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The Relations of Education to  
National Prosperity.

DELIVERED IN CENTER CHURCH BEFORE THE

CLASS OF '86

JUNE 13, 1886.

BY

JOSEPH F. TUTTLE

President of Wabash College,  
Crawfordsville, Indiana.

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Baccalaureate Sermon,

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## The Class of '86.

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### THIS DISCOURSE

IS DEDICATED TO THE CLASS OF '86 WITH  
THE SINCERE THAT THEY MAY ATTAIN  
THE HIGHEST SUCCESS.

# Baccalaureate Discourse.

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BY PRESIDENT TUTTLE.

(TEXT: Deuteronomy, Sixth Chapter.)

My purpose is to discuss the *relations of education to national prosperity*.

In this chapter the great lawgiver of Israel distinctly announces the conditions on which a nation may be prosperous.

In the first place, let me show what is meant by a prosperous nation, and in the second place discuss the relations of education to national prosperity.

In answering the question, What is a prosperous nation? I may say it includes the two elements of a *good land* and a *good people*.

Egypt produces "corn by handfuls" and yet to this day, it is "the basest of the kingdoms." It is not now nor has it been for three thousand years a prosperous nation. On the other hand it is possible to conceive of a virtuous nation living in a land destitute of the elements essential to make it a great nation.

In neither case do we have, in the fullest sense of the terms, a prosperous nation.

A good land and a good nation constitute a prosperous nation.

In this definition, I follow the lines of thought in the chapter which furnishes the theme under discussion.

What then is "a good land?" It must furnish its people *subsistence*. They cannot accomplish their destiny without food, clothing and shelter. There are some lands which are not rich in subsistence, but are rich in forms of wealth, which, directly or by exchange, secure all they need.

Australia has flocks, but little iron. England has iron, but not enough bread. Maine has granite, but no sugar. Cuba has sugar, but no granite.

A good land, directly or by exchange, produces subsistence for the people who occupy it.

Palestine produces none of the precious metals, yet through exchange as may be inferred, Solomon made silver so plentiful in Jerusalem as not to be accounted of. A good land provides for the physical necessities of its people and this is not a small item in the prosperity of a nation.

A good land also is able to provide for the *mental* necessities of its people. It provides for their education. Sodom had "fulness of bread and abundance of idleness," but she had no schools, and "did not strengthen the hands of the poor and needy." Lot

did not find a good land when he "pitched his tent toward Sodom," although it was in the midst of "the plain of Jordon and was well-watered everywhere, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar."

A land may flow with milk and honey, but that is not enough, for it has been said that "education is the only interest worthy the deep controlling anxiety of the thoughtful man." How much we say for Scotland and our own country when we name the Parish schools of the one and the Public schools of the other!

And further let me remark that a good land not only provides bread and schools for its people but also *law* and *freedom*.

Man is capable of becoming a most dangerous animal. The jungles of India with their tigers are not so bad as a land cursed with such anarchy as a few days ago tried to throttle Chicago.

But good, indeed, is the land where righteous law reigns over the highest and the lowliest citizen. How grand the peasant's reply to Frederick the Great of Prussia, who threatened to take by force the lands which he could not buy. "Your Majesty may take the inheritance of my fathers by force, but you will find that in Berlin there is law."

Was there ever a nobler encomium passed on England than that by the Elder Pitt, "In

England every man's house is his castle. Not that it is surrounded with walls and battlements; it may be a straw-built shed; every wind of heaven may whistle around it; every element of heaven may enter it; but the king cannot—the king dare not.”

And in our own country such is the supremacy of law that a man may guard the door of his home only with a spider's thread, and the law makes that thread as strong as bars and bolts.

A nation which has such law is most fortunate. And with this inestimable blessing, let us associate another—liberty. Dr. Hopkins says, “Men are born free. Freedom can be crushed out only by the degradation of the whole man. Law is the basis and the natural limit of liberty. Rights and liberty! These are the most exciting and stimulating words in the English language.”

A nation is free when its people are endowed with the rights to work out the end for which they were created.

Let me recount. A good land furnishes subsistence for its people, provides for their education, by law defines and guards their rights, and gives them liberty to work out the great end of their existence. If such be a good land, what is “a *good people?*” The two united make a prosperous nation. And still following the line of thought al-

ready begun, I remark, that to be a good people who are able to force the lands to yield them subsistence. Of course I do not mean that all shall be tillers of the soil. No nation can be prosperous in the highest degree without "varied industries."

The word subsistence is generic and includes all that man needs for the support of his body. And it needs no argument to prove that to be a good people, who are able to gain from the country they inhabit the subsistence they need.

And such a people will provide *schools* and ~~use~~ them so as to improve their minds both in discipline and knowledge sufficiently to make them good citizens. Such a nation will have both schools and scholars. They will be an educated people.

And farther than this, such a people will have righteous laws, and will obey them; they will not only have freedom as sweet and pervasive as a mountain atmosphere, but it will be associated with law. Such a people will be free to work out the ends of their being. They are not anarchists but freemen great in the double glory of righteous law and a Divinely regulated freedom—liberty and law. So Milton says:

"This is true Liberty where free-born men  
 Having to advise the public, may speak free,  
 Which he who can and will deserves high praise:  
 Who neither can nor will may hold his peace.  
 What can be juster in a State than this?"



What a good land! What a good people! A prosperous nation indeed that has a land full of bread, and worked with honest toil by bread-winners; that has ample schools and universal education; that has just laws and citizens that square their lives by them; and last of all and crowning all it is a land whose citizens are free.

To one worthy of it, it is a high privilege to be a citizen of such a good land. He might well exclaim, "If I forget thee let my right hand forget its cunning!"

Let us now consider the *relations of education to national prosperity.*

Moses was one of the greatest of educators. He organized a race of slaves into a nation of freemen. The education he gave them in a most remarkable manner provided for their *physical* wants, as also the development of their *mental* faculties. He crowned his work by educating them as citizens of Israel and as servants of God.

So thoroughly did he do his work that amid all the vicissitudes of their history for four thousand years, they still glory in their relations to Israel. Live where they may, or in what age, they exhibit in themselves the prodigious educating power of Moses. It is a wonder of the ages.

And this education was pre-eminent in its religion. So profound is it in its adaptations that the descendants of Israel are still

held by it as by an Almighty power. The fact is amazing. Jesus, the Divine Christ, and Paul His greatest Apostle, have laid the foundations of Christianity so deep that it is not merely an impregnable fortress, but the center of the grandest moral forces on earth.

Its conquests in all directions have been remarkable. In some respects it has new-created the world.

Nations redeemed by it from the most abject barbarian for ages have led the world in all the great lines of achievement.

During these ages the Jews have suffered all the curses of disobedience spoken by Moses. And yet whilst Christianity has triumphed over Greeks and Barbarians—the profligate and degraded races of Asia, Africa and Europe,—it has not made large conquests among the people educated under the Mosaic teaching.

That discipline taught them to love the citizenship of Israel and to cleave to Israel's God. It was their law forever and they are still Israelites in both respects. In this education of a nation thus stated and illustrated we may note two things. In the first place it was chiefly an education of the *young*. The adults who followed Moses out of Egypt with two exceptions were dead. During these forty years, Moses with the utmost diligence, had been educating the young. It was his great mission. His plans bore powerfully to the attainment of this end.

In the second place the central and vitalizing element of this education was the *moral and religious* element.

Going to a land of fruits and grains, of flocks and herds, nothing is said of educating them as tillers of the soil.

Destined to be soldiers in wars of defense and conquest, no provision was made for the education of soldiers. Destined for many ages to be cosmopolitan traders, no provision was made for their education in the science of values and exchange.

What then? The germ of the education was the moral and the religious. The Divine moralities as taught in the Decalogue were to be in each parent's heart, and with all possible ingenuity and industry and perseverance, were to be educated into the hearts of the young. It was to be an education ingrafted into a moral nature that had been inbred from age to age as by a kind natural generation.

Out of such an education of the young were to grow the virtues of industry, thrift, business, citizenship, war, peace, statesmanship, schools, literature, law, patriotism, liberty and every other thing needful to a prosperous nation.

The very heart of the education with which Moses so powerfully affected the destiny of his people was found in the moral and *religious education of the young*.

And it is worthy of notice that from the time Israel took possession of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua until the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus—a period of from 1500 to 1700 years—their prosperous periods were associated with the observance of the educational method of Moses and their national calamities with its violation.

And this fact finds a strong analogy in the relations of the Egyptians, Persians and Romans to the religious faiths they held. So long as they were sincere in their religious faith they were strong, but when faith degenerated into a sham, decay began.

These are some of the reasons which lead me to the conviction that the education of the young holds the most important relation to the prosperity of a nation. In fact that education will determine the destiny of a nation.

Assuming this, I wish to apply it to the condition of our own nation. There can be no mistake as to some phases of our national life. The growth of its industries and its wealth is amazing and is still going on. So is the increase of its means of comfortable living. We have small standing armies and yet in case of war our people quickly learn the art of war. We have some forts and some war ships, yet for the purposes of defense against the iron-clad fleets of Eng-

land and France or even of Russia and Germany our immense sea-board is too nearly defenseless. And yet in any case I think our nation would prove itself a great military power.

Our internal resources both for the times of peace and of war are vast. We have all the raw materials and the means of transforming them into the munitions we may need in the time of war even if our coasts were blockaded.

Our nation has had a wonderful educational growth. We have, I am sorry to say, an illiteracy that is appalling and all of it but a small fraction is made up of *freedmen* and *foreigners*. This is an appalling fact. Indeed, it is. I wish we might look at it long enough to appall us. We shall have to do so after a while. And yet our educational appliances are vast. The Public schools, church schools, academies, colleges, universities and professional schools, present a grand and wonderful system of educating agencies.

And the same may be asserted of our religious organizations to some extent. I will not burden my statement with church statistics. There can be no doubt that there are several millions of our people who are not provided with religious instruction.

Bishop Foster, of Boston, has recently set forth this fact with terrible distinctness.

And yet the ratio of church privileges to population is gradually increasing. I say with emphasis, *gradually*. In all our cities and in large regions of our country there are vast multitudes who are under no positive religious training. This statement is partially relieved by the almost universal recognition of the Christian Sabbath by ceasing from labor, and the recognition of the oath as an appeal to God in the administration of law.

This is called a prosperous nation. It certainly has a good land. Where is there a better? What one is better adapted to produce subsistence and furnish labor for its people? The great industries are followed here on the land and on the water. We produce subsistence in illimitable quantities, and employ labor of every kind and pay for it the best wages. It is said by one writer that "probably the inhabitants of the United States constitute the only large population in the world who are thoroughly well-fed."

Certainly our claims to be a prosperous nation in respect to bread and labor for our millions are well-founded. We do more. We have sent bread to the starving in Ireland, India and Persia.

What shall we say about the *education* of our people?

We have a vast body of illiterates—chiefly freedmen and foreigners. Can we over-

come this danger? The Public school is a chief agent in the work and the Public school is the child of the church. And at this very time Christian education is encroaching on the black domain of American illiteracy by means of schools.

And the same is true of the higher institutions of learning. They originate in the church. They are endowed and managed and taught by Christian men. Not the least important work done by the church for the prosperity of our nation has been her origination, endowment, and management of the learned schools which have done so much in the education of the young.

What has been the influence of these higher institutions? The state schools and colleges cannot directly give religious instruction, and yet the Bible and Christianity control them. Is there a Board of Trustees that would dare to place a bad man in its Faculty? He may be a learned man, but if he be an immoral man he is not placed in a school to poison the young with immorality.

The state institutions are doing much good work in the education of the young.

These statements are still more applicable to the colleges and schools which have originated either in the benevolence of churches or of private Christians. The chief purpose for which these were founded is to educate the young with reference to the enlarge-

ment of Christian influence. The money given for such institutions is great in amount. The aim has been to educate the young after the plan of Moses. The very center of that education was to be duty to God. Every science was to be illuminated with the light of God.

The founders of these Christian schools, believing that all "essential knowledge begins, continues, and ends in God," have been the chief promoters of scientific investigation in every direction. They have provided the means for researches into the hidden mysteries of nature.

In the noble educational expenditures made in the interest of Christian learning, we find the proof of what Christianity aspires to do in the work of educating the young. She makes her expenditures not for the sake of magnificent buildings, and scientific collections, and vast libraries. These are a means to an end. She does all this, and she is ready to do more, in order to educate the young in all learning to lead them to God. The moral and religious element is the germ of it all and through the development of that the human race is to attain perfection in all that is good as the condition to a grander life in the world which faith reveals.

This is the ideal education which Christianity would provide for all mankind. And it



is this education made practical in all the experiences of life which becomes of incalculable importance to the well-being of a nation. We cannot have too much knowledge if it be true. Nor can we educate our faculties too highly if in so doing we get nearer to saving truth, and to the "Father of Lights."

I have said this is the ideal education which holds such vital relations to national prosperity. It may not be attained fully, but the nearer a nation comes to it in all the departments of its life the nearer will it come to the high ideal of national prosperity.

You will infer that on the whole I take a cheerful view of the education now moulding the young of this country. I do not forget that scholars in the different walks of learning sometimes are irreverent and even impious in their utterances. They are arrogant sometimes and raise shouts of joy over their discoveries as if unfriendly to the Christian religion. I am not afraid of them. They may dig deep into the earth and soar high into the heavens. They may analyze light and unfold the structure of plant and animal. They may say with an insane satisfaction, "There is no God! and there is no revelation of God, and there is no future for man." I am sorry they are not wiser. But of this I feel sure, the germ of the educa-

tion in this good land is gradually unfolding the moral nature of the young and is thus promoting the prosperity of our nation.

And thus I come back to the point from which I started, the assertion that if we would make our nation prosperous in the highest degree we must imitate the wisdom of Moses in this famous chapter and thoroughly educate the young of this nation so as to make every faculty strong and each citizen thoroughly good in his moral nature.

A nation so educated could claim God's promise to Israel, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward."

## GENTLEMEN OF THE CLASS OF '86:

You are living in a greatly favored age and country. You have been educated at one of its colleges. As you are about to leave these familiar places I invite you to recall the line of thought pursued to-day to impress on your minds your duty as educated men. You owe your first duty to God. That must underly all other duties. You owe a duty to the nation. Remember that as educated men you are to help your country to be more and more prosperous by doing what you can to educate the young not merely in human science and learning, but in their duty to God.

I am the more earnest in this injunction because I fear that not a few educated men, and learned institutions, are giving an undue prominence to the training of the mind irrespective of the moral nature as related to God. That education which does not conduct the young beyond the physical sciences up to Him who made all things is far too narrow. Education from the nursery to the grave must include duty to God and to man as a chief element:—it must regard man as not only subject to moral law, but as sure to experience its retributions here and hereafter.

Now, I desire you, my young friends, to be helpful to the young in this great concern of a complete education. Others have

helped you. Repay the debt and in so doing lay it on other shoulders in turn to be discharged and renewed again and again in a never ending series.

Carry on the education of yourselves by the study of books. Educate yourselves in every virtue. Win others to the goodness they see in you. Especially win others to God. In so doing you glorify Him and you bless those you save.

You do more; for you will bless our great country. She needs citizens who fear God. And you will bless the world of mankind.

You come to the stage of active life at a time of great promise. Go to your work cheerfully and with hope. And when the end comes, you lay the work of God on others whom you have educated to take it up where you lay it down.

You go from us with our benediction. "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you and give you peace."

1022