

A  
USEFUL LIFE  
AND  
A PEACEFUL DEATH:

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

LEGISLATURE OF NORTH CAROLINA,

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## PREFATORY NOTE

THE author of this pamphlet visited Raleigh, for the purpose of attending a series of religious meetings. On the night of his arrival, he was present at the organization of an Executive, Legislative and Judiciary Temperance Society, and, after an address on the occasion, was desired to preach before the Legislature on the following Sabbath night. The largest church was procured, a very full audience of every rank were present, and the following discourse was submitted.

A request was soon after received, signed by twenty-one Senators and Members of the House of Commons, "in behalf of themselves and their associates," desiring a copy for publication. This request is reluctantly complied with, urged chiefly by the desire that the publication may prove beneficial to citizens renowned for a tolerant spirit.

As early as 1672, George Fox, when he had crossed "the great bogs, laying abroad anights in the woods by a fire," and reached the groves of Albermarle, "met with a tender people" who received "the authority of truth;" and when he had "opened many things concerning the light and spirit of God that is in every one," he was still "received lovingly." From the house of the Governor, who "heard him meekly," he went to the residence of "Joseph Scot, one of the representatives of the country, where he had a sound and precious meeting with all conditions of people;" and when he returned to Virginia, he declared that he found the people of North Carolina, "generally tender and open," and that he had made among them "a little entrance for truth."

The characteristics which this envoy of humanity found in that chivalrous State yet remain. The kindness which the unworthy author received will be gratefully remembered, and in return he prays that every soul on her domain may become enlightened, sanctified and saved.

E. L. M.

## DISCOURSE.

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ACTS XIII: 36 — *For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep.*

THE Apostle uttered these words in his argument at Antioch. His immediate object was, to prove that Jesus was the true Messiah "whom God raised from the dead." In this allusion to the person of David, we have a compendious description of a good character and a useful man.

The occasion which has called us together, will, perhaps, require and justify a slight departure from the usual style of sermonizing; but while we proceed to discuss some of the great principles which relate to the general good, most earnestly is it desired that none of you will forget the dread responsibilities connected with your personal relation to Almighty God. In this service we shall consider the subject of **A USEFUL LIFE AND A PEACEFUL DEATH.**

It is said of the ancient Monarch of Israel that "He served his own generation by the will of God." This will suggest several particulars.

In the *first* place, he took his position in society as Providence directed, and recognized this life as a state of active service. He felt a tie linking him to his brother man, to all men, and while he served them beneficently, he felt most deeply that his **highest** relation was a divine one, and because he was truly devout, his patriotism was the inspiration of goodness. He was greatly sincere in his uncommon greatness: though imperfect in his life, he was perfect in his purposes, and hence he was by infalible wisdom declared to be "a man after God's own heart." His repentance was as profound as his faults were obvious. He was "zealous for the LORD," and desired the prolongation of earthly existence only that he might be more useful. In the seventh chapter of Acts it is said that "David found favor before God, and *desired* to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob." Perseverance, that great element of usefulness, entered into his composition. Having served the world through a long life in the highest station, he made his death-bed a throne of perpetual admonition, from which he taught his son to "show himself a man," and died praying that his influ-



ence might be augmented through the agency of worthy successors.

In the *second* place, this ancient servant of God and humanity *served his generation*. By this we are to understand that he served the age in which he lived. He went out of himself, rose above the narrow and contemptible precincts of sectional prejudice and took generous and comprehensive views. It is not forgotten that public men are here,—men who rule this commonwealth and legislate for this great people,—men older, wiser, and better every way than the speaker. We come not here intentionally to degrade the pulpit so low as to make it the desecrated scene of political fulminations, nor would we willingly deserve contempt by presuming to dictate to your superior sense. But we meet as citizens of a common country, christians of a common faith, and descendants of a race who never deemed it irrelevant to inquire earnestly into the process by which successive generations have been served and by which coming ages should be blessed. How will the Christian Patriot serve his age?

First of all he must *understand* it. He must be capable of imbibing its spirit before he can ennoble it. The wind must not only be strong, but it must come in contact with the sea before the billows roll and are purified by the motion. As well might we expect, that of itself "the spicy breath of Araby" would cause the stormy Atlantic to swell and dash against the adverse shore as that the great mass of the people will be moved and elevated, and constantly impelled towards one great point by the conflicting whims of those whom luxury has emasculated of strength, and ignorance has incapacitated for counsel.

Moreover, one will begin to understand his age just as soon as he has the power of *feeling its claims*. Cold theorizers and frigid dogmatics are obsolete in our day. Men of acute sympathy are our men of power, and men who have had experience *among* the people, are the leaders who have won wisdom in the best school, and with that prophetic sagacity which is quickened by the throbbings of the popular pulse can intelligently guide human destinies to the noblest goal. What is the predominant character of our age? Action! Who are fitted to serve it? Men who are active, who are practical, and who in every vocation are working men. The age of metaphysical disquisition is past, and the time has come when if one would be useful he must be active in acquiring wisdom and equally industrious in embodying all he acquires in magnanimous acts which are palpable to the general feelings and conducive to universal good. Healthy souls in sound bodies, men of solid qualities and indomitable application are demanded now. This age though distinct is not separate from those that have preceded. We are bound to past generations, even to the most remote, by a sublime connection. Our age is the cumulated and compressed result of all antiquity, as the majestic river widening to the sea, is the result of every tributary, however obscure, and of

every fountain, however small. Hence he who would mould and guide the elements of the future should not take his position as a pilot in the eddying current of opinions until he has explored the past and caught an inspiration commensurate with the magnitude of the world's increasing claims. Our proper destination is into purer and deeper waters; but he who is ignorant of what has been will be most indifferent to what needs be, and will be as likely to navigate his craft in one direction as another.

There are two ways by which we obtain the power of serving our generation. The first lies in *generous and comprehensive self-culture*. Human nature is identical in its constitution and in its susceptibility to social influence. We thrill others most when our own soul is best toned. But the elements of public thought are diversified, temperaments differ, and local characteristics conflict. He therefore who is to mingle among all and would move each must possess an education as varied as the multifarious gradations of the surrounding intellectual world, and must urge repugnant demands through the universal avenue of love. The giant in his best condition can move no farther than he takes hold. The power of grasping moral powers is moral, and is within us. We reach the soul through the soul,—we arouse the passions only through the passions. True power is intellectual. Its honor and reward lies in the capacity of uttering the bright coinage of immortal thought.

Providence has appointed our existence in an age and country most favorable for the illustration of this point. In ruder ages, physical strength obtained mastership in life. In the subsequent era of chivalry, the prowess of military chieftains monopolized the brightest smiles and the highest honors. But under the higher civilization of modern times, beautiful thought is the favorite sovereign, who from the printed page or speaking lip sways with omnipotent energy a sceptre that is omnipresent. Look at the regal power of mind. If it cannot "create a soul under the ribs of death," it will chisel frosty marble into the lineaments and gracefulness of more than kingly majesty. Disdaining to employ agents weak and fragile to execute its purpose, creative mind has produced a titan-progeny whose strength is greater than Briareas with his hundred hands. Vivified with a soul ethereal and lightning-winged, these servants, whose toil is neither uncompensated nor unjust, open the quarry and drive the loom; or when linked to the car and ship they unexhausted go

" Tramp, tramp over the earth,  
Splash, splash across the sea. "

There are intellects at this moment extant and luxuriating in the solitudes of profound meditation, or active in public toil, whose



conceptions, long since dispatched on their mission of conquest, are rushing in a thousand directions with infinitely more speed and energy than the Eagles of imperial Rome. As the lightning shineth from the east unto the west, so the clear broad light of sterling thought, glittering through "the spacious circuits of her musing," is pouring an effulgence round the globe. Not the fitful coruscations of vapid mediocrity, but profound and glowing mind is the universal queen whom all must adore or serve. Republicans though we are, we must acknowledge that here is a sovereign victorious beyond our envy or our hate.

But mental strength does not lie in the power to sit still. Action, action energetic, persevering and comprehensive, is the condition of development and progress. Mind must have mind in masses to act upon, and in that contact there is an exciting power beyond all human computation. Napoleon must have high Alps to overleap, nations for his conquest, and universal empire for his dominion. Nothing less than a whole planet will answer for Columbus to shape his course upon; and such mental emperors as Bowditch and Newton require immensity thick-shown with myriads of constellations for apparatus, angels for fellow students, and all eternity to unfold the latent energies of the human mind.

Why even here in this doomed earth, where storms howl and disease destroys, the empires that rise, and the institutions that rule, are only lengthened shadows of individual minds walking before the sun of immortal glory. It is the same now as it ever has been, the thick ranks of the great army of mankind are marching with lock-step over the field of time to great conflicts and eternal rewards. They march to the music of thought regular or distracting, and he who plays loudest and best will be followed by the strongest host.

A thought put into action is infinitely more effective than exploding cannon. The tones of true eloquence will drown all their uproar, counteract the force of their destruction, and render the emperor of all the Russias utterly impotent before the splendors of inspiring truth. The crash of iron hail and the growlings of "the dogs of war" are intermittent, but the salvos of mental artillery are perpetual.

Our power to serve the age in which we live is measured by the excellence of our spiritual cultivation. God has indicated our duty in the wonderful endowments of our race. He has made it the eternal nature of the soul to make all things its own; and it is the glorious prerogative of a virtuous mind to make all excellence its solace and its food. Is a diamond beautiful?—mind will set it on fire and from its flame educe truth more sparkling and profitable than the perishing gem. Is light transparent?—mind lays hold of a ray, and with a scalpel more etherial than the subject it dissects, spreads before the eye of admiration, the discriminated hues which in diversified combinations tint the rose and form the

rainbow, beautify the earth and adorn the heavens—And is the deep blue vault of those heavens sublime with the resplendent glories of majestic worlds circling there?—mind, aye the mind of man, has from that awful dome suspended its balance-beam, and calmly weighed vast systems of worlds in the even scales. Mind thrown into the lowest vale of nature, an intangible and immortal essence, illumines whatever is dark, conquers opposing strength, and with pinions swifter than the lightning's wing, flies an angel-flight, forth and right on whithersoever it will.

Again, by high self-culture we reach the spirit of our age and *more it by the power of principles*. He who deeply *feels* the riddle of the world is in a good way to unravel it. One spark may kindle a conflagration which shall destroy the temples of liberty and justice. Such is the fanatic who hurls his torch on high and vaunts himself as a philosopher, when he is only a madman. One spark of hallowed fire may set rubbish in a blaze, from whose flashy and blasting heat rich products may flow, as Corinthian brass was first formed amid the cinders of a voluptuous city. One little word embodying a nation's spirit,—one speech glowing with the inspiration of the age,—may fall on combustibles which oceans cannot quench. Old John Adams, when a college student, chanced to be in Boston and heard a patriotic speech, one of the first sparks struck by the Genius of American Liberty from his majesty's oppressive throne. That seed of fire was not lost. It fell in the already glowing heart of him whom a great rival frankly termed "our colossus in congressional debate." What the worth and power of the principle then broached were is indicated by Mr. Adams' declaration, "I say in the most solemn manner, that Mr. Otis' Oration against Writs of Assistance breathed into this nation the breath of life."

Martin Luther found a bible uncumbered by traditions, and read it in secret, panting after truth until the bright vision burst upon his enraptured heart. In the light of a new and nobler principle than was possessed by his cotemporaries, his cell became more glorious than grandeur's most magnificent saloon, and he deeply felt that no man should hide what God designed all men to know. Inspired by holy truth he could but inspire, and those reachings of his soul went forth conquering and to conquer, until he had kindled the surrounding atmosphere into a canopy of magnificence, inspired contiguous minds with his own ardor, and left the world all blazing from his torch, to assume hereafter a crown compared to which the laurels of selfish heroes are weeds.

And yet the reformation was not complete. Latimer and Ridley struck for a still nearer approach to undoubted right. For their fidelity they must share in the peril and glory of all great advancements. "Fear not, Master Ridley," said the heroical Latimer, as both in chains were going to the stake, "for by the blessing of God we will this day kindle such a flame as shall



never go out!" No! it shall not go out. Each new principle discovered and proclaimed, is a new and imperishable luminary added to the moral heavens.

To support an unjust war, Charles I of England taxed his subjects illegally and without just cause. Hampden resisted the trifling assessment of twenty shillings on his vast landed property, and stood up the mightiest among the mighty to defend a down-trodden principle of justice and ceased not until he had brought from the dust the cry of liberty, and rendered *ship-money* in all men's ears a hated word.

There is another and still more striking illustration of the service rendered to one's age and to all ages by the discovery and defence of profound and original principles. Sir Edward Coke, the distinguished lawyer,—for it was fashionable for lawyers to go to church in those days,—one day discovered a lad taking notes during divine service. Being pleased with the modest worth of the lad, he asked his parents to permit him to educate their emulative son. It is said that Coke sent him to Oxford. He drank from the fountains of knowledge, and in those draughts he found

" The sober certainty of waking bliss. "

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, he longed for the wisdom that rouses the might which so often and so long slumbers in a peasant's arm. He communed with the past and with his own startling thoughts. He summoned around him the venerable sages of antiquity, and in their presence made a feast of fat things,

" A perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets where no crude surfeit reigns. "

At the fount of holiest instruction he cleared his vision, and from the mount of contemplation breathed in worlds to which the heaven of heavens is but a veil. But his soul was too free for the peace of his sycophantic associates, his principles were too philanthropic for the selfishness of his age, the doctrines which he scorned to disavow were too noble for old England, and he sought an asylum among the icy rocks of this wilderness world. He came

" To plant the Tree of Life, to plant fair Freedom's Tree. "

and was driven from the society of white men through wintry storms and savages more lenient than interested factions, to plant the first free colony in America. That boy was the founder of Rhode Island, that man was the patriot who stooped his annointed head as low as death for universal rights, and ever

" Fought to protect, and conquered but to bless. "



That christian was Roger Williams, the first who plead for liberty of conscience in this country and the pioneer of religious liberty for the world.

Such lovers of truth and justice are the pillars of society and the benefactors of their age. They expel popular fears, steady popular fickleness, expand narrow prejudice, and sink factious tempers in their enlarged wisdom and public spirit.

Such service is neither transient nor spasmodic. Thoughts born in solitude and agony most frequently convulse or console the world. In the lightning-gleam of intellect which in the murky gloom of his indigence and neglect created in the mind of Columbus the conclusion that the earth is spherical, and that the Indies might be reached by sailing due west, America with all her vast domain inhabitants and history *was discovered*! But we have had moral explorers who, striking out a new and successful voyage, have returned with "rich argosies" of inestimable wealth. Fifty years ago a few Baptist preachers assembled in a small parlor in the retired town of Kittering, Eng. After spending a season in prayer for divine direction, they resolved to form an association for diffusing religious knowledge in the heathen world, and from their own scanty means they contributed thirteen pounds sterling as alms to accompany their devotion. This was the beginning of the great work of modern missions. The germ has grown to a mighty tree overspreading the earth. There are now fifteen hundred missionaries in the field, aided by five thousand native teachers. These are laboring around twelve hundred central stations and fifty printing establishments. One hundred and eighty thousand have already professed conversion to the Christian faith, and two hundred thousand more are daily taught wisdom, human and divine, in the missionary schools. William Carey struck the first blow at home and kindled the first beacon light on the shores of the kingdom of darkness abroad. He rose to be the first scholar and foremost philanthropist in India. He emulated every excellence and became the purest among the great, the greatest among the pure. The government which first opposed him came at length to acknowledge their obligations to true religion, and on the 10th of August, 1842, a great concourse of British statesmen and native patriots in Calcutta resolved to signify their gratitude and veneration for great services and exalted worth, by ordering the form of Dr. Carey cut in marble. But neither they nor the angels above can fully estimate how wisely and how well he served his generation.

Robert Raikes, the industrious and benevolent printer of Gloucester, having acquired a fortune, set about subordinating it to the benefit of his age. Happily he struck upon a new principle, by gathering the vicious and ignorant into a Sabbath school. A great light has sprung up and spread from that heavenly spark, and millions are now blessed in that institution of which, since

God himself is the President, every matured christian should be a teacher, and the whole world of youth the alumni.

Clarkson out of Parliament and Wilberforce in it, with their tongue and pen, like Howard with his heart and hand, served their generation in the advocacy of justice and mercy, and won fame and glory which shall be luminous and immortal when the names of their calumniators shall rot in the caves of eternal infamy and oblivion.

Another illustration, the strongest and most striking of all, will stand prominent in the history of this eventful age. It is that those six inebriates in Baltimore, when drunk, should have staggered upon the only true principle of sobriety,—a principle which, had it been acted upon, would have prevented previous dissoluteness and which is hereafter destined to rescue the abandoned drunkard from his hell, and elevate the moderate drinker into the condition of a temperate and virtuous man.

The influence of true service to one's age goes on multiplying. Washington and his compatriots went to "war against a preamble,"—behind a small but unjust requisition they detected the presence of tyranny, and dragging up from the deep well of truth an old but undiscovered antagonist principle, they first felt its worth, authenticated its justness, and then went to the struggle of death in its defence. What are the results? The principle has survived its first patrons, and is now circling the globe. From us to the south pole, from sea to sea, almost every foot of soil is disenthralled from European rule, the peasants of the vales and hardy mountaineers of the old world snuff the air of liberty from our shores and pant for the blessings we enjoy.

What has done this? Opinion!—mind aroused, and stimulated into action. It is a fearful power to unloose, but it is more fearful when arbitrarily confined. When ardent truth has once fallen where it kindles, and latent thought has been drawn from the quickened mind, it thenceforth becomes a sword of lightning which no material scabbard can sheathe.

The volcano in eruption, if allowed in a natural way to expend its force may be comparatively harmless. Its currents of noisome scoria and melted rock may flow down through channels blasted by outbursts of preceding flame, or they may quietly subside at the roots of richest vines to improve their flavor and mature the richest fruit. But when the crater is closed by force, and the abortive attempt is made with coercive bonds to imprison internal heat, then there is danger all around. No one can safely anticipate where or in what shape the inevitable explosion will appear. You may, if you choose, play with the uncaged lion,—you may tantalize the tiger when the first gush of warm blood is on his gnashing teeth, but do not peril yourselves and your country by sporting with an incensed public opinion!



"At whom do lions cast their gentle looks?  
 Not to the beast that would usurp their den.  
 Whose hand is that the forest bear doth lick?  
 Not his, that spoils her young before her face.  
 Who scapes the lurking serpent's mortal sting?  
 Not he that sets his foot upon her back.  
 The smallest worm will turn when trodden on;  
 And doves will peck, in safeguard of their brood."

The age of physical force is passing away. Men are beginning to be less enthusiastic in heroising their fellow men for wholesale murder. Probably we shall not vote the apotheosis of many more military chieftains. The gladiatorship of mind must be our peril and our glory. It is useless to stand still and frown, as if we could wink difficulties away. If a great conflict arises, why "let the weakest fend off." Two things demand gratitude.

First, *God gives the best minds the widest field.* All souls have some points of contact. Love of fraud and error are unnatural. One true soul will touch the latent springs in every other. The sparks of genius will kindle. The voice of reason, truth and justice will eventually be heard. The whole earth listens. When the ambassador from God shall appear with true credentials,—a heart to feel every throbbing of humanity and an intellect armed and ready to make aggressions on every tyrannical foe, *that man will be heard!*

In the *second* place, *God gives favor to the best men by ensuring their success.* The certainty of triumph lies in the inherent superiority of truth over error. Good men have a wide field,—they ask no favor but a fair one. If this is unjustly forbidden, it is only a momentary restraint. Every free element comes to their aid. Some press will throw out rays of light. Some kindred soul will speak. Slander only reduplicates truth indirectly by its repetitions of detraction. Every breeze blows but to augment the treasure it circulates. Every bounding billow rolls joyously on to the world's limits, rejoicing in the dissemination of that which is most like itself—truth!—knowing no fear and yielding to no chain, but living on forever, boundless, fetterless, sublime! Who is so mean as to quail before the discussion of any important truth?

"If we have whispered truth,  
 Whisper no longer;  
 But speak as the thunder doth,  
 Sterner and stronger."

If a storm gathers in the political or moral heavens, it is more than folly, in our age, to deprecate its approach or fear its might. We must have men of no whimpering, childish composition to

conduct off safely the elements of cumulated wrath. Men who efficiently serve their generation are of this mettle. They were anticipated and described by the classic poet,—the moral giants who march along the earth and across the ocean, but their front is among the stars. They do not stand with pale lips and quaking knees, but grasping the pillars of the temple where tyranny sits enthroned, not in blindness, like the strong man of old, to be self immolated, they crush oppression from its iron throne and trample in their strength on the colossal ruins. Day and night, sunshine and storm, are vicissitudes which neither impede such men nor change their course. They are not weathercocks to be turned by the winds, but they take their positions in storms, like the Alps, to turn the wind. A great American poet has told us the whole truth in lines worthy of the country and the man:

" Truth crush'd to earth shall rise again,  
The eternal years of God are hers ;  
But error wounded writhes in pain,  
And dies among her worshippers. "

It is suggested in our text that the service we owe our age is measured and sanctioned by the Divine will. "David served his generation by the will of God." How shall we deserve this eulogium? We must rise above a slavish devotion to a sect, and consult our common Father's will. We must so far loosen ourselves from a segment of the circle of humanity as to comprehend the whole. When men are furiously and fanatically fond of a particular object, they will prefer it to their own peace, to their own life, and to every other claim. Men should be decided, all men should have their sentiments well understood by themselves and frankly avowed to others. "'Tis noble to have a giant's strength, but not to use it *as* a giant." We should be open to conviction while we are enforcing it. The outlet of generosity is the inlet of true greatness. "The liberal soul," said Solomon, "shall be made fat." God puts a noble and generous man into stall-feed, while the poor, meagre, miserable miser is left to shrivel up his pigmy soul in this world, and in the great winnowing day of God's almightiness, the crisped and haggard *thing* will be blown into eternal despair by the burning winds of contempt.

The will of God requires us not to elevate a few by depressing the many, but on the contrary to seek the greatest good of the greatest number. What means are to be used? This brings me to the great point I would enforce in all this discourse. We must educate. Let us not leave the mass of mind to grow ignorant and corrupt, and afterwards attempt coercively to bind it. Xerxes may as well expect to chain the vexed Hellespont in peace. Legislation is impotent any longer to resist the beamings of a brighter day. Knowledge is generous and communicative, and jealous-



sy at its progress is a sure symptom of its want. But, thank God, the day has come when it cannot be successfully resisted. Superstition may condemn Galileo for his improved astronomy, but the earth continues to turn round with all its stupid inhabitants revolving into light. Some are born in darkness, have always dwelt there from choice, it is *their* native land, for it they fight, and it is the only sense in which they are patriotic. This is natural, but they and all like them who fear the effulgence bursting up the horizon should quickly kindle counter fires and *educate, educate!* The more obstructions you throw before the flooding tide of knowledge, the more destructive energies will be developed. The force of cannon may quell mobs, but education will prevent them. Moral power creates the strongest munitions of safety; while arbitrary compulsion degrades both the tyrant and his victim. We may expect that a few will continue to cry out against increased illumination, as that which they deprecate shames bigotry, cures superstition, and destroys all tyranny over body and soul. But the fire-cross of wisdom is shining from hill-top to hill-top, and is rapidly bounding from hand to hand. Aggressions into the kingdom of darkness have commenced. We do not "cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war," but in God's name and for all God's creatures we do say "Let there be Light!" It is said that if the beak of a bird is bound up fast, and his wings broken, he can still live and breathe through the hollow bones. But, say we, give the bird both wings and beak to be used as heaven designed. Epictetus told his sovereign that he would confer a greater favor upon the state by elevating the thoughts of the people than by raising the roofs of their houses.

To sow the seeds of thought in uncultivated mind, is the first duty of this age; and on the timely discharge of this duty our salvation depends. The lower classes must be made intelligent men before they can possibly become useful citizens. The time will soon come if it has not already dawned, when the greatest martial victory ever achieved will be regarded as infinitely less important than the opening of the first Lyceum or the establishment of an additional school. Mind, ruling with a sway as peaceful as sunlight, like it will be most powerful. There are not physical energies enough in the universe to bend one thought of the human soul; and if we can succeed in training the rising generation as they should be trained, each youth will become an intelligent patriot ready to say to any oppressor as the ancient hero said—"You may destroy the *case* of Anaxarchus, himself you cannot reach."

The extent and resources of our country ought to stimulate us to prompt and persevering action in this enterprise. We have already under cultivation a fragment of our vast domain, including twenty-six sovereign states, some of which are larger and more powerful than whole kingdoms in Europe. We are occupying

an area of two million three hundred thousand square miles; or, one billion four hundred and seventy two million acres. What a theatre is here spread out for the last experiment of civilization! A son of the Pilgrims may turn his back on the dust of his sires and the foam of his ocean haunts, and travel three thousand miles towards the setting sun, and still be on his fatherland. The most magnificent scenery will greet him everywhere. Chains of inland seas, and innumerable majestic rivers leaping from their mountain springs, and coursing from Columbus to Oregon, from the Lake of the Woods to New Orleans, may entice him on through every zone and every clime, from the stern north to the balmy south, from the regions of rock and ice to the perpetual zephyr and rose, a journey of twenty thousand miles, and yet he will not have passed from his fatherland.

But what if along our coasts, our rivers, our plantations, mind lies passive to the bigot and the demagogue? What if some crafty intriguer, clothing his hollow pretensions in "the rhinoceros skin of impudence," shall act the part of a baser Cromwel here, by launching from the little fulcrum of a military and religious despotism a power which once annihilated all that remained to England of church and parliament, frightened the great nation into submissive, dumb despair, and

"hewed the throne  
Down to a block!"

Let foreign bigots flood our land, and native intellect be steeped in ignorance but for a brief cycle of years, and the dreadful end will come, the last experiment of republican government will fail, patriotism will perish and this great national compact will tumble to ruins, like a globe shattered by earthquakes. We must educate. We must supply the means to cultivate the hardy yeomanry scattered over "the low-lying fields of our beautiful land." Especially is it needed that the cant and technics of religion should give place to a generous spirit and an active benevolence. Make the pulpit respectable and it will be respected. Do not drive thinking men from the sanctuary. Let the altar of God remain attractive as it was originally designed, the watch tower of wisdom and not the throne of dulness. Keep teachers of religion out of the political arena. May God paralyze the hand that would unite church and state under our skies. We can dispense with such a curse. Let statesmen look well to their appropriate business, and let religionists see that truth is not perverted nor morals injured. No preacher should be a partisan, but every herald of the Cross should be a sentient nerve of Freedom, the toughest sinew in the whole body of patriotism.

The result and reward of a useful life is a peaceful death. When David had served his generation "he fell on sleep." This



beautiful description of a peaceful termination of life's toils and solicitudes, is applied to David, Solomon, Jehosaphat and Hezekiah in the Old Testament, and to Lazarus and Stephen in the New. To the conscientious there is no guile in life, and to the useful there is no terror in death.

" The good man lays his hand upon the skies  
And bids earth roll, nor heeds her idle whirl."

He who has consulted the will of God and the welfare of mankind in the transactions of his life, will not fear with Moses to "go up into mount Nebo and *die in the mount.*" The veteran christian be his walk of life what it may, will hear the summons without remorse, and like the venerable Grecian sage surrounded by grateful pupils, will calmly fold his mantle about him and sit down to die. He bids the world good night and wakes in eternity all fresh for an immortal race and reward!

The purpose of this discourse will be lost unless an immediate effect is produced on those who hear it. We have no time to waste. The remote horizon gleams with lurid foretokenings, the monitory thunder mutters hoarsely, and reverberates through subterranean caves. The sagacious look thoughtful, and the patriotic with suppressed forebodings anticipate coming storms. There is no better alternative than to prepare for them. To be conscious of our peril, is to be already in a propitious condition to avert it. To have good men among us well educated, is to possess the richest gifts of a beneficent Providence; but to suffer under great powers perverted, is to be scourged with the bitterest curse. An uneducated population may be degraded; a population educated in unrighteousness will be ungovernable. The one may grind in slavery; the other will give anarchy its venom and its crimes. All lesser luminaries that shone on the reflecting Nile found no responsive melody; but when the Sun shone there, even stony Memnon poured forth melodious strains. The light of flowers, of stars, and of kindred intellect may with intellect harmonize in the notes of inarticulate praise, but it is only the highest light that wakes the adoration of gratitude vocal and sincere. A palace of ice may be radiant with hues as splendid as they are cold, but while the fabric is admired it melts, and as its treacherous material grows liquid around the imprisoned occupant, his remorse will ignite it into a sea of flame.

It is demanded by our country and our God that you who occupy the principal places should be men of principle. Your talents, all the influences you can wield, are to be consecrated to the public good. Your responsibility is fearfully great. If you err even in an honest view of your duty, mistake the spirit of the age, wound the constitution under which we subsist or indulge private passion at the cost of the general weal, than will you

suffer the reprisal which neither wealth nor station can avert,—you will receive in your persons, and forever pay in your fame, the penalty of those whom Providence signalizes as doomed but not useless barriers to the violent current of changeable times. If any wish to augment the fury of gathering waters by braving them, they will only prepare fertility for coming generations by forcing them to sweep away unrighteous impediments, and then to waste their rage in diffusion. Every violence done to human rights is grimly noted down in the grand impeachment-book by the Genius of Humanity who patiently waits till the shadow upon the darkening political sun-dial points the hour of retribution. The crafty demagogue may hurl

“His dazzling spells into the spongy air  
Of power to cheat the eye with blar illusion  
And give it false presentiments,

but hypocritical falsehood is always suicidal to its own interests. “Be ye sure your sin will find you out.” The gawdy shows of the coronation of chicanery and ignorance cannot endure and will not long beguile. Restless wisdom has a broom to give to the world a speedy riddance of all such nuisances.

We all have a great work to do. Political asperity should be softened, popular ignorance dispersed, and a moral emancipation every where achieved. This will require protracted and incessant toil. It is vain to wait for some potent magic to change the character of a people all at once. We have the inveterate habits of centuries to conquer. A copious administration of food is not the most prudent means of curing the debility which results from protracted abstinence. The influence of example descends. We must have purity, patriotism and piety in high places. We need statesmen who shall aspire not so much to harrangue each other as to exemplify exalted virtues before a great, earnest and intelligent nation.

Pardon the warmth of my expressions. I know where I am and whom I am addressing; but under the eaves of your magnificent Capitol, and in this dense throng of chivalrous Southerners, I think of that venerable christian patriot whose son was my father, and on whose white locks my young brow leaned and learned the sentiments which he enthusiastically imbibed from the lips of Washington and Lafayette. Not like Spartacus do I rush to this scene and under oppression cry—“I’m here to fight!”—but as a free man among the free, I pray you guard well and transmit unimpaired the great inheritance which our fathers won. Go to your constituents and declare your purpose; and if some rival, skilful in meanness, commands more votes because his whiskey equals his selfishness let him enjoy his brief triumph. Labor generously for the real good of your county and your



commonwealth, while life lasts, and then fall on sleep as gently as the beneficent orb of day sinks from human view. A glorious reaction will follow, and your son, justly proud of an upright father's integrity, or a beneficiary, rescued from obscurity by your kindness and educated as a worthy successor in the legislative hall will stand there with tears of gratitude more noble than a coronet, and inspired with an eloquence more thrilling and magnanimous than the sycophancy of a parasite will proclaim in deathless tones that,

"—————Man was made *to know*,  
And there will be a time when this great truth,  
Electric shall run from man to man,  
And the blood-cemented pyramids of ignorance  
Shall by its flash be thrown to earth in atoms---  
When it shall blaze with sun-refulgent splendor  
And *the whole earth be lighted.*"

There is an imposing grandeur in public testimonials to exalted worth. It is a noble thing to honor the truly excellent of our race; it awakens the purest sympathies and gives energy to the most generous sentiments. It has always been natural for nations to associate the honors rendered to great men with religious solemnities. We would not be idolatrous, neither would we wish to deprive society of the illustrious, nor disenchant human nature of the love of glory. We would only have men seek true celebrity, by executing what is worthy of being celebrated. True honor is not external; it can only be acquired by virtuous integrity in all our relations to man and God. Moral honor alone is permanent. Like a hymn it is always attractive, while the fleeting puff of worldly praise is like a street song, which wearies the ear. Fame created and sustained by intrinsic worth is like the planets on high. To our imperfect sense they may sometimes appear to stand still, or move backward; while in reality, under the guidance of the Infinite, they never are arrested in their orbits, but with an original and sublime momentum compass the heavens. False fame is like a gawdy flag floating over a foundered ship; it streams out gaily as the craft sinks, and then disappears forever. Fondness for such honors is certainly "avarice of air"; while a deep passion for enduring reputation is among the noblest emotions of the human heart. The mind that is indifferent to the veneration of posterity is undeserving of contemporary esteem. Citizens and Patriots make this great boon your own. Secure the homage of unborn generations, by opening fountains to supply their wants as they rise. Let the stream of high thoughts and generous deeds go sounding down the future, to charm the dull into intelligence and rouse the obdurate into praise, deep and sublime as the mighty ocean.

There are in this congregation many christians, and christian ministers. Let us, my brethren, approach the holy altar in spirit, and before this solemn stillness is broken by the moving mass, like the young Carthagenian swear eternal enmity to every vice. Then may a Father's blessing go with us, our words of stern truth be more often a warning than a prophecy, and our influence in the cause of God and our country continually increased,

“Till wrapt in fire the realms of ether glow,  
And heaven's last thunders shake the world below.”