st. IN THE RELATIONS OF LIFE.—As a son and as a citizen, he has taught us what we owe to the domestic circle and to the social compact.

Though he was the Lord of Glory, the builder of all worlds, he condescended to assume these relations and sacredly fulfilled their binding obligations. *As a son*, we read in the brief but comprehensive language of scripture, "He was subject to his parents"—thus faithfully fulfilling those solemn duties which every child owes to those who gave him his being, for the pain and toil and anxiety which the parental heart has incurred for the child of its fond affections and its inspiring hopes. Reason and nature and scripture, and the example of our blessed Saviour, all declare the binding duty of filial obedience and affection. This relation has been constituted for the wisest and most salutary purposes. And he who offers violence to this sacred tie gives abundant promise of future disgrace and ruin.

The fifth commandment is the first commandment with promise, and in no instance perhaps does Providence so signally in this world fulfil its promises and threatenings as in case of a compliance with or disobedience to this commandment. Submission to parents leads to submission to the laws of the land—to cheerful submission to the providence and laws of God—and to that self-control that prepares the individual to govern others with moderation, when he in his turn is placed at the helm. That pre-eminently gifted, but unfortunate poet and genius, Lord Byron, well and truly depicts the lamentable evils of neglect of early discipline, when he exclaims—

"And thus untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poisoned."

The filial tenderness and affection of our Saviour's heart were seen in the dying hour, and only ceased with the last

pulsation of life. Whilst suspended on the cross, and just about to bow his head in death, as his aged weeping mother stood gazing on the terrific spectacle, he looked around and beheld her; and the hidings of his Heavenly Father's face, and the tortures of the cross, and the pangs of his dying agony combined, could not arrest the breathing forth of filial love, whilst commending her to the beloved disciple, he exclaimed, "Behold thy mother!" What a rebuke is this to the ungrateful monster in human form, who in affluence and ease can forget an aged parent.

Look at the example of Christ as a *citizen*—a member of civil society. How strictly he obeyed the laws of men! The Jews were jealous of the Roman power, and proudly disputed their authority. He, though the Creator of men, the God of Angels, the Lord of all worlds, obeyed. He rendered unto Cæsar the things which were Cæsar's. When called upon to pay tribute, though as man he owned not an inch of ground, nor an humble hovel where to lay his weary, aching head, yet that he might be an example to us in all things, he commanded a fish of the sea to supply him with the means, and he responded to the call.

Government is ordained of God, and duty to him and man calls upon us to obey its mandates. Private revenge, the laws of honor, falsely so called—all resistance to law, personal or combined, is rebuked and condemned by the example of Christ. And of all men under Heaven, the citizens of our privileged and beloved land are the least excusable for refusing to be law respecters, for they are the source of power, the makers of their own laws. And yet our impatience of restraint and reckless defiance of authority are alarming symptoms of the times, suited to make the reflecting, thoughtful observer shudder and fear, lest human nature should prove too corrupt and depraved to bear the indulgence of our mild forms of government. There is often a lawlessness of action and a harshness of denunciation which embitter party strife and weaken the ties that bind society.

Men should remember that vituperation is not argument, nor is billingsgate logic—nor is violence or abuse, in the correction of real or imaginary grievances, the safe method to promote the purity or preserve the integrity of human governments.

2d. VIEW CHRIST AS A PATTERN OF INDUSTRY.

Whilst he remained in private life, he seems laboriously to have pursued the humble vocation of his reputed father. When he entered upon the public labors of his ministry, he commenced a series of toils uninterrupted and labors unmitigated. They were suspended only for the three days he lay in the grave, to be resumed again with unrelaxing rigour, and continued until he led his disciples out of Jerusalem, and a cloud received him out of their sight as he sublimely rose to his native Heaven. He had taught man that this was not the place of his rest, and in his own life he exemplified the duty and condition he has imposed on humanity. Man is made for activity. His very nature proclaims it by indisputable signs. The body, the intellect, the heart, all need employment and exercise for a healthy tone and action. Health, happiness, usefulness, all prompt to effort and demand activity. Corporeal indolence superinduces effeminacy and disease. Mental inactivity is attended with intellectual imbecility. Neglect to exercise the affections of the heart leads to apathy and misanthropy. Solid reputation, extended usefulness, lasting fame, are the results of labor. The curse of the "sweat of the brow" is converted into a blessing in this world of temptation, and it is the price to be paid for all true merit. "Be not weary in well doing," is the scripture rule. The mushroom springs up in a night—the sturdy oak is the growth of ages.

I know not why, of the thirty-three years of our Saviour's life on earth, he spent thirty long years in obscurity and retirement, and devoted only three to the amazingly important interests of the public ministry, unless it was to rebuke man's restless haste for notoriety and renown. Skill in a

profession, whether mental or manual, is the reward of toil, long, patient, persevering and laborious. The labours of one year of a matured, well directed, disciplined, and cultivated mind, are often better, more effective and honorable than the crude, undigested and weak efforts of the undisciplined mind for scores of years.

There is imminent hazard in entrusting the interests of the soul, the health of the body, the reputation, property and life of the citizen, or the relations of communities, states and nations, to immature hands.

In the best days of the Roman Republic, no man was entrusted with the functions of high and responsible office unless he was deeply read in the history and laws of his country. And under Divine authority, the Apostle Paul, in giving directions to Timothy respecting the proper candidates for the holy christian ministry, strictly enjoins it upon him to lay the hands of ordination suddenly upon no man, lest he be lifted up with pride and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Much reading, meditation and prayer, are required for the solemn office of an ambassador for Christ.

A long course of study and laborious preparation is necessary to qualify for the honorable posts of life. Our vessel of state is freighted with too precious a cargo to be safely entrusted to rash and inexperienced hands. It has been purchased at the cost of too much sweat and blood to justify its committal to unskilful navigators. Able heads and sound hearts are needed to pilot it through the breakers and storms which buffet it. The matured and mellowed experience of age and grey hairs is too much overlooked. Were we more in the habit of taking counsel of age, many hasty steps would be avoided, and those scenes of violence and angry contest in our halls of legislation would more seldom occur, which too often disgrace our public assemblies and bring a blot upon our fair escutcheon as a nation. Men intrude upon giddy heights before the passions are sufficiently

calmed to enable them to stand self-poised on the fearful eminence of influence and power.

All that is illustrious in antiquity, that has come down to us, is the result of much labor. The great secret of the present existence of the literary productions of two or three thousand years standing, is found in the fact that their authors spent ten, twenty, thirty years in their compilation. Their toil constructed arks that could ride out the buffetings and surges of time, whilst lighter barks have foundered and been swept from the face of the ocean.* The Bible direction is "Not slothful in business," whilst "Fervent in spirit serving the Lord." But let it be the right business. Said the profound and learned Grotius, when gazing upon the corpse of a deceased acquaintance whom he had often ridiculed for his protracted seasons of devotion: "That was a truly wise man, but as for me I have wasted my life in laborious idleness."

3d. VIEW CHRIST IN HIS HUMILITY.

The Apostle informs us that he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. Humility was a striking trait in his character. It was predicted that the King of Zion would come in a lowly character. And when he appeared, no pomp, parade, or display, waited on his footsteps. He was meek and lowly in heart. The grace of humility is strangely undervalued among men. Indeed, there is no word to express the meaning of this lovely virtue out of christendom. The Latin word *humilitas*, whence the term is derived, when used in a moral sense, signifies meanness. And yet man surely should be humble. If we look at our depravity in the sight of God, our origin, our dependence, our end, we have little of which to be proud. What is man? His foun-

* Dionysius was engaged 24 years in writing his work—Polybius, 17 years—Dion. Casseus, 22 years—Decdorus Siculus, 30 years. Demosthenes is said to have transcribed, with his own hand, the works of Thucydides eight times, that he might become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and style of the author.

ation is in the dust; he dwells in a tabernacle of clay; his breath is in his nostrils; he is crushed before the moth. In infancy, how feeble and helpless! In old age, how infirm! In the vigor of manhood, how entirely dependent on God and on his fellow man! And in the dying hour, what is he!

A thousand diseases are lurking within him—a thousand accidents are flying around him, any one of which may in a moment lay him low in the dust. As a guilty creature, how depraved is he! altogether dependent on the spirit of God and the grace of Christ for that spiritual renovation without which there is no heaven for him. Do pride and a lofty bearing become such a creature? Especially, in view of the humility of his Saviour, and of the angels in heaven, who lie low before the throne. We may possibly have a right to think ourselves as good as others, for we may be; and humility is only a proper sense of our true character. And yet it is true that the greatest and best of men, who were the most intimate with their own hearts, have been the humblest. Abraham, the friend of God, acknowledged that he was but “dust and ashes,” and Jacob that he was “less than the least of all God’s mercies.” Isaiah exclaims, in view of the majesty and holiness of God, “Wo is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips.” And the devoted Paul felt that he was “less than the least of all saints, not worthy to be called an Apostle.” And if it is not profane in this connection to refer to an uninspired philosopher, I would point you to the example of Sir Isaac Newton, who, after holding communion with the stars, and listening to the music of the spheres, and opening paths of science along which none but gigantic minds can follow even in his beaten way, felt, in view of the unexplored oceans of truth, like a child picking up pebbles on the shore. In view of his nature and inferiority to other beings, for man to exalt himself among his fellows, is like an insect proudly comparing himself with an other insect by the side of a mastodon. God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. And

though Heaven is his throne, he will dwell with that man who is of an humble and contrite spirit, and who trembleth at his word.

Pride in man is the fruitful source of a thousand nameless mortifications; for the proud man is never so much insulted as when he meets a man as proud as himself. But "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."

4th. VIEW THE BENEVOLENCE AND COMPASSION OF CHRIST.

He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He went about doing good. His whole life was a life of benevolence. He came to dry up the tear of sorrow—to quell the pang of grief. Diseases and wretchedness fled at his approach. He made the deaf to hear, the dumb to sing, the blind to see, the lame to leap for joy. From the afflicted and sorrowful, he never turned away. And at last, to consummate the work of love, he gave himself up to the agonies of the cross, the accursed death of crucifixion, to expiate the sins of man, his guilty enemy. And though the power of working miracles does not belong to us, yet there are many means and ways in our power, of turning the frowns of men into smiles and their sorrow into joy. Even the common courtesies of society, in the exercise of a benevolent heart, can every day find means to cheer the desponding, and by sympathy light up the abodes of distress with comfort. The last venerable signer of our Declaration of Independence, who descended to the grave, used to say that kindness and courtesy of manners were so cheap to the possessor, and so cheering to his fellow men, that he must indeed be truly selfish who would not cultivate kindness of manner. Says the inspired Apostle Peter, "Finally, brethren, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be *courteous*, be pitiful."

But the compassion of Christ is one of the most wonderful traits in his character. See the Son of God at Bethany

weeping over the grave of his friend Lazarus ; and again on the heights of Olivet, weeping over the sins of Jerusalem, the very men who he knew well were soon to prove his guilty betrayers and his cruel murderers. Thou man of blood ! go and gaze upon this sublime spectacle until thy hard heart is dissolved into tenderness. A spirit of true benevolence is one of the best companions and protectors on earth. Some men seldom, if ever, are involved in difficulties with others. There is a spirit of benevolence flowing from the eye and beaming in the countenance that disarms opposition ; it is a more impregnable fortress than being encased in triple brass and armed to the teeth. The rugged nature of the tiger is softened down at their approach. A benevolent female philanthropist in England, who has turned her attention, like Howard, to the wants and necessities of prisoners, has taught us that there is a spring in the hardest human heart that can be touched by the hand of benevolence, and it will vibrate a grateful response. Desperadoes and outlaws, whom judges and juries, and bolts and bars, and prisons, could not cause to relax a muscle, have been seen, under her gentle admonition, to shed the tear of penitence.

5th. VIEW CHRIST IN HIS FORBEARANCE AND FORGIVENESS.

His rule was, "Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." And how admirably he exemplified his doctrines. The nearest approach to this in heathen ethics is the rule of Plutarch, directing us to forgive our enemies, lest we contract habits of unkindness towards our friends. Our Saviour, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. There is a passage in his history—an expression dropped from his lips whilst hanging on the cross—that contains more of the moral

sublime than any thing beside that man has ever heard. His murderers had driven him up the rugged hill of Calvary, with the Cross on his shoulders, until he began to faint from weariness. Fearing lest he might lose his sensibilities until he should become unconscious of the pains to be inflicted, by a refinement and ingenuity of cruelty truly diabolical, they constrain a passer-by to relieve him of his burden, in order to secure his capacity for suffering. They plait the crown of thorns around his sacred temples, and drive the nails through his hands and feet, and suspend him to the fatal tree. And yet, whilst anguished with torture and weltering in his own blood, he cries, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

"To err, is human—to forgive, divine." What shall we then say, if you will pardon me the expression, of the powder and ball spirit of the age—of the man who, for an imaginary or a trifling offence from a fellow worm, would send an immortal spirit unprepared into eternity, and destroy forever that precious life which none but God can give, and none but God has the right to take away—whilst he plants a barbed arrow in his own breast that shall rankle forever. Spirit of duelling! thou foe to humanity! thou emanation from the darkest passions of the human heart! riding in audacious triumph even through christendom, over the cries and tears of widowhood and orphanage, and over the sun-dere'd ties of all human and divine obligations! When shall the mild genius of Christianity check thy mad career? When will men cease to offer costly sacrifices at the shrine of this bloody Moloch, and to set at defiance the precepts and example of the Divine Redeemer? But whilst duelling is opposed to the commands and the laws of God, and to the example of Christ, it is utterly contrary to reason. If I call my fellow man to the field of mortal combat for an injury done me, and kill him, I have only added to the injury by committing crime myself. If he destroys my life, I have surely a poor compensation. If both of us escape, I must

now view his offence cancelled as a reward for his attempt to destroy me—unless we go back to the barbarous and superstitious origin of this mode of settling difficulties, and believe that Providence will interfere and make it the ordeal of innocence or guilt. As a mark of bravery, it is no test—for cowards have been driven to fight by false public sentiment, whilst brave men have dared to refuse.

And if the man of honor in high places may glut his vengeance by taking life by rule, surely the humble man of blood is justified in doing the work of death in his own way. The bowie-knife, and the dirk, and the stiletto, are part and parcel of the same system of revenge.

True worth will command reputation. The man of solid merit is armed with triple brass, and can afford to be forbearing. The humble mechanic understood the philosophy of reputation, who, when censured for not prosecuting his slanderous enemy, replied, that he could hammer out a better reputation on his anvil in six months than he could secure for years by appealing to the courts of justice. “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.”

6th. FINALLY, VIEW THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST IN HIS PIETY TOWARDS GOD.

This, after all, is the one thing needful—the quality without which every thing else will prove a curse, and when weighed in the balance will be found lighter than vanity. The soul of man was created to love and serve God.—Whilst destitute of that love, as every unregenerated heart is, it is out of its appropriate element, and nothing in the wide universe but that, can meet its wants and fill its vast and boundless desires. The possession of kingdoms and worlds, with all their glory, would still leave the soul to starve in indigence, without piety to God. Talents, fame, rank, all have their alloy. The finer sensibilities of the soul even are the inlets of sorrow. The poet of Nature has justly

said, in that perhaps finest stanza in the English language :

“Dearly bought the hidden treasure,
Finer feelings can bestow ;
Chords, that vibrate sweetest measure,
Thrill the deepest notes of wo.”

Our Saviour left the abodes of glory, and came to this dark earth to serve God. It was his meat and his drink to do the will of his Father in Heaven. Hence, when, at the age of twelve years, his parents rebuked him for his absence, not knowing that a call from higher authority had detained him, he meekly replied, “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Hence his frequent retirement for prayer, his zeal to purify the temple, and to reform the abuses of his age and nation. Hence his faithful rebukes and warnings to men. Hence his profound submission to the Divine will, when in the garden of Gethsemane, he said, “Not my will, but thine, be done,” though the approaching agonies of the cross caused him to sweat as it were great drops of blood, and extorted the cry, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.”

Piety of heart man must have, or perish. This is as needful an aliment for the soul, as food is for the body, or knowledge for the mind. It is indispensable, and there is no substitute for it. Individual man needs it—social man needs it.

What is this poor world to man, who is here but the creature of a day, and then bound for a wasteless eternity. One who combined all the advantages of wealth and talent, and rank and fame—who tried the world, and found it wanting—exclaims :

“’Tis but a worthless world to win or lose !”

Without piety, man is not prepared to live aright—is not fit to die. Oh ! think of a soul on its way to the bar of God, torn away from every thing that can communicate delight, and hurried up to an unprepared account. How it clings to the world with its last convulsive grasp, whilst despair sits pictured in the countenance, and a fearful looking for of

judgment awaits it hereafter. It is faith in Christ that erects a safe pathway across the dark valley of the shadow of death, and pours upon that pathway the splendors of an eternal day. Without the restraints of the fear of God, man is never safe. You may improve the intellect, but this is not enough. The demons in despair are not deficient in intellect. Piety is the helm that guides the vessel from the rocks and quicksands—the rein which restrains the spirited courser from dashing himself to destruction.

Religion is, too, the bond and cement of society, and nowhere else is it so much needed as in a republic. And if in England, and France, and Prussia, great statesmen, with Brougham at their head, are calling for more religious instruction, to save the people from the abuse of knowledge, what can a self-governed republic do without it? Where there are no restraints but what the people impose—no rulers but who are the type of the people—no law but omnipotent public opinion—law, without a purified public sentiment to administer it, is but binding Sampson with a cord of withes. We must have more religious restraints, or our young and beautiful republic will become a rope of sand, or a tyrant's football. Her intellectual glory and her physical strength and resources will but light her way, and give a more fearful impulse and alarming momentum towards an inglorious end. The great heart of the nation must rest on the Christian Sabbath, from the throes and palpitations of secular excitement, and refresh itself in repose and divine contemplation, for renewed contact with worldly care. And to secure this, the consciences and the habits of the rising generation must be cultivated and watched with sedulous, parental and religious care. God's revealed will must be made the guide and standard in all things, and the life and atonement of the blessed Saviour must be proclaimed and held up in bold relief in every quarter of the land.

And now, my young friends, what more shall I say to you? Follow the example of the Blessed Saviour; believe

on him, and obey his precepts. It is to the life and teachings of that Saviour, and to his inspired Word, that woman especially is indebted for her elevation in society. In all heathen lands, the endearing words, daughter, sister, wife, mother, have no charms. There woman is, every where and always, the degraded slave of the selfishness, the lust, and the tyranny of man. A female infidel is therefore a moral monster, a wretched ingrate.

Go forth, those of you who go, to adorn and to bless society—to scatter the light of truth and benevolence and piety along your path—to aid in enlightening and purifying a dark and corrupt and miserable world.

So live and act, that when the false glare of time shall be withdrawn, and earth's glories shall dwindle into insignificance, through rich grace in Christ Jesus, the ineffable splendors of Heaven may blaze and brighten around you forever. AMEN.