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An address, on the oc-  
casion of the author's  
inauguration as presi-  
dent of Hanover College  
...1850

by

T.E. Thomas

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AN  
ADDRESS,

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE AUTHOR'S INAUGURATION

AS

PRESIDENT OF HANOVER COLLEGE,

INDIANA.

DELIVERED MARCH 28, 1850;

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BY THOMAS-EBENEZER THOMAS.

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NOTE.

It may, perhaps, be necessary, on account of one or two allusions in the following pages, to say that the author would by no means oppose the study of the Greek and Latin classic authors. He sees no inconsistency in the sentiments quoted, on page 5th, from Sir William Jones. He only desires that the Sacred Classics may not be wholly excluded from a course of instruction, in which Pagan writings occupy a large and engrossing share of attention.

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Jan 11-29-32

## INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

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*Gentlemen of the Board of Trustees,  
and Fellow-Citizens :*

THE Institution over which I have been called to preside, whose interests I have this day undertaken, in conjunction with my respected colleagues of the Faculty, to maintain and promote, is emphatically a school for Christian education. Founded in faith and prayer; sustained by the zeal, enterprise, and liberality of a portion of Christ's Church; and subject, from the beginning, to ecclesiastical superintendence and control; it is to be regarded as consecrated to the service of our blessed Lord and Saviour. Whatever subordinate ends it may subserve, its main design is, and should forever be, to aid in establishing the kingdom of Him whose right it is to reign, and who must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

If the chief end of man is, as we believe, to glorify God and to enjoy him forever, the chief end of Christian education must be, to qualify youth, so far as human instrumentality may avail, for fulfilling the design of their creation. Such an education must address itself to the whole complex nature of man, physical, intellectual, and spiritual. It must include the development and discipline of faculty, the communication of knowledge, the formation of habits, and the cultivation of manners. Above all, it must continually direct the pupil to

his Creator, Redeemer, and Judge; impress upon his mind the obligations of duty and usefulness; strive to awaken in his heart sentiments of piety; and lead him to order his life in accordance with the principles and precepts of religion. Surely nothing less than this can be called Christian education.

The system of instruction, gentlemen, which you have deemed it a duty to establish in this Institution, is, we believe, peculiarly adapted to accomplish the end which the Church designs in the establishment and support of colleges. In addition to those branches of learning which are prosecuted in all similar Foundations, the thorough study of which is thought most fully and symmetrically to develop and improve the intellectual powers, you have felt it obligatory to order, that *the Bible, in some form or other, shall be made a text-book for daily study and recitation, in every class, from the lowest to the highest.* It is a singular and almost unaccountable fact, that in adopting such a course, you are venturing an experiment perhaps unprecedented in the history of American Colleges. I say this, not invidiously, still less boastfully;—"let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off;"—but as a simple matter of fact. The distinguished President of Brown University, in his admirable Thoughts on the present Collegiate system in the United States, says, "The design of public seminaries is specially to develop, and cultivate to the highest perfection, the intellectual power of the nation." (p. 76.) Did the Oracles of God occupy their appropriate place in our public seminaries, this statement could never be true; and the design of such establishments would be far more elevated, comprehensive, and sublime.

Untried, however, as this experiment may be, in our modern systems of education, I cannot allow myself to doubt that if fairly and fully tested, it will ultimately justify the expectations of its friends, and command the approbation at least of the Christian public. Nor are there wanting, even antecedent to all experimental proof of the practicability and utility of

the course you have adopted, arguments of irresistible influence in favor of employing the Holy Scriptures as a chief instrument in the mental as well as moral cultivation of youth.

I. And first, the Bible, by the confession of the ablest judges, stands unrivaled, even in a literary point of view, by any human composition.

In reference simply to our English version, that distinguished scholar and orator, Fisher Ames, has said: "Should not the Bible regain the place it once held as a school book? Its morals are pure, its examples captivating and noble. . . . . One consideration more is important. In no other book is there so good English, so pure, and so elegant." The eminent jurist and accomplished oriental scholar, Sir William Jones, has said: "The Scriptures contain, independently of their Divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected within the same compass, from all other books that were ever composed, in any age, or in any idiom." Yet was he no enemy to the Profane Classics; but one who could say of Tully and Demosthenes, "These I devour—these I get by heart—these I repeat—these I shall never cease admiring and imitating to the end of my life;"—the man who "made it a rule to peruse the works of Cicero once every year."

The opinion of the famous Fenelon, archbishop of Cambray, "than whom a more calm, dignified, and dispassionate judge, never compared Christian with Heathen classics," is thus expressed in his Dialogues upon eloquence: "The Scripture surpasses the most ancient Greek authors vastly, in native simplicity, liveliness, and grandeur. Homer himself never reached the sublimity of Moses' songs, especially the last, which all Israelitish children were to learn by heart. Never did any ode, either Greek or Latin, come up to the loftiness of the Psalms, particularly that beginning, 'The mighty God, even

Jehovah, hath spoken.' This surpasses the utmost stretch of human invention. Neither Homer nor any other poet ever equaled Isaiah, describing the majesty of God, in whose sight 'the nations of the earth are as small dust, yea, less than nothing, and vanity;' seeing 'it is He that stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain, and spreadeth them out like a tent to dwell in.' Sometimes this prophet has all the sweetness of an eclogue in the smiling image he gives us of peace, and sometimes he soars so high as to leave every thing below him. What is there in antiquity that can be compared to the lamentations of Jeremiah, when he tenderly deplores the misery of his country? Or the prophecy of Nahum, when he foresees in spirit the proud Nineveh fall under the rage of an invincible army? We fancy that we see the army, and hear the noise of arms and chariots. Every thing is painted in such a lively manner as strikes the imagination: the prophet far outdoes Homer. Read, likewise, Daniel denouncing to Belshazzar the Divine vengeance ready to overwhelm him; and try if you can find any thing in the most sublime originals of antiquity that can be compared to those passages of Sacred Writ. As for the rest of Scripture, every portion of it is uniform and constant; every part bears the peculiar character that becomes it. The history, the particular detail of laws, the descriptions, the vehement and pathetic passages, the mysteries and prophecies, the moral discourses—in all these there appears a natural and beautiful variety. In short, there is as great a difference between the Heathen poets and the Prophets, as there is between a false enthusiasm and the true."

Testimony, like this, to the literary merit of the Bible, drawn from the very highest sources, might easily be multiplied at pleasure: but for those who are unable to verify such statements, they are sufficient, for they are uncontradicted; and the scholar may easily ascertain their truth for himself. Let him compare, for example, Virgil's admired description, in the first book of the *Æneid*, of *Æolus* and the cave of the winds,



“Hic vasto rex Æolus antro  
Luctantes ventos tempestatesque sonoras  
Imperio premit, ac vinclis et carcere fraenat,—”

with Isaiah's description of Jehovah—

“He holdeth the winds in his fist.”

Or his exhibition, in the same book, of angry Neptune's power over the sea :

“Interea magno misceri murmure pontum  
Emissamque hiemem sensit Neptunus, et imis  
Stagna refusa vadis, graviter commotus; et alto  
Prospiciens, summa placidum caput extulit unda.  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Sic ait, et dicto citius tumida aequora placat,  
Collectasque fugat nubes, solemque reducit.  
Cymothœ, simul et Triton adnixus, acuto  
Detrudunt naves scopulo: levat ipse tridenti;  
Et vastas aperit syrtes, et temperat aequor;—

Compare the picture of Neptune, “greatly excited,” raising his “composed features” from the water, to dig out the Trojan ships,—with the simple majesty of the Prophet,—“He holdeth the waters in the hollow of his hand”!

Or the soft, mellifluous line of Homer,

*βῆ δ' ἀκρων παρα θίνα πολυφλοισβοιο θαλάσσης,*

with the Psalmist's stanza, even in the vernacular :

“The floods have lifted up, O Lord,  
The floods have lifted up their voice;  
The floods lift up their waves.  
The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters,  
Yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.”

Let him compare the truly grand and thrilling picture, in the opening of the Iliad, of the far-shooting Apollo, as he spreads havock among the Greeks,—

*βῆ δὲ κατ' Ὀλυμπεῖοι κρητῶν χωόμενος κῆρ,  
Τοξ' ὠμοῖσιν ἔχων, ἀμφηρέφεια τε φαρετρήν  
Ἐκλαγξάν δ' ἀρ' οἴστοι ἐπ', ὦμων χωόμενοιο,  
Αὐτοῦ κινήθεντος· ὁ δ' ἦϊε νυκτι εἰοικώς.  
Ἐξέτ' ἐπειτ' ἀπανευθε νέων, μετὰ δ' ἰὸν ἔηκε·  
Δεινὴ δὲ πλάγῃ γενετ' ἀργυρεῖο βιοιο.*

with the awful majesty of Jehovah, as described by Habakkuk :

“ God came from Teman,  
 And the Holy One from Mount Paran.  
 His glory covered the heavens,  
 And the earth was full of his praise.  
 Before him went the pestilence,  
 And burning coals went forth at his feet.  
 He stood, and measured the earth ;  
 He beheld, and drove asunder the nations :  
 And the everlasting mountains were scattered,  
 And the perpetual hills did bow.”

Let him compare Xenophon's *Memorabilia* with John's Gospel; the vehement eloquence of Isaiah with that of Demosthenes; or the reasoning of Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, with that of Plato's *Phædon*, or the first book of the *Tusculan Questions*; let him multiply such comparisons indefinitely, and he will not fail to award the palm of even literary merit to the ancient emir of Uz, the exile of Midian, the shepherd king of Israel, the rough-garbed prophets of Judea, the fishermen of Galilee, and the tent-maker of Tarsus.

Nor is this superiority of the sacred writers a matter of surprise. Adequate causes may be found in their profound earnestness, and the dignity and grandeur of their theme. Style is to an author what manners are to a gentleman,—the natural expression of thought and feeling. But the penmen of the Scriptures were distinguished for their singleness and loftiness of purpose; they are concerned only about the *thoughts* which they communicate; and hence, in their very forgetfulness of manner, they are necessarily natural, and therefore simple, beautiful, pathetic, and majestic in expression.

And shall such a volume, of unrivaled literary value, be withheld from the daily contemplation of the young? Shall the Doric simplicity and dignity of Homer, the Ionic grace and beauty of Herodotus, the Corinthian elegance of Plato, the Tuscan strength of Livy, and the Composite finish of Virgil, attract their hourly admiration; while the exquisite natu-

ral beauty and majesty of Moses, David, Isaiah, John, and Paul, like those of the verdant meadow, the gentle declivity, the undulating hills, the graceful and waving forest, the beetling cliff, the rugged rock, the awful precipice, and the cloud-capped mountain, are passed unnoticed!

II. The study of the Bible, especially in the Greek and Hebrew originals, simply as a means of mental cultivation, is unquestionably as valuable as the study of Pagan authors.

If, in the acquisition of a language, the memory be strengthened by a continual effort to retain the meaning of words; if the judgment be rendered more acute and discriminating by constantly distinguishing the ever-varying shades of thought; if the reasoning faculty be invigorated by frequent and thorough analyses of labored arguments; if habits of attention, reflection, and patient and intense application be secured; if these and similar advantages attend the study of the Profane, why not of the Sacred Classics? Why may not the Hebrew ode of David, for instance:

אשרי בשׁוֹי־יָשׁוּעַ סִסְמֵי חַטָּאִה:

translated, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven," &c., afford as profitable an exercise as the Latin ode of Horace,

"Beatus ille qui procul negotiis?"

Or the discourses of Paul before the Areopagus, the Sanhedrim, Felix and Agrippa, as the various speeches recorded in Xenophon's *Anabasis*?

Indeed, so far as the student's improvement depends upon the interest awakened in his mind by the subject of study, the Bible possesses incomparable advantages. Where else can we find so engaging a variety of style, manner and matter? so wide a range of material for thought,—boundless, indeed, and inexhaustible? Beginning with the origin of created things, it traces the history of the past, and lifts the veil of an interminable future. The antediluvial world, the founders

of nations, the builders of Babylon, Nineveh, and Tyre; the simple-hearted but noble patriarchs of a primeval period; the Jewish nation traced like some famous river from its fountain-head; the Theocratic judges, the world-renowned kings, the splendid temple; the Egyptian, Chaldean, Assyrian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires; the wealth, luxury, vice, and ruin of the ancient seats of power; the desolating plagues of Egypt; the destruction of the tyrant Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea; the burning cities of the plain; the reception of a sublime, universal, and perfect law at Mount Sinai, amid clouds and darkness, the vivid flash of lightnings, the bellowing thunder that leaped from crag to crag, and all the majesty of a descending God; the unbending integrity and stern heroism of prophets commissioned to denounce impending vengeance; the active, benevolent, spotless life, and awful, sacrificial death of the man Christ Jesus, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; his ascent to the throne of universal dominion; the founding of that kingdom which has survived eighteen centuries of change, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, and which shall break in pieces all kingdoms; the principles of intellectual and moral philosophy, the philosophy of social relations and political economy; the fall and redemption of man, the nature and ministry of angels, the fall and fate of devils; the rest of the saints, and the prison of perdition; the administration of Divine providence, extending over all worlds, throughout all ages, comprehending alike the stars of heaven, and the hairs of the head; finally, Jehovah himself, wonderful in being and counsel, glorious in holiness, adorable in infinite excellence;—these are some of the varied, profitable, sublime, and profoundly interesting subjects presented in the Bible. Will any one venture to compare with such topics, regarding their inherent power of fixing attention, the wrath of Achilles; the wanderings of Ulysses; the *casus et labores* of the *pious* villain Æneas; the bawdy Bacchanalian songs of Anacreon, Horace, and Catullus; the

vices and crimes of Cataline and Jugurtha, or the ceaseless and bloody battles of Cæsar?

If we consider the immense variety and exuberant fertility of those resources from which we draw illustration and confirmation of the facts, narratives, and allusions in the Bible, we shall discover additional reason for regarding it as incomparably the most interesting text-book which can be placed in a student's hands. As the sheaves of Joseph's brethren bowed in homage around his sheaf; as the beautiful daughters of Jerusalem waited around the matchless Shulamith; so around the Book of books there clusters all else we know of nature and art, of science and human history. Hither come, to honor and to aid, a thousand curious oriental customs; a thousand facts from ancient historians, poets, and philosophers; from modern travelers; from geography, geology, natural history, and astronomy; from coins, medals, inscriptions, statues, ruins, and monuments. As the wise men of the East brought to the infant Saviour, gold, frankincense, and myrrh; so to the pages of Revelation there come rich contributions from Egyptian, Persian, Grecian, Roman, and Indian mythology; from the rock-hewn dwellings of deserted Petræa; the temples and pyramids of Egypt; the mouldering heaps of Babel; the long-lost halls and towers of Nineveh; the gloomy, sunken sea of the dead cities; the fallen palaces of Zion; the solitary, net-covered rocks of once populous Tyre; the forsaken sites or languishing remains of the seven Asiatic cities; from Mars' hill, from Corinth, and from Rome. Can scholiasts and editors claim for any Pagan classic, a mass of subsidiary information, so varied, useful, and attractive?

Nor is the Bible devoid of that singular interest with which a venerable antiquity invests its subject; that attraction so strongly felt as we gaze upon the pioneer whose early steps disturbed the silence of our western wilds; upon the moss-covered oak, beneath whose shade reclined the stalwart warrior of other days; upon the grassy mound, the resting place of

those who climbed these steeps, and cultivated these plains, and navigated these streams, a thousand years ago. What, but the everlasting hills, can challenge the antiquity of the Bible! The student, entering some vast library, searches for the writings of the Fathers, and finds Augustine, Chrysostom, Eusebius, Origen, and Tertullian:—but the youngest New Testament writer died, before the eldest of these Fathers was born. He is shown, as the earliest profane compositions, the productions of Homer and Hesiod; but the songs of Moses anticipated the rhapsodies of Homer by five centuries. History unfolds before him the names of Solon and Lycurgus, among the ancient lawgivers of Greece: but Moses had recorded the Jewish Constitution six centuries before the birth of Lycurgus. He traces the mighty Roman empire, through fact and fiction, *ad urbis conditæ annum*: but learns that the King in Jeshurun had established the Jewish commonwealth seven centuries before Romulus laid the corner stone of the eternal city;—that the last Jewish and the first Roman monarch, were cotemporaries. He makes a pilgrimage to “the Niobe of nations,” and surrounded by her magnificent ruins, is attracted and overawed by the venerable majesty of the crumbling Coliseum:

“ Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,  
 Collecting the chief trophies of her line,  
 Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,  
 Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine  
 As ’t were its natural torches, for divine  
 Should be the light which streams here, to illumine  
 This long-explored but still exhaustless mine  
 Of contemplation; and the azure gloom  
 Of an Italian night,—where the deep skies assume

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,—  
 Floats o’er this vast and wondrous monument,  
 And shadows forth its glory.”

Yet let him remember, with greater admiration, that the Coliseum was built by the labors of sixty thousand Jews, captured during the second and last overthrow of a people, whose history, for

two thousand years previous, had been recorded by Old Testament prophets!

III. Valuable as these considerations may be in evincing the merits of the Bible as a text-book of daily instruction, there are others of far superior weight. The importance of self-knowledge, and of an intimate acquaintance with human nature generally, cannot easily be over-estimated. When Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, was asked what he thought the most difficult thing in the world, he answered, "*To know one's self:*" and in reference to this saying, perhaps, the famous maxim, Γνωθι σεαυτον, was inscribed on the front of Apollo's temple at Delphi. The advocates of Pagan Classic literature have frequently defended their favorite authors, on the ground of their ability in dissecting and exhibiting the nature of man. Thus, a Wytttenbach could say of Thucydides, "What wonderful grandeur and sublimity of thought does he possess! What weight in his opinions! How just an estimate does he always make of virtue and vice! With what sagacity does he unfold the human heart, and explore its inmost recesses!"—Of Polybius, "With human nature in general he seems to have had so intimate an acquaintance, that nothing which belongs to man has escaped him. He has thus accomplished what he had proposed to himself; to make history the Directress of life, the Herald of truth, and the safest Interpreter of futurity:"—and again, of Plutarch, "The genuine Grecian spirit, therefore, breathes forth in his works; where we find those excellencies which are the characteristics of the ancient writers; sound judgment, a proper sense of what is right and decorous in our deportment in life, liberality of feeling, affection for our fellow citizens, benevolence towards all men, and unwearied zeal in deserving well of all men, by enlightening their minds, forming their habits, commending their virtues, correcting their vices, and exterminating error in every form."

But if such language be indeed applicable to Heathen histo-

rians, biographers, and moralists; if *they* deserve the daily and unremitted attention of youth, that they may learn themselves and mankind; what terms can sufficiently extol the Bible, that inimitable collection of history, biography, poetry, moral precepts, and evangelical doctrines!—a volume, dictated by Him who created man upright, observed his fall, and has marked all his wanderings; by Him who knoweth what is in man, for He searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men; by Him who understandeth our thoughts afar off, who compasseth our path and our lying down, and is acquainted with all our ways! In this book, penned by holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, human nature, in all its varied phases, is presented as in a mirror; and presented with a simplicity, minuteness of detail, accuracy of outline, and vividness of impression, which man would vainly imitate! Here are exhibited for our instruction the public and private acts, the very words, the secret thoughts, passions, and emotions, of patriarchs, priests, kings, subjects, and servants; of shepherds, farmers, and fishermen; of philosophers, scholars, and the ignorant; of queens upon the throne, and maids behind the mill; of parents and children, the aged and the young; of the savage and the civilized, the poor and the rich, the prosperous and the afflicted; of the ambitious, the covetous, the lover of pleasure, and the misanthrope; of the lukewarm, the self-deceived, the faint-hearted, the time-server, and the bold blasphemer; of the pure and the licentious, the penitent and the desperate; of the atheist, the idolater, and the Christian; of the antediluvian scoffer and the preacher of righteousness; of the proud oppressor, and the crushed, degenerate slave; of apostate professors, and warning, weeping prophets; of sneering bigots, self-righteous hypocrites, and calm, zealous, dauntless apostles of truth; of bloody persecutors and patient martyrs; of the sons of God, and the children of perdition. In short, here is a perfect transcript of man and of society, in every possible variety of situation,



relation, and circumstance. Shall we, then, possessed of this unerring guide, pursue the study of man under blind leaders? Shall we substitute for these Divine daguerreotypes of the heart and life, any human portraitures, however faithful? "Woe unto them that put darkness for light, and light for darkness! Should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

IV. The daily study of the Scripture will introduce our youth to a familiar acquaintance with the noblest models of excellence in every department of life; and make the wise and good their constant companions. Before the mind of the Biblical student there passes that long array of illustrious persons, the elite of mankind, whose admirable virtues (as well as their faults) are so graphically portrayed in the sacred narrative. The martyr-shepherd; the translated prophet; the father of the faithful, peaceful, gentlemanly, courageous, disinterested, devout, distinguished alike as the head of a religious family, a tender father, and a devoted missionary; the quiet, meditative Isaac; the pure, pious, affectionate, noble-minded Joseph; the learned, fearless, eloquent, patriotic, and more than kingly Moses; the patient Job; the heroic Joshua; the diligent, just, religious, Samuel; the lion-hearted shepherd-Psalmist; Jonathan, the self-sacrificing friend; the magnificent Solomon; the royal reformers, Hezekiah and Josiah; Daniel, the able, prayerful, conscientious statesman; the manly, generous, high-spirited Mordecai, whose elevation at court could neither make him forget his kindred, nor bow the knee to a sycophant; the faithful, persevering, and intrepid magistrate, Nehemiah; the gentle, loving, and beloved John; the stern, ardent, and impetuous Peter; the lofty-minded Christian hero, Paul;—these, and such as these, are the incomparable characters presented in Scripture. How vain to seek their parallels in Nepos and

Plutarch; among the Scipios and Cyruses, the Catos and Platos of profane antiquity!

Or if we turn to the female worthies of the Bible, how pure and peerless are its examples! how brilliant and lovely its galaxy of Christian maids and matrons! There are the queenly Sarah; the modest, artless, confiding Rebecca; the simple-hearted, loving Rachel; the strong-minded, patriotic Deborah; the tender and devoted Hannah; the faithful Michal; the prudent, sagacious Abigail,—“a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance”; the industrious, energetic mother of Lemuel, invaluable as a wife; the staid, religious, affectionate sister of Lazarus; her bustling, care-cumbered, yet pious sister, Martha; the penitent Magdalene; the devout Elizabeth; the inspired prophetess, Anna; the spotless mother of our Lord, blessed among women! Who would name, in such a presence, the Didos and Lavinias, the Cleopatras, Aspasia, and Xantippes of Italy, Greece, and Egypt? Who would compare even the Cornelias and Andromaches?

Nor should I omit to mention, in this catalogue of Scripture worthies, that solitary example of perfect human nature, our adorable Redeemer, whose resplendent and Divine virtues are so fully presented in the sacred pages. Can the youthful student familiarize himself, by daily converse, with these loftiest specimens of sanctified humanity, and not find his intellect invigorated; his evil propensities reprovèd and curbed; his views of life, its end and aim, corrected; his affections purified; and his whole character sensibly and permanently improved?

V. The importance of a thorough and intimate acquaintance with the facts and principles of the Bible is rendered more evident, when we consider the present unsettled state of the world; the momentous revolutions which have lately occurred; and the certainty that social changes of even greater extent and magnitude must yet take place, before the hopes of philanthropy and the predictions of Scripture can receive their com-

plete accomplishment. The social and political condition of mankind has, within a recent period, attracted an unusual and increasing share of attention, not only among the humane and philosophic, but among the toiling, suffering, oppressed millions themselves. A celebrated historian of England has truly said, "The press now often sends forth in a day, a greater quantity of discussion and declamation about the condition of the working man, than was published during the twenty-eight years which elapsed between the Restoration and the Revolution." The principles upon which society is based; the various forms under which it is or may be organized; the actual and the rightful object of its laws and institutions; the mutual obligations of rulers and the ruled; the relations of labor and capital; the condition and prospects of the rich and the poor, the few and the many; the inherent rights of man;—these, and kindred topics of vital, practical interest to humanity, are the theme of daily speculation with the multitude, of inflammatory declamation with the demagogue, as well as of patient and profound investigation with the political and Christian philosopher.

The results of this wide-spread inquiry cannot for a moment be doubted. We accept no predictions of a mad and disorganizing radicalism; nay, we do but repeat the language of the rapt seers of Judea, when we assert that in these last days perilous times shall come. "Fear, and the pit, and the snare are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth! for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in prison. Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

Assemble yourselves and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord! Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision."

If the Scripture be explicit in foretelling a day of overturning before the times of restitution, may we not well employ, in reference to what is taking place before our eyes, the Saviour's reproof of ancient stupidity and unbelief,—Can ye not discern the signs of the times? Has not the proclamation already gone forth—Prepare war; wake up the mighty men? What mean that din of arms, that tumult of the people, that tottering and crashing of thrones, that downfall of ancient dynasties, that "fear of change perplexing nations," which, for the last half century, have fixed upon Europe the eyes of a world? What means it, that kings surround their palaces with hired soldiery to repel their own subjects; that they erect fortifications, not to defend but to subdue their own capitals; that trembling despots, like the ancient idol-makers, help, every one his neighbor, and say, every one to his brother, Be of good courage? What means it, that many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased upon the earth; that by ship, steamer, and railway, the ends of the earth draw near together; that the electric telegraph, that nervous system of the body politic, diffuses instantaneously throughout the whole frame of society, the sensations of every part; enabling the hearts of millions to throb with simultaneous pulsations? Is it nothing that the ancient people of God are steadily setting their face toward Jerusalem? that Mohammedanism, once the terror of three continents, now begs its craven life at the uplifted hands of Christendom? that the handful of corn on the mountain tops already shakes with the fruit of Lebanon? that the vast fabric of Hindoo heathenism trembles to its very base? that the Chinese wall, not of brick and stone, but of ignorance, pride, and prejudice, is broken and penetrated? above all, that within

fifty years, thirty millions of Bibles, in two hundred different tongues, have been scattered over the earth? Does all this portend nothing, demonstrate nothing? Or shall ignorance, vice, and error devour forever? Shall the face of this fair earth be bathed perpetually with the tears and blood of oppressed nations? Shall despotism,—whether the petty scheme of the plantation, the mine, the work-shop, the factory,—the stupendous system of self-styled Autocrats,—or the incomparable usurpation of Satan, the god of this world,—forever lord it over the bodies and souls of men? The answer is borne on every breeze, is declared in every act of Providential administration, is inscribed on every page of prophetic writ. He that was to come has come, the rightful Lord of man and of society; He takes to himself his great power and reigns; for the government is upon his shoulder.

“The groans of nature in this nether world,  
 Which heaven has heard for ages, have an end.  
 Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung  
 Whose fire was kindled at the prophet's lamp,  
 The time of rest, the promised Sabbath comes.  
 Six thousand years of sorrow have well nigh  
 Fulfilled their tardy and disastrous course  
 Over a sinful world; and what remains  
 Of this tempestuous state of human things  
 Is merely as the working of a sea  
 Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest.  
 For He, whose car the winds are, and the clouds  
 The dust, that waits upon his sultry march,  
 When sin hath moved him, and his wrath is hot,  
 Shall visit earth in mercy. . . . .  
 Come then, and added to thy many crowns  
 Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,  
 Thou who alone art worthy !”

But what connection has all this with Colleges? Much, every way. Let the history of Harvard, Yale and Princeton, let the very name of Hampden-Sidney answer. Let the universities of Berlin, Vienna, and of Germany generally, in connection with the late European revolutions, tell us what rela-

tion such Institutions bear to the progress of society and the welfare of man. And let the temporary suppression of these revolutions also teach us the dependence of substantial, lasting social advancement upon an intelligence, sanctified and strengthened by the spirit of Christianity. A College is not, indeed, intended to act directly upon the masses; to scatter broadcast among them the elements of knowledge and the principles of virtue; still less, to take the lead in public efforts for political improvement. But "it teaches the teachers. It guides those whose future office will be to guide others. It sends forth the men who are to enlarge the domain of science and learning. Colleges are instituted to rear up a small number, whose duty and privilege it will be to lead the way in many noble enterprises; to be the first to discover, promulgate and defend the truth." Here are to be trained those who must advocate justice in our courts; enact, expound and sustain law in our legislative halls; those who must sway millions by the power of the press,—control listening Senates by their knowledge, wisdom and eloquence,—and lead States and nations in the path of freedom, rectitude and happiness; the men who must fill the twenty thousand pulpits of our land, and maintain the dominion of truth and righteousness. And here, too, are they to be educated who must carry the principles of science, literature and religion far hence to the gentiles; and lay, in every heathen land, the only foundations of civil and religious liberty. Already has Hanover, young as she is, her representative in the Celestial empire; a representative to be followed, as we trust, at no distant day, by scores and hundreds of Christian Heralds.

And shall not all these be made familiar, as a necessary part of their education, with that word which Jehovah has given as man's infallible guide in all his relations to society, as well as to Himself? Shall they neglect, shall they not daily and diligently ponder, that inspired volume

"From which man may learn wisdom and instruction,  
 And receive words of understanding ;  
 From which they may gain the instruction of prudence,  
 Justice, equity and righteousness ;  
 Which will give caution to the simple,  
 To the young man wisdom and discretion !"

Let no one object that such knowledge is the exclusive property of the Christian ministry, or of Theological students. How shall society, throughout all its departments, domestic and public, productive, commercial or political, be improved, purified and elevated, but by the application of Biblical facts and principles to the every day business of life? Did the laws of Solon or Lycurgus, or the dreams of Plato, secure liberty and happiness for the misnamed republics of Greece? Have the vagaries of an infidel philosophy, the fine-spun theories of a St. Simon or a Fourier, given freedom to France and Germany? Were not the founders of our own Institutions men familiar with the Bible; and are not its principles, in a good degree, the basis of our government and laws? Let our young men, the future guides, reformers and governors of society, learn the brotherhood of man, not at the hand of a mystic, moon-struck socialist; but of Moses and his Lord. Let them learn the rights of man, not from the flimsy reasonings of a Paine, or the 'Social Contract' of a Rousseau; but from Him who gave to man both his rights and his existence. Let them learn the obligations of man from Him whose exclusive province it is to fix the boundaries both of duty and authority. Let the Divine philosophy be their guide of life, and then shall they be prepared to build up that constitution of human affairs, civil, political and ecclesiastical, which shall bless and adorn mankind in the days of millennial glory.

VI. And, lastly, the Bible demands the daily study of the young, as indeed of all, because it is the grand preservative from sin; the only infallible standard of faith and practice, of duty and usefulness; the only guide to happiness on earth,

and to everlasting rest in heaven. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee. Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel, and afterward receive me into glory."

I am well aware that our Colleges are not, and should not be, Theological Seminaries; that they are established for other purposes than the professional training of students for the ministry; that even Divine truth need not, and cannot, be continually before the mind; that human science and literature demand a large share of attention; that the field of human knowledge is immense, while the period allotted to its survey is extremely limited; and that many who desire a Collegiate education for their sons, as well as many who may be placed under our care, may not take that lively interest in Biblical studies which their intrinsic excellency merits: still, I would never forget that the subjects of our training are immortal souls; and shall they not be trained for immortality? Of what avail to any young man, to his friends, or to society, are an invigorated intellect, refined taste, extensive acquisitions, if the conscience be uninstructed, the will perverse, and the affections earthly, sensual, devilish! Admitting even Plato's definition of education,—“that which qualifies men to be good citizens, and renders them fit to govern or obey,”—is such an one educated? Is he prepared to be a dutiful son; an affectionate brother; a tender, faithful husband; a kind father; a sincere friend; a benevolent neighbor; a law-abiding citizen; a diligent, upright, disinterested ruler? Has any part of his training qualified him for these relations? And if nothing can be expected from him in this life, what, in that interminable future for which the present is but a brief preparative? What will it profit him, a hundred or a thousand years hence, that, while on earth, he was profoundly conversant with Greek and Roman lore, had explored the mysteries of nature, had weighed and measured the planets, and had called the



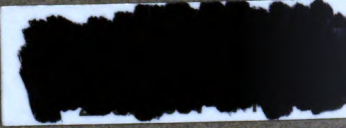
stars by their names; if, having neglected the word of God, and undervalued το ὑπερῶν τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, he had failed, with all his getting, to get understanding,—that fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom?

I know, indeed, that one may be familiar, even with the Scripture, and yet fail of eternal life: but is there not reason to hope, that God's blessing will accompany its daily and careful perusal, so that our youth may be led from its literary to its spiritual beauty and excellence? And for my part, God grant that the beloved pupils whom we may have the privilege of instructing, may be so directed to the Father of lights, and the Saviour of sinners, that we may hereafter meet them in that land where our present misty knowledge shall have vanished forever in the bright sunshine of eternal Truth!

Gentlemen, it was written over the vestibule of Plato's celebrated Academy, "Let no one ignorant of geometry enter here." You have this day inscribed upon the portals of Hanover College, the nobler, Christian sentiment, Let no one depart hence ignorant of the Bible!



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