

OUR COUNTRY'S MISSION IN HISTORY.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

PHILOMATHÆAN SOCIETY

OF

PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE,

September 19, 1855.

25-10

BY

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WILLIAM H. ALLEN, LL.D.,

PRESIDENT OF THE GIRARD COLLEGE FOR ORPHANS.



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CORRESPONDENCE.

PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE, GETTYSBURG,

Wednesday Evening, September 19, 1855.

DEAR SIR:—

The Philomathæan Society of Pennsylvania College tender to you, through us, their sincere thanks for the truly chaste, eloquent, and instructive Address delivered by you this evening, at their request. Desirous of seeing it in a more permanent form, they have requested us to solicit a copy for publication.

Your compliance will confer a lasting favor upon

Your obedient servants,

L. H. CROLL,

W. FRANK. PAXTON,

JOS. R. TITZEL,

J. W. BITTINGER,

W. HAY.

To Wm. H. ALLEN, Esq.

GETTYSBURG, September 20, 1855.

GENTLEMEN :—

Accept my thanks for the courteous terms of your letter, and for the honor it confers.

I hesitated last evening to comply with your request, because the greater part of the address had been delivered elsewhere ; but the assurances which members of your Committee gave me, that the Society they represent will not treat its publication less indulgently on that account, have induced me to place a copy at your disposal.

Respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

WM. H. ALLEN.

To Messrs. L. H. CROLL,
W. FRANK. PAXTON,
JOS. R. TITZEL,
J. W. BITTINGER,
WM. HAY,
Committee.

A D D R E S S .

GENTLEMEN OF THE PHILOMATHÆAN SOCIETY:—

I have selected a subject which is more closely allied with the interests of the present, and the hopes of the future, than with the memories of the classic past. In doing this, I have presumed that whatever concerns the human brotherhood will, if treated in the spirit of a scholar, and not of a partisan, meet with a response in the fraternity of educated men. I propose to speak of OUR COUNTRY'S MISSION IN HISTORY; and if the observations I have to make should fail to commend themselves equally to American students and American citizens, the fault will not lie in the subject, but in the manner of its treatment.

The fact forces itself upon our notice every day, that a new race of men, differing from the Anglo-Saxon, which is its basis—differing from the Celtic, German, and Scandinavian races, which are elements in its composition, is in process of formation in the

United States. This fact must have a historical meaning; and my purpose is to inquire whether it is not probable that Divine Providence has reserved for the American race some important work in history, and to hazard a conjecture as to what that work may be.

When a Grecian philosopher laid down, as the basis of his material and atheistic system, the proposition, "*Nothing is made out of nothing*," his postulate was admitted, because it agreed with the testimony of the senses, which was at that time considered more reliable than any other. But modern philosophy, which has searched less for material, and more for final causes, has arrived at the conclusion that "*nothing is made for nothing*;" and as this proposition harmonizes with revelation and science, and satisfies the reason of the learned and the faith of the unlearned, it is now generally received as true. It has become popular belief that if God works, he works for some end—that whatever he makes, is made for some purpose.

When we study the structure of an organized body, we discover that every organ is adapted to particular uses, and that the health of all the parts depends upon a due performance of the functions of each; and from this adaptation and mutual dependence we infer design and intelligence in its Contriver and Maker. So, when we study social communities, we find that they are not mere aggregates

of independent beings, but organized structures, every part of which is affiliated to every other, and has uses which are appropriate to itself and necessary to all the rest. As the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee, so one class of productive laborers in a state, city, or town, cannot say to another, we have no need of you. Each draws life and strength from all, and all from each. We must occasionally send for a physician, even at the risk of taking a remedy worse than the disease; we must sometimes consult a lawyer, though the fees be more than the claim; and we like to be christened, married, and buried by a minister of religion, however little heed we give to his teachings and admonitions. When we come to the question of independence, I think that the philosopher would be rather more helpless without the cobbler than the cobbler without the philosopher. Even professors of the fine arts, a class of laborers whom the age calls unproductive, could not be spared: we may almost say they could least of all be spared. They are wanted to supply nutriment to a part of our being which is above the grade of material economy and utilitarian arithmetic. They minister to desires which lie deeper and soar higher than those which propound the every-day question, "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" It is their office to give form to the ideal, and even to attempt an expression of the Infinite;

to elevate the soul through the medium of the senses, and to ennoble the sentiments by addressing the sensibilities; to refine, embellish, and dignify life, and, by making us familiar with forms of ideal beauty, to teach us to love and imitate moral beauty, which is the vestment of virtue.

Now, just as every organ subserves a specific purpose in the animal economy, and as every class, occupation, and individual in a community is fitted for some good use in the social economy, so we may believe that every political society, every nation and race of men has been so endowed, and placed in such a relation with the rest of mankind, as to contribute something to the growth and progress of that vast organism which we call humanity.

The history of a nation is not an aggregate of the biographies of the men and women who have composed it; for as the intellect, will, and conscience, which make up its political life and character, are not the sum, but the exponents of the mind and morals of its citizens, its history will have a certain unity and individuality. It will be the biography of a complex organism, constructed according to a definite plan, for specific and determinate purposes. In like manner, universal history is not an aggregate of the particular histories of the nations and races which have figured in the world, but the development of a plan and purpose which Infinite Wisdom has devised, and which, under the divine guidance, every people

contributes to unfold. It assumes that the human species exists for some end and aim, above and distinct from the ends and aims of the parts which successively compose it; while, at the same time, these parts are so linked together, and their forces so adjusted, that, while they pursue their own interests and work out their peculiar ideas, they contribute to the general movement and progress of the whole.

I am aware that, in these preliminary observations, the infallibility of writers who have ignored final causes in history is challenged. If the same authors were treating of scientific subjects, they would ignore final causes in nature. They could not conceive that the mechanism of the eye was arranged with any intelligent view to its function of vision. They would deny that the web-feet of ducks were designed for swimming, and that monkeys have four hands to facilitate climbing. They would subject all living creatures to some unintelligent and unintelligible law of organic development, which inheres in brute matter by accident, and works blindly on without aim or object. They would derive man from an ape; the ape from a wolf; the wolf, perhaps, from a rat; and the rat from a goose's egg;—and to obviate all difficulty in obtaining the goose, they would give wings and legs to a serpent; derive the serpent from a worm; the worm from a monad; and vivify their monad with a current of electricity!

But sober men, who reject the theories of La Marck and his plausible disciples of the school of the Vestiges of Creation, and who deem it more rational and probable that fishes were furnished with fins to assist them in moving through water, than that the effort to move through water made the fins grow, will find no serious difficulty in concluding that the movements of humanity are at least as important in the divine view as those of a fish, and deserve as well to be provided for; and that while every part of the universe is full of God, the sum of all the parts cannot be godless.

If the Divine Intelligence does not control and direct the movements of history, according to some preconceived scheme and beneficent purpose, bringing forth good results even from national crimes, and "causing the wrath of man to praise him;" in a word, if there be no God in history, the condition of humanity is like that of a felon in a treadmill, moving forward always, but never advancing; toiling upward forever, but never ascending. Then it is the doom of every successive generation to suffer for the crimes and follies of its predecessors, rear up another generation to commit like crimes and endure like sufferings, and die to give it room to sin and suffer in. Then, too, all the blood of patriots and martyrs, which has been poured out upon battle-field and scaffold has been shed in vain; and all who have stood

for the right against the wrong, have lived and died in vain.

We recoil from so cheerless a view of our destiny as this. Our reason rejects it; our moral sense abhors it; our instincts revolt from it. Away, then, with the chilling philosophy which would frame an atheistic scheme of history, and make man the puppet of chance. Let us still cherish the steadfast conviction that we have a guide who sees the end from the beginning, and that we may discern in the providence of the all-wise the benevolence of the all-loving God.

These general observations will, it is hoped, derive some specific value from their connection with the main subject of the address. For if God reigns in history, he is raising up the American people for some historical purpose. Have we, then, reason to believe that this purpose, in the accomplishment of which our country is to be the instrument, is an important one in the affairs of mankind?

When we study the progress of civilization, we learn that in every great movement the influence of some one nation or race has been for the time predominant over all others; and this predominant nation or race has been, during the period of its historical activity, the standard-bearer of humanity. Is there reason to believe that the American people may justly aspire to this post of honor?

In attempting to answer this question affirmatively, I appeal first to our national consciousness. As a people, we have a settled conviction that we are to perform no secondary part in the world's drama. Placed in the van of civilization, with a continent before us to stamp our impress upon, and an ocean behind us as a barrier against the forces of despotism; with a population whose enterprise is restricted by no limits but those of the globe; with the hope and strength of national youth, and with a history already rich in examples of statesman-like wisdom and heroic achievements, what wonder if we discover in these the signs of a manifest destiny!

This abiding consciousness of a vocation is something more than the suggestion of vanity. It is a prophetic thought which reveals the future, and points with steady finger to the career of a patriotic and noble ambition. Without it, neither nations nor individuals ever become, in any large or appropriate sense, historical. Those men who have left their mark upon their country and age, have always felt an assurance that they had been called, as by the audible voice of Jehovah, to a work, and that they had been endowed with ability to perform it. Not he alone, the conqueror of the East, who cut in pieces the knot which he could not untie; nor he, Rome's greatest enemy, who took an oath in boy-

hood at the altar of his country's gods, to live and die his country's avenger; nor he, who, in a tempest at sea, could quiet the alarm of his pilot with the characteristic words, "Fear not, you convey Cæsar;" nor he, the deliverer of his Alpine home, who, when his boatman said, "It is impossible to cross the lake in such a storm as this," silenced him with the resolute reply, "I know not whether it be possible, but I know that it must be attempted;" nor he, who called himself the child of destiny, and on the morning of many a day of doubtful arbitrament, hailed the sun of Austerlitz as the harbinger of another triumph;—not only your Alexanders, Hannibals, Cæsars, Tells, and Napoleons, held and proclaimed this faith, but lawgivers and prophets, apostles and martyrs, reformers and philanthropists, all who, in every age and clime, have nobly dared and nobly done, for God and man, have felt and expressed the same.

In like manner, every nation which has borne a prominent part in history for any length of time, has cherished an invincible belief that it had a destiny to fulfil; and this faith has always manifested itself on trying occasions in resolution, courage, and fortitude. We read this in the inscription upon the monument of the three hundred Spartans: "Stranger, go tell at Lacedæmon that we lie here in obedience to her laws." We perceive this in the stern resolution of the Romans,

who, after the slaughter at Cannæ, still regarded the banner which bore S.P.Q.R. as the symbol of invincible power, and who were willing to bid high in the Forum for the lands on which their enemy was encamped. We hear this in the words which Nelson signaled to his fleet at Trafalgar, just before the battle commenced, and which were answered from every deck with shouts that rent the welkin, "England expects every man to do his duty." We observe the same in the simple but firm command of Wellington, when at Waterloo he saw his squares shake beneath iron hail and charging squadrons, "Stand, men, it will not do to be beaten; what would they say in England?" And we mark the resolute expression of the same spirit in the words which our own Taylor wrote to the Secretary of War when he led forth his little band from Point Isabel, "If the enemy oppose my march, in whatever force, I shall fight him."

This national consciousness of a high calling, this prophetic aspiration after something which is believed to be a mission, of which these examples are both signs and expressions, was never stronger in any people than it is in the Americans; and without assigning to this fact more weight than it is justly entitled to, we may at least assume that it will help us attain the position among nations towards which it points, just as the presentiment of victory inspires a soldier with the courage which will be likely to

achieve it, and as any man's confidence in his ability to accomplish an object renders his success probable.

But there are other indications that the standard of historical progress is to be borne by the American people. One of these is, our geographical position. "Westward the course of empire takes its way," is something more than a poetic fancy—it is a historical fact; and this fact is doubtless attributable, in part at least, to geographical causes.

It is generally conceded that the human family was planted at some point in central or eastern Asia, from which it soon radiated in all directions. But when population had advanced eastwardly to the ocean, which men had not then the skill to navigate, it must have recoiled; and while lateral waves probably turned aside toward the frozen North, and the torrid South, its main current must have flowed back toward the West, whither temperate climates and fertile lands invited. While these hardy, enterprising, and self-reliant pioneers of the West, whose inventive faculties necessity had sharpened, would take with them the sciences, the useful arts, and such laws and institutions of the parent communities as were adapted to their condition and wants, they would leave behind them many of the defects of the elder civilization, and plant States which would start forth unfettered by prescriptive formulas, and soon surpass their father-lands in all the elements of

greatness and power. From these new communities other colonies in their turn would proceed further westward, and again leaving behind whatever had crystallized into immobility, sloughing off whatever had become effete, and retaining whatever was vital in every part, would move onward with a fresh impulse in the career of improvement.

In this solemn march of four thousand years, our post is now in the front. We are rising upon the great tide-wave which has been steadily advancing through China, India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Western Europe; and we know that as "there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune," so there is also in the affairs of nations. Who shall say that the States which were founded by the Anglo-Saxon immigration into North America, will not hereafter compare as favorably with England, as the English people now do with their Saxon progenitors; and as the cities of Greece and Carthage did with the Phœnicians who colonized them?

Again, while our position is foremost in the line, we have the advantage of an eminently favorable locality. Our territory stretches from sea to sea, including the most desirable third of the continent; and it is an article of our political faith, that if we bide our time, the whole will be ours—Cuba and all. We are midway between the old world of Europe in our rear, and the older world of Asia in our front.

The American Ophir is opening to us the commerce of the East, a prize which has enriched every nation which has been able to grasp it; and even the barred gates of Japan, as well as walled China, have been opened by the golden keys of California. The thousands of Chinese who are now on our Pacific coast, have come thither to shake hands and make our acquaintance. They are saying to us, "You are not the outside barbarians we had supposed; we will talk with you, work with you, and trade with you; we will shuffle off our wooden shoes, and permit our women henceforth to wear feet; we will pare our nails, and clip our cues; we will learn your sciences, practise your arts, adopt your worship, and then return to our homes with ideas which will astonish the mandarins."

All this they will do, and more. They will break the shell of egotism in which three hundred millions of people have been so long incrustated. They will infuse vigor and activity into that living petrification, to which immobility alone has given permanence. With free commerce will go a free gospel, free institutions, art, science, letters, and progress, until the manhood of civilization shall revisit the land of its infancy, and the first great cycle of history shall be complete.

Another indication that the American people are to play a star part in history, is their combination of dissimilar races. We learn from physiology that

there is a law of nature, extending to all organized bodies, which makes the blending of certain varieties of the same species a condition of improvement. This law has been wisely ordained, so far at least as the human family is concerned, to make it for the interest of all classes of people to preserve friendship with each other, and, by checking the spirit of caste, clanship, and race, to promote peace on earth, and good will among men.

History confirms what physiology teaches. It assures us that while the unmixed races have generally been stationary or retrograde, the mixed races have been progressive. The Chinese and Hindoos are examples of the former; the Greeks, Romans, and English, of the latter. In Greece, three distinct peoples united. First came the fierce and barbarous Pelasgian from the North; next, the industrious and refined Phenician from the East; and last, the reflective, religious Egyptian from the South. The descendants of these diverse colonists grew up, flourished, and intermingled in that country, till they formed a race which was superior in physical strength and mental capacity to any other then existing—a race which combined the best qualities of all its constituents without their defects; the hardihood and heroic virtue of the North, without its rudeness and ferocity; the imagination, elegance, and commercial enterprise of the East, without its effeminacy; the speculative thought and religious veneration of the

South, without its sordidness and superstition. Such was the composition of that singularly acute and intellectual people, whose mission was to cultivate the practical intellect to an extent before unknown; to bring down philosophy from heaven to earth; to carry the fine arts to a degree of perfection which subsequent ages might strive to imitate, but could not hope to surpass; and by their literary, commercial, and military activity, to provide for approaching Christianity the vehicle of a universal language.

Let us glance next at the Roman, the man of iron frame and iron will. In him we find, first, the union of the rude Pelasgian with the polished Etruscan—strength wedded to grace. Next, if we may believe Livy, the offspring of Roman fathers and Sabine mothers, people the Seven Hills. Other tribes of Italy in rapid succession, and afterwards foreign nations, are subdued as enemies, and welcomed to political and social equality as friends. The policy of the state was the absorption and assimilation, not the destruction, of the conquered. It was not till after the race had accomplished its historical purpose, and a remorseless despotism had risen upon the ruins of the Republic, that a Roman historian could utter the reproach, “We make a desert, and call it peace.”

It is probably true that no people ever combined so many different elements as the Romans, and it is certain that none ever made so deep a mark upon

human affairs. It was their vocation to be the world's schoolmasters in legislation and jurisprudence; to demonstrate the force of the indomitable will; to combine activity with stability, extension with duration; and thus to build up for the dissemination of infant Christianity the fabric of a universal empire.

Look next at the nation which has done more perhaps than any other for the progress of modern civilization—England. The ancient Britons were Celts, savage and superstitious, but generous and brave. The Romans conquered them, and held possession of their island four hundred years. When Roman power had served out its time, and was about to give place to the fresh vigor of barbarian mind, the Saxon came—the stern, cold, granite man, robber of land and sea. Next came the warlike and hardy Dane; and finally the proud, chivalrous Norman, with feudal pomp and knightly courtesy, the aristocratic element of English civilization. In process of time, the gradual intermingling of these unlike stocks produced the modern English, or, as I prefer to call them, the Anglo-Saxon race; a people tenacious of individual and political rights, inflexible of purpose, proud, stubborn, equally persevering in enterprises of wisdom and folly, justice and injustice, freedom and oppression, and which, including its great American branch, has never been driven

from any soil on whose surface it had once firmly planted its feet.

England, too, has her mission in history. She has been, and still is, the instructor of mankind in the principles of constitutional and representative government. She has been, and still is, a powerful champion of those forms of Christianity which recognize the right of private judgment in matters of faith. She has also sown the seeds of that harvest of personal freedom which has since grown up and will hereafter ripen in America. Without England, the United States could not have been. She has indeed loved and pursued riches, as Greece did glory, and as Rome power; but while doing this, she has developed the industrial element of civilization, and added much to the physical comfort and material prosperity of mankind.

Future history will doubtless show that the eager desire of wealth, which is the master passion of the Anglo-Saxon race, and which is everywhere stimulating invention and improvement, applying the sciences to all forms of productive industry, and promoting free intercourse among men by means of iron, steam, and electricity, has been directed by Providence towards the true aim of all progress—the moral elevation of mankind. You must make the toiling multitudes physically comfortable before you can make them intellectually wise, or morally good. In other and homelier terms, you must satisfy

the stomach and protect the person, before you can thoroughly cultivate the head and improve the heart.

These examples, if I have not mistaken their meaning, teach us that when the Divine Being intends to use a people as the instrument of an important work in human affairs, he does not take the old races whose ideas, opinions, and institutions have become so fixed and petrified as to lose all flexibility and elasticity. He seeks new and plastic materials. When the chemist wants a new re-agent, he collects, mixes, fuses, and dissolves dissimilar bodies till their mutual action forms the desired compound; and so the Divine Being (I use the simile with reverence) brings together from afar unlike peoples, and moulds them into a new race possessing qualities suited to his purpose.

Such a race is that which is now overspreading the North American Continent; for, though the union of the different varieties of our people is incomplete, it has advanced so far that every American, born upon the soil, has much in common with every other, though Anglo-Saxon blood may predominate in one, German in another, and Celtic in another. Each of these streams has received, and may continue to receive, healthful contributions from the rest. It is only when the foreign accessions to our population refuse to coalesce and identify themselves with the native born in feeling and interest, and when they form combinations among themselves

either to preserve the spirit and prejudices of the communities they have abandoned, or to change the policy of our government, that they become a disturbing force in the body politic, and, like anything else which is indigestible, pernicious to the public health. The sturdy Anglo-Saxon suffers no detriment from having his sharp angles broken off, and the rugged features of his character smoothed down. He is well fitted to be the conqueror of savage nature, and the pioneer of a new civilization; but a modicum of selfishness and ambition must be eliminated; he must be made more continental and less insular; more of a cosmopolite and less of an eremite, before he will become the instrument to adorn that civilization with its crowning glory, its highest moral finishing of fraternal love between man and man.

To advance this end the American race is forming, to become, as we hope and believe, the master-men of future history. Though our population is derived from numerous sources, we may presume that when it shall have become homogeneous, its leading characteristics will be Anglo-Saxon, modified by the influence of Celtic and German blood. The Anglo-Saxon will be represented in the practical intellect; the Celt, in the feeling heart; the German, in speculative thought. The Anglo-Saxon will contribute indomitable will; the Celt, impulsive sensibilities; the German, steady, sterling common sense. The

first is the type of pertinacity; the second, of courage; the third, of fortitude. The first has wit; the second, humor; the third, imagination. The first has ambition; the second, generosity; the third, honesty. The first fights for interest; the second, for honor; the third, for right.

While the American race may not aspire to be that higher type of humanity of which philosophers have dreamed, as the next step on the ascending scale of organic development, we may expect that it will combine the enterprise, perseverance, and hardihood of the Anglo-Saxon, without his exclusiveness, haughtiness, and sullenness; that it will possess the docility, vivacity, and warm-heartedness of the Celt, without his rashness and improvidence; and that it will exhibit the patience, stability, and integrity of the German, without his apathy.

A race uniting such qualities as these, can hold no second place in history; and it is an easier problem to determine what it *will* do, than what it *cannot* do.

Before taking up the final question, *What is the historical mission of the American people?* let us assume that the ultimate aim of human progress is the moral renovation of mankind. This assumption may be fairly made, not only because most Christian writers on what is termed the philosophy of history have assumed substantially the same, but also because it is difficult to conceive of any other object so

important as this, or so worthy of the Divine interposition. Nor should we forget that inspired prophets of old predicted a reign of universal justice, and that Christianity itself has promised a millenium of universal love.

The most authoritative of all teachers laid down the Golden Rule as the practical guide of moral conduct, and commanded men to love their neighbor as themselves. The observance of that rule, and obedience to that command, would be nothing less than the reign of justice and love. It is a melancholy fact that the rule has never been generally observed, nor the command generally obeyed; but he who infers from this fact, and who dares to assert, that mankind, or a large majority of them, never will conform to that rule, nor obey that command, takes upon himself the tremendous responsibility of pronouncing Christianity a failure and a falsehood.

Are we discouraged because, after eighteen and a half centuries, not one-fourth of the population of the globe have heard the tidings of peace on earth and good will to men, and because not one-fourth of those to whom the gospel has been proclaimed live in accordance with its precepts? Then let us remember that, however important time may be to a man, or to a generation of men, it is of no importance to that Being who does not exist in time, to whom the past and the future are ever present, one eternal *now*. Guizot clearly perceived that He, "to

whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," could wait for the slow ripening of his purposes, when he said that "Providence moves through time as the gods of Homer through space: it takes a step, and ages have rolled away."

If, then, we admit that the triumph of Christian morals is the highest attainment of man in time, it may not be difficult to conjecture what will be the next movement of humanity in that direction.

If I were permitted to draw a charcoal sketch of a plan of history, it would consist of five divisions or epochs, corresponding to the successive ideas which men have entertained of themselves:—

1. Man as the child of a patriarch and the slave of a despot. The representative of this idea was oriental civilization.

2. Man as a citizen, but the property of the State. This was the epoch of Greece and Rome.

3. Man *and* the State. Here we follow Guizot, who makes this the epoch of modern Europe.

4. Man master of the State, and personally free. This is the American epoch.

5. Self-governing man, in the highest perfection of his moral nature which is attainable in the present life. This will be the prophetic or millennial epoch.

The education of mankind might also be divided into five stages of progress, corresponding very nearly with the five epochs just named:—

1. The education of the imagination and speculative intellect. This was the work of the oriental schools.

2. The education of the practical intellect and will. In this, Greece and Rome were the school-masters.

3. The education of the religious sentiments. This commenced with the dawn of Christianity.

4. Education in physical sciences and inventive arts. The object of this is to teach man the uses of nature, and to make him master of her forces. We are in the midst of this movement.

5. Moral education, or the training of the heart, by the united agency of revelation and reason, and the highest triumph of both.

Of course, it is not meant that each of these departments of the education of our species has been strictly confined to a definite period; but that, while they have been all cultivated together to a certain extent, the advances which have been made in each have been more rapid and successful in some periods than in others. For example, men always studied nature and applied her powers to practical use, but it has been only within the last three centuries that these researches have taken the right direction, and produced the most conspicuous results. Philosophers studied moral science as earnestly before as since the Christian era, but they failed to educate the moral sensibilities of their dis-

ciples; and, though the discipline of the heart is the proper work of Christianity, he who would see the accomplishment of that work in its highest beauty, must look forward to a purer epoch and a better age than the present.

Anterior to the reign of Christian love there must be a reign of natural right, or justice; for it is plain that men must be taught to live together as neighbors before they will learn to love one another as brothers. So long as they defraud, oppress, and destroy each other, so long it may be presumed that they will suspect, hate, and retaliate.

Again, anterior to the reign of justice, men must learn to govern themselves; for he who cannot restrain his own appetites and passions, will violate the rights of others.

Guizot, in his instructive lectures on "Civilization in Europe," regards modern progress as a twofold development—of the individual, as master of himself, and of the state, as the conservator of political and social order. He proves that the political element is the legacy of Roman civilization, while the individual element had its origin among the rude tribes of Germany. But the people of this country have been constantly enlarging the individual, and restricting the political power, until every man in our Union of sovereign States is himself a sovereign. Now, if we inquire how the dualism of European civilization, man and the state, has been reduced to

unity in America, man master of the state, we shall find, to use an illustration which may sound somewhat professional, that, in their course of education, the people have advanced in this country to a school of higher grade, in which, as they are required to govern themselves more, they need the rod and ferule less. In European states, government is the centre of force, and the lines through which it moves diverge from the centre towards the circumference; but, in our country, every individual will is a centre of force, and the conductors converge till they form, at a common centre, an aggregate national will, which the government must represent and express, or be powerless. In Europe, the people are, to a great extent, what government makes them; in America, government is what the people make it.

As the democratic form of government can be maintained wherever a majority of the people know how to protect public and private rights, and are sufficiently upright to respect them, so every man can govern himself, who comprehends his relations to his fellow-men and to God, and has moral power enough to obey the law of harmony which regulates them. Thus, the condition of absolute liberty is absolute obedience. The more perfectly men understand and obey the code written in their own hearts, the less will they need to be restrained by force and fear; the more intelligent and moral they become, the milder will be the form of their go-

vernment. Their progress will be from despotism to limited monarchy, and from limited monarchy to democracy; and when democracy shall have finished its appropriate work in the political education of any people, and science in their intellectual education, and Christianity in their moral education, they will find in individual autocracy the platform of a better civilization.

To prepare for self-government such as this, men must first acquire personal freedom; for as the strippling cannot learn to swim without touching the water, so no one can unfold his entire individuality until he is made, under limitations divinely authorized, master of himself. I submit that this is the work of the American people: the establishment of personal freedom among ourselves, and its dissemination in the world.

The ruling motive of the Greeks was love of glory; of the Romans, love of power; of the English, love of wealth—and what is ours? The united voice of the nation, in every form of utterance, and in every manifestation of its daily life, answers—*Love of Freedom*. Whenever the cry of the oppressed and down-trodden is heard, whether from the slopes of the Andes, the Emerald Isle, or “the bright clime of battle and of song;” whether from the banks of the Vistula, the Tiber, or the Danube; and the arm of struggling freedom is stretched out to America for sympathy, our blood is stirred with quicker pul-

sations, and our voice speaks out to cheer and encourage. A few years since, we listened to the burning words of an exile, as with full heart, in tones half hopeful, half desponding, he pleaded in the audience of our country as a man would plead for his mother, in behalf of a fallen, and, so far as human foresight could extend, a ruined cause. What gave to the words of that zealous, though indiscreet patriot, their power to lead captive the hearts of men in spite of their judgment, and sway vast masses as with the wand of an enchanter? Others have spoken as earnestly on other themes, with equal eloquence, and used arguments which showed less of the special pleader, yet who, since the days of Demosthenes, has produced such an effect upon such multitudes of people as the distinguished Magyar? The power of eloquence does not reside in him alone who gives it form and expression. Unless the heart of the hearer respond to the tongue of the speaker, and emotion answer to emotion as face to face in a glass, the accents of Gabriel himself would fall powerless and dead, like an unknown language. But Kossuth spoke directly to our master passion, and therefore he called forth a response from the great heart of the nation.

The freedom which we love, and which may be called American freedom, is not only national independence of masters, whether foreign or native, but also the personal liberty of every citizen as master

of his own actions, and, jointly with every other citizen, master of the State. And this liberty is something quite different from license; it is liberty in and under law, regulated both by written statutes, and by the unwritten law of reason and justice, of nature and God.

This development of individual man, as personally free, and at the same time personally responsible; this union of liberty with obedience, which is one of the indispensable conditions of liberty, can be made nowhere but in a republic, and no republic is so fit to make it as ours. Our history and institutions, our habits of thinking, speaking, and acting—our very instincts and impulses, all prove that we are the men for this work; and, what is more to the point, that we are doing it. The Puritans, Quakers, and Cavaliers who colonized different sections of the country, came hither to enjoy their religious and political opinions undisturbed by arbitrary power. Their descendants took up arms in defence of the right to make their own laws, elect their own magistrates, and levy their own taxes. They have made more liberal concessions to each other than were ever made before by any people to establish and preserve a national union. They have gradually extended the right of suffrage, and have thus given legal form to their conviction that men, and not money, should govern. They have diminished the number of public offices which are held by executive

appointment, and increased the number of those which are obtained by popular election. They have made all posts of trust and honor accessible to the poor as well as to the rich; and when they have delegated their sovereignty for a limited time to magistrates of their choice, they make them understand very clearly that they are in office as the servants, not as the masters of the people. These are the fruits of the progressive spirit of our institutions, which teach every man his value, his dignity, and his duty, and which place in his hands more and more power as he shows capacity to use it safely and wisely.

The same tendency which is manifested in our political life, extends to our social, educational, and religious institutions. These all tend to elevate man, not as a constituent atom in the State, not as a drop in the bucket of a sect or party, but as independent, self-relying man. The poorest citizen of the republic knows and feels that he may claim the consideration due to a man, and if you withhold or deny him this, he will only wait till you are a candidate for office to make you sensible that he has the power of a man.

The schoolboy is no longer taught to put implicit faith in the *ipse dixit* of any Pythagoras, but to reason for himself. The time has gone by when he could gain praises, or prizes, because he could re-

member and repeat; we now insist that he shall think and know.

We hold, too, that faith is better sustained by works than by government. He who contributes voluntarily to support a pastor, reserves the right to judge of the quality and wholesomeness of the spiritual food he receives. He admits no obligation to believe the dogmas of the minister because he is the minister, but because, in his own private judgment, they are true.

It is worthy of remark how quickly the political exiles from foreign lands, who take refuge among us, become charged to excess with that bold independence which is characteristic of our people. They touch our soil, and are electrified with new and strange life. One, before he has been a week on our shores, undertakes to expound to us the esoteric meaning of Washington's Farewell Address. Another, before he has had time to learn the distinction between Hards and Softs, Silver-Grays and Adamantines, reads the government a lecture on the courtesies of diplomatic correspondence, forgetful that the right to abuse our public functionaries on our own soil is an American monopoly. The same gentleman even proposes to make us the fulcrum of a lever to move the world; a proposition which means, in plain English, that our country is to bear on its patient back the weight of the lever, with the world at one end, and our modern Archimedes at the

other! Issachar crouching down between two burdens! Our adventurous refugee may learn, if he has not learned already, that whenever a fulcrum shall be found for the world-moving lever, the American people mean to have fast hold of the long arm where the power is applied.

Perhaps we ought not to be surprised if emancipated mind, in the consciousness of its newly-discovered power, should run into some excesses. A troop of boys, just let loose from school, play pranks worthy of the pencil of Hogarth; and so, in the intoxication of freedom, we may commit extravagances which amuse or amaze the world, with the laudable purpose of demonstrating that we are not bound by prescriptive rules of behavior, and, therefore, are not "old fogies." But the extravagances we commit are only straws upon the surface of society, which show the direction of its mighty current. They are not the drivelling follies of dotage, but the freaks of youth's exuberant strength. They are the natural, though superfluous, offshoots of our vigorous and progressive civilization; not parasites which exhaust its life, nor fungi which feed upon its decay. They only need to be pruned off, and the sturdy trunk will remain healthy and full of sap, to nourish the expanding branches of our prosperity, and mature the wholesome fruits of liberty. The brain of the nation does not grow giddy with the height it has so rapidly attained; its eye looks up-

ward and onward, still higher and further; its heart beats time with the clock of progress, whose dial-fingers point the hour on the earth and heaven; and all its aspirations are prophetic of an expansive and glorious future.

And in that future there needs no prophet to foretell that our country will and must make its influence and power felt by other nations, in behalf of universal liberty. This is a part of our vocation, and we must fulfil it, or be traitors to humanity. Our example, and the resolute expression of our sympathy, have done, and will continue to do, much for those who honestly struggle against despotism; but the time has not yet arrived for the interposition of the strong arm. The infant Hercules could strangle the serpents of Juno in his own cradle, but he waited till the thews and sinews of manhood had grown strong and hard before he went forth to crush the heads of the Hydra, and to grapple with the Nemean lion in his den.

But that we shall have to go forth, at some future time—and that, perhaps, not very remote—the champions of humanity, like Hercules, to exterminate the monsters that ravage the earth, I believe to be as inevitable as destiny. Despotism, sooner or later, will force the conflict upon us; and, whenever that conflict shall come, the American people will carry with them into the world's battle the invincible

will of Prometheus, and the unconquered arm of Hercules.

But let us not anticipate our destiny, nor precipitate events which the teeming future labors to bring forth. Before we listen again to any voice, however eloquent, which would persuade us to rush prematurely into an armed crusade, let us show, before the excitement comes on, a little of the cool, practical common sense which we never fail to exhibit when the paroxysm is over. Whenever the sword of Washington shall be again invoked in the name of liberty, let us at least carefully inform ourselves whether it be such liberty as the sword of Washington achieved.

In conclusion, permit me to inquire whether there is anything in the political state of the world, or in our own condition, to bar our progress, or to prevent the realization of our country's prophetic thought? God has not bound the will, either of individuals or nations, in the rigid chains of fate. A man may mistake or neglect his calling, or throw away his advantages, or pervert his powers to ignoble uses; and so may a whole people. In both cases, the unprofitable servant will be cast out, while his work and its wages will be given to others. The hopes of humanity are now confided to our keeping; but if we prove recreant to the trust—if we remove the old landmarks which our fathers have set up—if we permit local interests, or sectional jealousies, or self-

ish ambition to alienate one part of our country from another, and rend asunder the union of these States, God will raise up more faithful instruments to do his will, and place in their hands the standard of progress and the sceptre of power.

The nation which commits suicide—and disunion would be suicide for us—perpetrates a crime of more terrible consequence than its own destruction, for it delays the purposes of the Great Ruler, and mars the fair proportions of humanity.

But let our hopes prevail, and put to flight our fears; for though, one after another, the great lights of the republic are extinguished, and with measured tread, and muffled drum, and saddened hearts we follow the dust of the fathers of our country to the grave, yet, wherever they repose—whether at Mount Vernon or Monticello, whether in the shades of Ashland or Quincy, or by the murmuring sea which moans its endless requiem around the tomb of the statesman of Marshfield—the lessons they have taught will not be forgotten, nor the legacy they have left us be scattered to the winds.