A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

On the occasion of its Sixth Anniversary,

ON WEDNESDAY, 12th FEBRUARY, 1845.

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A DISCOURSE.

Gentlemen of the Georgia Historical Society,—

It is, doubtless, a source of deep regret, to all present, that the distinguished and honored individual expected to address you on this occasion, has been providentially prevented from complying with your wishes.*

But while this disappointment must mar the pleasure which the return of your anniversary is well calculated to bring, it will not, I trust, prevent an humble substitute from receiving that sympathy, to which, according to the laws of our social nature, we are all, under similar circumstances, entitled.

The social feeling is, perhaps, one of the most important feelings of our nature. It is evidently among the first of which we are conscious, and certainly one of the last which lingers in the heart, as we stand upon the verge of time.

We are cast upon society, in some of its forms, from the cradle to the grave. We are indebted to society for those aids and those influences which fit us for present and for future happiness. That love which watches over us while incapable of self-preservation—which labors for us, and defends us when exposed to danger—"that love which loves us the more for our very helplessness and imbecility, is the offspring of that social feeling which Deity has implanted in our breasts."

We are indebted to this susceptibility of our minds for most of those desires which prompt to action, and for much of that pleasure which we derive from the exercise of our faculties. We live and labour, not for ourselves, but for those to whom we are united by social ties. During almost every moment, while conscious, our breasts feel the influence of this principle, and our minds act in obedience to its impulse.

It becomes, therefore, an important consideration as to what direction should be given to this susceptibility of our nature. It must be important to know how far it may be under the control of others, and by what means it may be most easily and most effectually directed, so

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* Gov. Gilmer.

as to promote, in the highest possible degree, the welfare of society and the happiness of individuals.

Hitherto, this susceptibility of the human heart has been too often perverted. Instead of arousing men to the discharge of the great duties of philanthropy and benevolence, it has prompted them to unite for the oppression and destruction of each other—assuming the specious names of patriotism and the love of glory, it has armed nation against nation, and often made man the most deadly foe to his fellow man.

But we have reason to rejoice that, under the mild influence of knowledge, and under the hallowing influence of that religion which is love, men are beginning more clearly to understand, and more fully to comply with the obligations which result from the constitution of their natures. Men now begin to apprehend, that as members of society, in all its various forms, important obligations rest upon them—that they are necessarily exerting an influence which may, in no small degree, be moulding the characters, and limiting the happiness, not only of the present, but of succeeding generations.

The importance resulting from the various and possible associations of men, and from the proper direction and control of the feelings and sentiments of the members of society, is now well understood—and this knowledge is used for purposes most deeply affecting the happiness of men.

Our political clubs and associations—our religious and literary societies, as well as great national communities, show not only the power of that united strength which renders man lord of this lower creation, but also the vast influence which individuals may acquire in the direction and control of this united Strength! They show us that one man may so acquire the direction and guidance of his fellow men, as to become the very heart of millions—and that all their acts will be but the pulsations of this central, life-giving organ!!

The happiness of man in this life, and, doubtless, in the life to come, depends upon the proper culture of all his powers with reference to his social nature,—"society is the natural state of man."

The object of society is mutual aid—the great business of society is to prepare its members for the full discharge of individual duty, and to enable them to enjoy the highest degree of individual happiness. Or it may be said, with propriety, that the business of society is to educate men for society. To do this effectually, men must be taught the relations which they sustain to each other—they must be made to feel the obligations which arise from these relations—they must be able to trace the direction to which the virtuous emotions of the heart point, and to

find the objects of benevolence upon which the virtuous sympathies of our nature should fasten. And it is, doubtless, true, that the farther they extend their view, the broader they make the field, over which are to be exercised the kindlier feelings of their hearts, the better will they be prepared to discharge all their duties as members of society, and the purer and more lasting will be that happiness which they will enjoy!

In looking at the relations which we sustain to our fellow men, we find that they do not connect us with the present age alone, but also with the past and with the future. To many who have preceded us we are under peculiar obligation —obligations which cannot be disregarded without failing in duty, not to them alone, but to present and future generations. The names of good men who have gone to the grave —men who have devoted their lives to the happiness of their fellow men, should be rescued from oblivion—their virtuous deeds should be held up to the view, and for the imitation of all. This duty, ever binding upon the members of society, is felt by only the few, and but seldom discharged by any. And even the few who attempt, in any degree, to discharge their duty to those who have preceded them, confine their efforts, almost exclusively, to those who have been preeminent in wisdom and virtue. That distinguished men should be remembered with merited honours, all will at once acknowledge—and most will occasionally render them the tribute of just praise. But such men *will* be honored—they need not *our* efforts to secure for them the just meed of fame.

But there are many others, to whom we are greatly indebted, whose names and whose virtues will be unknown to future ages, unless rescued from oblivion by speedy exertions. Men have ever been too indifferent to the merits of humble virtue—and especially have they been too remiss in seizing upon that strong passion of the human heart, the love of posthumous praise. Every man wishes to be known to succeeding ages—every man desires that his name may stand upon the chronicles of the country—that he may, in some degree, be considered a benefactor to his fellow men. And any hope that this desire will be gratified will incite to virtue—will restrain from vice. We owe it then to the dead—we owe it to the living—we owe it to the good of succeeding generations, and especially to the welfare of society, to rescue from oblivion the good deeds of those, who, though they may not have been most conspicuous among their fellow men, have still rendered some service to their country—have still been benefactors to their race.

In discharging this duty, local history is an all-important instrument.

In our own State, many unambitious, yet useful and most worthy men have gone to their rest, and are now unnoticed and almost unknown. Any knowledge of their motives, and of their acts, and of their influence, which may still be retained, is fast fading from the memories of the living, and must soon be lost in the graves of these aged survivors.

Many in our border-wars performed services and exhibited feats of valor, which would honor the brightest page of our revolutionary history. And yet no record tells their deeds, and probably no page of history will ever record their names.

How few of the citizens of the State have ever heard of the bold and perilous adventure of the little band of frontier patriots who, in 1793, at midnight, swam one of our largest rivers, explored a camp of hostile Creek Indians, who were ready to fall upon the defenceless settlers; and while the merciless savage was buried in sleep, carried from his midst such trophies, as, exhibited to his view upon the opposite bank of the river, convinced him that the white man had explored his camp, was acquainted with his designs, and ready to meet him in battle? But one individual lingers among us, who can say, with respect to that bold and perilous, yet successful adventure—(an adventure which probably saved many from the murderous tomahawk,) "*cujus pars magna fui*"—and perhaps not a line exists to transmit to succeeding ages the author* of this noble deed, or the services of the worthy patriot and his spartan band!!

Who can estimate the blessings conferred upon the State by such men as Springer, and Marshal, and Hull, and the elder Mercer, and many others of the same self-denying spirit?

And what, in a few years, will the page of history tell of these good men, who labored in the midst of difficulties which would have been appalling to almost any others, that they might spread the light of knowledge and the blessings of the Gospel among their fellow men.

Go to the busy line of one of our important rail roads, and as you see the products of the country hurried to our cities, almost without price, and the traveller wafted to his destined place, as on wings of wind, ask to whom are we probably indebted for this noble work of art—this important high-way through the State. And few, even now, will point to the name of one† who, unambitious of office and unused to the halls of legislation, had wisdom to apprehend the advantages of such a work, and patriotism sufficient to prevent it from being abandoned, when oth-

* The late Gen. David Adams. † Wm. Williams.

ers shrunk from the responsibility of securing its charter. In the older counties, a few aged fathers yet linger who were actors in important and stirring events of our early history: With respect to most, if not all such, it may doubtless be said with truth, no autobiography will transmit to succeeding ages the story of their lives—no diary of the events in which they were engaged will remain to illustrate the scenes in which they were important actors.

Others may be found whose fathers have repeated to them the story of by-gone days—the perils of savage warfare—the early adventures of the hardy pioneers of our successive frontier settlements. These are now well attested traditions—facts often intensely interesting and highly important to the full and perfect history of the State.

But they are facts which must soon be lost—traditions, which, unless soon deposited in the archives of some society, must soon become mere legendary tales. In our new and mountain regions are those who are familiar with the first settlement of those interesting portions of our State—some of them mingled with the native population,' and can communicate much concerning that interesting people which posterity will love to read—much which the men of future ages, as they tread those lovely valleys and climb those lofty mountains, will dwell upon with delight.

Might not local associations be made efficient auxiliaries to the Georgia Historical Society, in securing much of this important knowledge, which is liable to be forever lost? And might not such local associations be made to exert a happy influence upon the feelings and habits of our people? Could they not be made, in some degree at least, an antidote to the bitter political, and the unholy religious asperities of which our free institutions seem to be so prolific?

The pleasant and cordial mingling of all parties, whether military, or religious, or political, which annually takes place in your city on this day, is proof that such associations may exert a delightful influence upon the minds of our people. How different the effect of one of these anniversaries from that of a meeting for a political canvass! "*Parvis componere magna licet.*"

And why may not what you here see, be seen in other cities, and in the village, and even in the country?

By suitable efforts, I doubt not that the population of almost any section of the State, might be collected on an occasion of this kind—they might be brought to feel an interest in subjects relating to our past and our present history, they might be brought to feel a deeper interest in the institutions of the country—an interest wholly unconnected with

the party feuds and personal contests of aspiring politicians. We are not, as a people, deficient in patriotism, but we often fail to direct our patriotism aright. Subjects of great importance to the public welfare and to private happiness have been, and are still being neglected for those of far less importance. We evidently want something to change the current of popular feeling—the minds of our people must be suitably withdrawn from the, hitherto, all absorbing themes of party politics and great, immediate wealth. And still they must have, occasionally, subjects of a public and exciting character—they must gratify that social feeling which burns in the heart of every man—that feeling upon which the demagogue and the tyrant alike seize, and which the friends of good order and good government must endeavor to wrest from them, and direct in such manner as to promote the best interests of the State. Our young men, and especially our young men in the middle and lower classes of society, want new motives to action—motives which must be furnished, or the liberties of the country will be endangered.

Ours is a government which knows no distinction of rank—it is a government which must cease, so soon as a permanent division of our citizens into castes shall take place.

And yet there is, evidently, in our State, a tendency to distinctions and *permanent* distinctions, inconsistent with the genius and the stability of our republican institutions! The line between the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, is becoming more and more distinct. The desire to acquire even the elements of knowledge is, with certain classes, diminishing—and the want of education is losing in the estimation of many, that reproach which heretofore has ever been attached to those in this condition. There may now be found, and especially at the polls, "*the esprit du corps*" of ignorance.

If we have not our "*sans culottes*," we have those whose boastings are little less shameless, and whose ignorance and vice, if unchecked, must lead to scenes as revolting as those of Jacobin France during the darkest period of her revolution.

It has often been asked of late, and that such questions can be asked with propriety, should fill the heart of the patriot with fearful forebodings—where is now that respect for the sanctions of law which once universally prevailed in our country? where that reverence which was once connected with the obligations of an oath? where that safety, and that certainty of justice which were once found in the jury box? and where that purity and freedom which once characterized our elections, and made the ballot box the glory of American freedom?

That our free institutions cannot long survive the permanent debase-

ment of a majority of our citizens is with us an axiom. And yet that process is evidently going on in our State—the number of the uneducated is increasing in a ratio greater than that of our whole population.

Were we to discover, on the part of a foreign nation, a policy intended to interfere with any of our domestic institutions, or to overthrow our government, with what vigilance should we guard against its influence? What are even now our feelings towards a portion of the citizens of some of our sister States?

But what is the danger arising from foreign enemies, or from fanatics at a distance, compared with that arising from an ignorant and vicious population in our midst! a population who have the constitutional right to make our laws, and the physical power to enforce them! a population having nothing to lose, yet ever hoping to gain by change and revolution!

Let it be generally believed, that the fleets of a foreign power were soon to appear upon our coast, to co-operate with the fanatics of another portion of our country in overturning our peculiar domestic institutions, and would there be any difficulty in asssessing and collecting taxes to meet the expenses of preparation to repel our expected invaders? The march of ignorance may be slower than the march of armies, or the approach of hostile fleets—but it cannot be less certain, or less destructive to our free institutions! Even those peculiar domestic institutions, concerning which we are, at this time, with much propriety, peculiarly jealous, are in far greater danger from ignorance at home than from fanaticism abroad. And if they be ever rudely interfered with, it will doubtless be from this source. The jealousy and envy of a large, ignorant, and debased population, must be most dangerous, in such a government as ours, and to such a state of society as that to which I have just referred. Our only safety on this point, is in the general intelligence and virtue of our population.

The tendency of civil government is, unquestionably to guard the interests of the few—to promote the honor and power of the nation, as a whole, at the expense of individual happiness. The history of the world fully establishes the truth of this assertion. The welfare of millions is every day sacrificed at the shrine of national strength and national glory. Look at Great Britain—great in arts and in arms. Her power is acknowledged by nearly one fourth the inhabitants of earth—her men of science are enlightening the world by their wisdom—her philanthropists are spreading the knowledge of christianity and the blessings of civilization among all nations—and her artists are bringing the powers of nature almost to supersede the

necessity for human labor. And yet what is the condition of the great mass of her subjects? Where are the increased blessings which are enjoyed by her brave and generous-hearted Irish peasanty? Where the elevation and comforts which the operatives in her mining and manufacturing districts have obtained?

Turn to France, where all which elevates and ennobles man may be found—a nation whose prowess in arms has never been surpassed—a nation now ruled by one of the mildest, and most enlightened, and most liberal monarchs of this enlightened, and liberal age. Have the subjects of this mighty nation advanced in knowledge, and in happiness, in proportion to the increase of national power and national glory? What is the condition of her peasantry, even since the glorious revolution of July?—a revolution which gave them a citizen king, and which published to the nation a bill of rights, declaring that Frenchmen are all equal in the eye of the law, and that all are to be equally eligible to civil and to military employment? Instead of finding all equal, and equally admissible to office, not more than 160,000 of her 34 millions inhabitants, are permitted to enjoy the right of suffrage. France, with a population nearly double that of the United States, has less than half the number of voters, which are found in the single State of Pennsylvania.

Most of the European States, have, within the last century, made great advances in wealth, in power, and in knowledge. As nations they have attained a high degree of civilization and refinement. But why, with all their wealth and power—with all their science and arts—with all their commerce and manufactures, do not their subjects reap advantages in proportion to the increasing greatness and glory of their respective nations? Why, even as their wealth increases until employment cannot be found for capital, and their products are multiplied, till the markets of the world are glutted with their merchandize, do the great mass of those very subjects who create this wealth, remain under the most grinding oppression, and endure the most withering poverty?

Is it not manifest that the great majority of British subjects, do not constitute the political nation? They may indeed create her wealth, and defend her territory, and carry her arms to the remotest regions of earth.—But they are not the nation—they are not expected to share in the blessings, which spring from national wealth, and national power, and national advancement, in the arts and sciences. A few individuals engross the wealth, and wield the destinies of empire. The wealth of the few constitutes national wealth, the intelligence of

the few constitutes national intelligence, and the happiness of the few is the grand object of governmental enactments. The vast majority of the subjects of European States, are lost, as individuals—they have no individual, political existence. They have virtually no personal freedom, and reap no personal advantage from the prosperity, and increasing greatness of their respective States. Such has been the tendency of civil governments, in every age of the world.

The oppressions of government may, and they often do arouse their subjects to a consciousness of their wrongs; and in the might of their physical power, they will assert, and even establish their rights. But to retain and to exercise these rights, as individuals, and for their individual happiness, they must be enlightened, they must be religious. Intelligence may not produce virtue, but ignorance will produce vice. An educated people may be the subjects of despotism, an ignorant people must be.

The citizens of this country have asserted and they have established their political rights—they have adopted forms of government, which were designed to secure to every individual, personal freedom, and an increase of personal happiness in proportion to the increase of national prosperity. Our independence was secured by men who understood their rights—the great mass of American citizens, at the period of our national revolution, were educated and virtuous.

But is not the tendency of Government, the same in our country, as in others. Are not our citizens, thus soon, losing that high tone of personal independence, which characterised the early settlers of all our States; and which especially characterised our fathers, during the period of our revolution? Are not great national interests engrossing the attention of our citizens, while many of their personal interests, are absorbed in the power and glory of the Republic? Are not the lower classes losing much of that personal influence which they once possessed, and becoming more and more, the dupes of the demagogue, and the unconscious instruments of selfish aspirants to office? The social system is sadly disordered—the powers and functions of the body politic are greatly deranged—the action of the system is unnatural, and must be restored to its original healthful state, or political dissolution will inevitably ensue.

The great evil is ignorance—the effectual and only permanent remedy is knowledge.

General education was considered by the early settlers of this country, a most important subject—one which claimed the first attention of the citizens, and the especial attention of the Legislature. The

school house and the church were usually, reared side by side—and it was evidently their intention, that no child should be left without the means of acquiring a respectable education. And though our State labored under peculiar difficulties, during her colonial existence, and for a considerable period after our independence, its history shows that our fathers were not less attentive to the great subject of general education, than were those who first settled our sister States.

This portion of our history is not, I apprehend, a barren, or uninteresting field. There are, I doubt not, many important and interesting facts, as well as many records, which may, and I hope will be brought forth, and which will show, that had we carried out the views of her early patriots, and the framers of our first Constitution, Georgia would now have a system of education, equal, if not superior, to that of any State in the Union.

I determined, when first informed, that I should be expected to address you on this occasion, to make the history of education, in our State, my subject. My time, however, and my health, and especially a want of records, which I trust may yet be found, have prevented me from attempting to carry out this purpose. We owe it, however, to the honor of our fathers—to the liberality of many who have given their wealth, to endow and to sustain private institutions of learning, both at home and abroad—we owe it to the honor of many who have labored in the arduous and most useful profession of teachers, that this portion of our history shall not be neglected. Those who have exerted a large influence in the establishment and support of Seminaries of learning, and those who have been eminent as instructors, in the higher branches of knowledge, will be honored, and their names will be chronicled among the benefactors of the State. While Franklin College shall remain, or its records be preserved, the name of Gov. Milledge will be honored for the noble gift of a large tract of land, intended not only for the site of the College, but also for that of a town, a gift which has, to a large extent, aided the trustees of the institution, in sustaining it, when other resources failed. While the records of the Baptist denomination of christians in Georgia shall be preserved, the name of Dr. Mercer will be honored by the friends of christian education, for his munificent gifts and bequests to the University which bears his honored name. And high as the reputation of Gov. Jackson and Abram Baldwin stand, for their political services to the State, I doubt not that their services in the cause of education, will add as bright a chaplet to their fame. Such men as the deceased Dr. Waddel, and the venerable patriarch of the school room and the pulpit, who

still lingers among us,* and whom I rejoice to see in our midst, to-day; can never be forgotten, while any history of our State remains. Their names and their fame are published in every part of our State, from the lips, and by the services of those, whom they have trained to wisdom and virtue.

But many, whose labors, as teachers of youth, have been performed in humbler spheres of action, but who have still been highly useful, will soon be unknown, unless speedy efforts be made to rescue their names from oblivion. And here again the importance of local history becomes manifest. As proof that the early inhabitants of our State were not unmindful of the subject of general education, we may appeal to the records of the first settlements of different sections of the country. In this city, early provision was made for public education—and especially for the education of the orphan and the poor. The efforts which were made to sustain the orphan house, and to establish and support Bethesda College, as well as the minor schools which were open to all the children of the city, are evidence of the feelings and sentiments of its early inhabitants.

We may refer also, with pleasure, to the pious, persecuted men, who first raised their Ebenezer in a sister, and adjoining county, and who there at the same time reared the standard of religion and of education.

The early history of the city of Augusta, is proof of the same feeling, on the part of her first inhabitants. The provision which was there made for the establishment and ample endowment of her Academy, one of the most useful institutions of the kind, in our Southern country, is proof that the subject of education was considered by her citizens as one of vital importance.

The hardy Highlanders who planted themselves upon the banks of the Altamaha, as a bulwark against savage incursions, and Spanish invasion, brought with them that love of learning, which characterises the land of their fathers, and to the honor of their descendants, it may be said, they have ever been the fast friends of general education, and of an elevated standard of learning in the State.

I need not mention the little colony who first penetrated the swamps of our Southern sea-board. All who are familiar with the history of that favored portion of our State, know with what zeal and energy, its first settlers commenced, and with what success, they prosecuted their efforts to establish, and to sustain the institutions of learning and religion—and most honorably have the sons of those noble sires, followed in the footsteps of their patriotic and pious ancestors!!

* Rev. Wm. McQuir, D. D.

Those who first settled the county of Wilkes, were not less mindful of this important subject. Scarcely had they traced the outlines of their now beautiful village, before provision was made for a permanent institution of learning; and from that period to this, the cause of education has been one of deep interest to its citizens, and the special care of its municipal authorities. And as we trace the history of our State from almost the landing of Oglethorpe to the acquisition of the last portion of our territory, we find the subject of education a prominent subject in the estimation of the first settlers of the different portions of the country. Academies have usually been coeval with the organization of the counties; and in no State in the Union have there probably ever been more, or better conducted institutions of the kind, in proportion to the population, than in Georgia. And in no State in the Union have the services of teachers of Academies been more liberally rewarded.*

The first constitution of Georgia was adopted the 5th of February, 1777, only a few months after the Declaration of Independence. The 54th section of this constitution declares, "Schools shall be erected in each county, and supported at the general expense of the State." This is an important record in the history of our education. On the 31st of July, 1783, the Legislature appropriated 1000 acres of land to each county for the support of free schools. In 1784, a few months after the ratification of the treaty of peace, by which our national independence was acknowledged, the Legislature, again in session at Savannah, passed an act, appropriating 40,000 acres of land for the endowment of a College or University. This act commences with the remarkable preamble: "Whereas, the encouragement of religion and learning is an object of great importance to any community, and must tend to the prosperity and advantage of the same."

In 1785, the charter of the University was granted, the preamble to which would do honor to any Legislature, and will stand a monument to the wisdom and patriotism of those who framed, and of those who adopted it.

"As it is the distinguishing happiness of free governments that civil order should be the result of choice and not necessity, and the common wishes of the people become the laws of the land, their public prosperity and even existence very much depends upon suitably forming the minds and morals of their citizens. When the minds of the people in general are viciously disposed and unprincipled, and their conduct disorderly, a free government will be attended with greater confu-

*See Appendix.

sions, and evils more horrid than the wild uncultivated state of nature. It can only be happy where the public principles and opinions are properly directed and their manners regulated.

"This is an influence beyond the stretch of laws and punishments, and can be claimed only by religion and education. It should, therefore, be among the first objects of those who wish well to the national prosperity, to encourage and support the principles of religion and morality; and early to place the youth under the forming hand of society, that, by instruction, they may be moulded to the love of virtue and good order. Sending them abroad to other countries for education will not answer the purposes, is too humiliating an acknowledgement of the ignorance or inferiority of our own, and will always be the cause of so great foreign attachments that, upon principles of policy, it is inadmissible."

In 1792, an act was passed appropriating one thousand pounds for the endowment of an Academy in each county.

In 1798, a third constitution was adopted. The 13th section of the 4th articles declares: "The arts and sciences shall be patronised in one or more seminaries of learning."

In 1817, two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were appropriated to the support of poor schools. In 1818, every 10th and 100th lot of land in seven new counties were appropriated to the cause of education and in 1821, two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were set apart for the support of county Academies.

These records show, that the people of Georgia, from the commencement of their independence, to the full establishment of their constitutional Government, have recognized the duty and the importance of making public, and ample provision for the education of all her citizens. These records show, that her Jacksons and Baldwins, with their many worthy soadjutors, in the achievement of our independence, and in the establishment of our present form of government, did not doubt, that the State could, and that she ought to become, an efficient patron of learning—that correct moral and religious instruction could be imparted in our public schools and colleges.

I know the opinion is now held by a few, that these men, and I may say, that almost every great and good man, up to nearly the present day, has been in error upon this subject.

We must honor the feelings which give rise to these sentiments—we must respect the piety which prompts to all the efforts which are made to purify the fountains of knowledge—to introduce the Bible, with its hallowing influence, into all our institutions of learning.

Without this influence, I believe learning will be a curse to its possessor, and a curse to the country of its possessor. But where, I ask, is the evidence, that in our country, there is any considerable disposition, on the part of public authorities, to banish christianity from our schools and colleges? If occasional, feeble attempts have been made, they have been so feeble, and have so signally failed, that, I apprehend, there is little danger of their being renewed, and less of their being successful.

The feelings of our people are such, that no public institution of learning can hope to be sustained, while it banishes the Bible from its halls, or admits the avowed enemies of Christianity among its instructors. Religious men, and, I may say, pious men, are generally preferred as teachers of youth. The sentiment is almost universal among our citizens, that piety is an important, and sound morality an essential characteristic of an instructor in our schools and colleges; and in this country public opinion controls public authority.

But, that the momentous truths of the christian religion cannot be as effectually maintained, and its holy precepts as successfully inculcated in an institution where no particular creed is exclusively professed, and no peculiar sectarian dogma enjoined, is, I believe, wholly unsupported by facts.

The broad mantle of Christian charity may be made to cover an institution, in which are assembled those entertaining different sentiments upon subjects generally acknowledged not essential to true piety. The mingling of students, who may entertain different views upon these subjects—students who have been educated by different sectaries, would doubtless produce in their minds enlarged, and more liberal views, and banish from their hearts much of that bigotry which too often cleaves to even the enlightened and liberal Christian. Will the youth, who has not yet embraced the religion of love, which the Gospel inculcates, be more likely to have his mind favorably impressed by its precepts, when enforced by the instruction of different teachers, all professing the same creed, and endeavoring to build up a particular sect, than when recommended by the precept and example of men professing different cr[illegible]—having no peculiar party to sustain, and yet each laboring to lead [illegible] pupils to practical and saving piety?

It is not true, that in institutions which have had teachers entertaining different religious sentiments, more difficulties have arisen than in those of a different character. While men are imperfect, we must expect that occasional discord will exist among those who may be pursuing any, even the holiest work on earth. But there is nothing in the

education of the youth of the country, in which the pious and zealous advocates of the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity, may not cordially unite; and there is much in this employment which should, and much, I am fully persuaded, which does soften the prejudices and awaken, in the breasts of teachers and pupils, the kindliest charities of the christian heart. It is not true, that seminaries of learning, under the exclusive patronage of the State, have had more difficulties to encounter, from the conflicting sentiments of politicians, than private institutions have had from opposing sentiments and jarring interests of those who have had the control of them. I might appeal, for the truth of this remark, to many institutions in different parts of our country. Did the public authorities of our sister State, South Carolina, forget the interests of her State College amidst the fiercest days of political strife? May I not refer to the University of North Carolina, at this time one of the most respectable seminaries of learning, of the same age, in our country—an institution wholly under the control of the State, and whose officers have ever been of different religious sentiments, and its students the sons of parents professing various creeds?

And, I apprehend, it will be found, that public authorities have been, not only as faithful, but also as successful guardians of institutions of learning, as private individuals or private associations.

That the funds of our own University have been most carefully and judiciously managed—that the usefulness of the institution has been the steady aim of its Trustees, from its organization to the present time, will not be denied by any one acquainted with its history.

It will be readily acknowledged that public institutions of learning seldom receive all that aid from the State which the importance of sound education requires—they often languish for want of means which their friends think enlightened and liberal legislators ought to furnish. But do not private institutions as often languish and drag out a mere existence for want of that liberal support which those who profess to patronize and support them, could most easily furnish?

Legislative bodies, all public authorities, are imperfect—liable to be influenced by selfish and bad men. The best interests of the country may suffer under these influences—the most sacred rights of our citizens may be sacrificed to party heat and the selfish purposes of dishonest men! But, can we dispense with legislation and civil government?

Mere party considerations may clothe men with authority, at whose hands we shall, in vain, seek justice! But, because oppression may be found upon the seat of the magistrate, shall we dispense with the forms of the law? Because the scales of justice may be held by

unrighteous hands, shall they not be entrusted to men? And because the great business of education may be imperfectly accomplished by the rulers of the land, shall it be wholly abandoned by those to whom is committed the welfare of the State?

If there be one duty devolving upon a free Christian people, which is higher and holier than any other, it is to provide for the education of its subjects. This is a duty which the Government must discharge, or the majority of its subjects will ultimately sink into slaves. The work of general education is too mighty a work for individual effort. Even England, wth all her wealth—with all her national pride—with all the zeal of a church establishment on the one hand, and all the energy of dissenting enthusiasm on the other, has never been able to effect this work. Her societies for the diffusion of useful knowledge, with such master spirits as Lord Brougham at their head, have most signally failed in their attempts to give the blessing of elementary education to the majority of the subjects of that enlightened and powerful nation.

The subject of general education is the important subject which should be urged at this time upon our people and upon our Legislature, until efficient measures be adopted to remedy existing evils.

But while this subject should be pressed home upon the rulers of the land, and while the people should be urged to come up to the aid of public authority, in this all important matter, we need not, we should not disparage, in the slightest degree, the efforts of private individuals, or associations, in their laudable endeavors to scatter knowledge over the land. Let the State, as a State, do her own work; and let the Christian and the patriot bid every man "God speed," who is endeavoring to enlighten and bless his fellow-men with useful knowledge!!

With respect to the subject of general education, we are behind many of our sister States. True, we are much younger than these States; but they have not now more means for effecting this object than we have. It is not, perhaps, necessary to inquire why we have not accomplished more—regrets for the past will not aid us in our future efforts. Still, in endeavoring to avoid future errors, and to escape future disappointments, we ought to guard against any thing which has apparently prevented the successful accomplishment of our former plans. And whatever causes may have conspired to defeat the efforts heretofore made, I apprehend the most efficient will be found to have been a want of steady, persevering action upon the part of the people and the Legislature. Impatience is the fault of our people—they cannot brook delay. The effects of this spirit may be seen in every department of life. In those sudden, and often absurd and disastrous changes of pur-

suits and professions, which so frequently blast the hopes of those who, by porsevering efforts, might attain to wealth and eminence. It is seen in the legislation of the country, and especially in the legislation upon the subject of education. On this subject, our statute book has line upon line, resolve upon resolve, and enactment upon enactment. But we have never had patience to persevere in our efforts to gradually perfect and accomplish what could not be at once effected. The history of the University is an illustration of the truth of this remark. Its plan was conceived in wisdom, and was most admirably adapted to the nature of our institutions and the condition of our people. Had the requirements of its charter been fully carried out, we should now have a system of education more perfect than that of any State in the Union, and as perfect and efficient as any kingdom in Europe. According to this charter, the education of the State was one connected system—every school and academy supported by pubiic funds, was a branch of the University, and over each the head of the University had a general supervision. It was his duty to visit the several institutions connected with the University—to correspond with their trustees and instructors, and endeavor to secure for them competent teachers, and to ensure from them an ample number of well prepared students for the higher departments of learning. Some have supposed this system too complicated to be successfully carried into effect—a beautiful but impracticable theory.

But its complication is simplicity, when compared with the Treasury or Post Office Departments of our Federal Government. The administration of the Post Office of the United States requires the supervision of about 15,000 post offices, scattered over the whole extent of the Union—the appointment of as many postmasters—the adjustment of the accounts of each—the making of contracts with thousands of mail-carriers—the receipt and disbursement of about four millions of dollars annually. And yet, this can be accomplished under the direction of one man!

The system of universal education which the charter of the University of Georgia prescribed, would require, perhaps 2000 institutions of learning, from the district school up to the well endowed and fully organized University. These institutions would all be found in an area of about sixty thousand miles, and requiring the annual disbursement of less than five hundred thousand dollars. Has not Georgia many citizens who could successfully superintend such a system of general education? Could we not as successfully carry out this plan of public instruction as the State of New York is now carrying out her system

—a system which, through the agency of the Regents of her University and the Superintendent of her Common Schools, is affording the blessings of education to almost every citizen of that great State!—a system far more important to her pecuniary resources than all her works of internal improvement—a system which is training up citizens who will be capable of understanding the blessings of rational freedom, and who will be willing to defend it—a system which will render her citizens capable of appreciating the advantages arising from the exercise of their faculties, and which will incite them to habits of industry and economy. It is a system of education which will create a population that will create wealth! And to this, more than to any other cause, if she carry out the system, will she be justly entitled to the appellation of "Empire State!"

And is it too late for Georgia, even now, to return to the plan of her Baldwin and Jackson? Should we now commence, and, in fifty years, accomplish the scheme, it would be the most glorious work which could be effected for the honor and prosperity of our State! The past should not discourage us in our efforts for the future. Little as we have accomplished in this respect, we have effected something; perhaps as much as any other State in the same time.

In this country, where almost every thing springs forth as if by magic, institutions of learning have been, comparatively, slow in their progress; and in every State in the Union, systems of education, and especially those of common school instruction, have not been rendered effective, till after long and repeated trials.

The State of Massachusetts is supposed by many, and perhaps with justice, to have the best system of common school instruction in this country. And yet the history of that State clearly shows that from 1620 to 1837, a period more than double that which has elapsed since the first settlement of Georgia, there was a constant departure from the great principles of her first settlers, upon the subject of education. The feelings and sentiments of the Pilgrim fathers were such as do honor to their names. The early laws of the commonwealth were wise and salutary—but they were never enforced. As her population and wealth increased, there was not only a farther and still farther departure from the spirit and the letter of these laws, but also, from time to time, a gradual relaxation, and unwise modification of them—until in 1830 the condition of her common schools was such as to alarm the friends of sound learning, and arouse them to united and successful action upon the subject.

The result of that union and action was, after repeated, and earnest appeals to the people and the legislature, the establishment in 1837 of a board of Education, and the appointment of a general agent to superintend the whole subject of common school instruction. From that time the work of reform has been progressing; and whatever of excellence pertains to her system of general education has been introduced since that period. Massachusetts has now something more than the theory of elementary education—she has a Mann to carry out the designs of wise legislation.

Similar remarks may be made with respect to her higher institutions: they have not sprung into existence in full perfection—centuries have been necessary to bring them to their present honorable and useful standing. Even Harvard College, the child of the Pilgrim, and, for a long time, the cherished institution of the Puritan fathers, and the hope of the church, one hundred and fifty years after its organization, and when the State had four hundred thousand inhabitants and no other College within her territory, had but three professors in its literary and scientific department, and about one hundred and fifty students in its halls. That venerable institution struggled for existence during almost two centuries—and, with all the zeal of her citizens for education, her legislature has not, to this day, given as much to sustain her Harvard, as the legislature of Georgia has given to our University.*

The University of Georgia has been chartered only about sixty—and, properly organized not much over forty years. The difficulties attending its organization were many and formidable—and had not a few such friends as Baldwin, and Jackson, and Milledge, been found to sustain it by their counsel and influence and wealth it might have been abandoned.†

But, though this Institution be of recent origin, we owe it to the memory of those who have labored most assiduously for its organization and support that a careful history of it be written. We owe it also to the names of President Meigs, and Brown, and Finley, and Waddel, and those who were associated with them that their labors and sacrifices in the cause of knowledge in our State shall not be unknown. Our children are taught to read, in our common school-books, of the piety and self-denial and sacrifices of the Mathers, and Wheelocks, and Stiles, and Wetherspoons—great and good men, to whom the cause of virtue and education is deeply indebted. And while we would not detract from the praise, deservedly, due to these fathers in learn.

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* President Quincy's Hist. of Harvard University, 2d vol. page 403.

† See Appendix.

ing, may we not, justly, place by their side the great and good men, who, in our own State, have labored as assiduously, and have made as great sacrifices for the cause of education?

President Meigs commenced the exercises of the University, when no College buildings had been erected for the use of the institution. Recitations were often heard, and lectures delivered, under the shade of the forest oak—and for years he had the almost entire instruction of the College, aided only by a tutor or some member of one of the higher classes. The institution was without library—without apparatus—without Professors—without buildings—without productive funds! And yet the President was called upon to instruct from forty to sixty students—to superintend the erection of buildings, and, frequently, to meet the Board of Trustees and the Legislature at a distance from the seat of the College, leaving the institution under the superintendence of a tutor, or without any control, but the discretion of inexperienced youth. And yet, because he did not, in a few years, call together as many students as were found at Harvard or Yale, and give to the College as high a reputation as was enjoyed by those ancient Seminaries, he has been thought by some to have been deficient in zeal and in talents.

Few men, perhaps, ever labored with more untiring zeal, and unremitted industry, than that faithful pioneer in the cause of learning in our State. His views upon the subject of instruction were enlarged, and the measures which he recommended to the Trustees of the College and to the Legislature were judicious—such as, fully, to sustain his character as a man of learning, and one who had carefully studied the subject of general education. The only failure on his part was a failure to accomplish an impossibility—to build up, without means, a flourishing College. The Israelites had not a harder task when required to make brick without straw, than President Meigs, when, under such circumstances, he was required, to raise up, in a few years, an institution which would compare with those which had been long established, and well endowed.

The successor of President Meigs was the Rev. John Brown, D. D., a most pious and amiable man—an accomplished gentleman, and a ripe scholar. He had to encounter not less formidable difficulties than his worthy predecessor. When Dr. Brown entered upon the duties of his office, the late war with Great Britain was impending, and soon commenced. The whole frontier of the State was threatened with savage incursions, and the whole coast was exposed to the fleets and armies of our formidable enemy. Many of the students belonging to the institution were called into the service of the country, and the

military excitement which every where prevailed, prevented a large portion of the young men of the State from pursuing their studies preparatory to entering College.

In addition to all these and other difficulties, the funds of the Institution were, almost wholly unproductive—and, like his excellent predecessor, this good man was left without any sufficient means to accomplish the work assigned him. Under such circumstances, Dr. Dwight could not have given the institution a respectable standing. Under different circumstances, Dr. Brown would, doubtless, have raised it to credit and usefulness.

Of Drs. Finley and Waddel, I need only say, that their names will, doubtless, ever stand among the most honored benefactors of the State. Dr. Finley was a martyr to the College.* But though he was engaged in the service of the institution only a short time, he infused, during that brief period, some of his own zeal into the minds of its friends and trustees, and gave an impulse and an energy to all its operations, which showed how invaluable his services would have been could his life have been spared a few years.

The Rev. Moses Waddel, D. D., succeeded Dr. Finley, and for ten years presided over the University—giving, perhaps, as universal satisfaction to the Trustees and citizens of the State as any man ever gave when engaged in the discharge of the duties of so important a trust. He accepted the office not for fame or wealth. Of the former, he had already acquired, both as a teacher and as a minister of the Gospel, a measure sufficient to satisfy the most ambitious—of the latter, he had secured all that he considered necessary or useful to himself and to his family. The hope that he might be more useful to his fellow-men in this station than in any other, induced him, after repeated solicitations on the part of the friends of the College, to accept the Presidency. That he was a most devoted friend and servant of the institution—that he spared no labor to benefit the State by raising the University to usefulness, and that his efforts were crowned with remarkable success, need not be published to the citizens of Georgia.

I should do violence to my own feelings and injustice to departed greatness and worth, were I not to mention, in this brief reference to the University, the name of Dr. Henry Jackson, for many years one of its most indefatigable and useful Professors. That he was not the President of the institution was because he would not be. To his

* He died of fever, evidently contracted while travelling, during the months of August and September, in order to raise funds for the purchase of a College Library, and to arouse the citizens of the State upon the subject of general education.

reputation as a man of learning—to his ability as an instructor—to his gratuitous services while in Europe, in procuring apparatus, and to his generous gift of a valuable portion of his library, the University is largely indebted for its increased reputation and usefulness.

The time and the occasion forbid an attempt to give a history of our State College—yet such a history I trust will be given—a history which I am persuaded will show that our State, when compared with other States, as to her efforts to establish and sustain the higher institutions of learning, will not suffer as much as many have apprehended. In looking at what has been done for the cause of knowledge in our State, we ought to remember that we are yet in our infancy—the warcry of the savage has hardly ceased from our borders, and over a large portion of our territory the forest still waves. To feel that we have done nothing because our University will not compare with the oldest institutions of the country, in the extent of its library and the number of its students, is as unreasonable as it would be for those institutions to feel degraded because they are, in these respects, inferior to the most distinguished Universities in Europe.* Under all the circumstances attending the efforts of those who have preceded us, they have done much for the cause of education—they deserve the thanks of the present generation; and if, according to the circumstances in which we are placed, we put forth equal energy and manifest equal zeal, we shall deserve well of those who will succeed us.

But we act under very different responsibilities from those who have preceded us. We have now possession of our entire territory—our population is now in some good degree fixed—the number is rapidly increasing, and the habits and feelings of our people are fast forming. And what ought to alarm and arouse every patriot, is the fact that many of our people are uneducated, and that this class is increasing in a fearful ratio!! The scenes of a few past years, as well as the very nature of our civil institutions, admonish us, that with an ignorant and vicious population, these institutions are in imminent danger—and that the security which we now so confidently expect from the laws of the country, will be lost. The history of the world admonishes us that our people must be educated or we must submit to tyranny—to the tyranny of the mob first, and finally to the tyranny of despotism to free us from the more grinding tyranny of the mob. The maintainance of a free government, while a majority of its subjects are ignorant, is an absurdity, too absurd to be entertained in this enlightened age. To hope that a representative republic can be sustained, and yet the majority of

*See Appendix.

those who exercise the elective franchise be destitute of the very elements of knowledge, is to hope against hope! Our people must be educated—and our people may be educated! We need not despair—our past efforts in the cause of general education should not discourage us!

"We have" not "tried the experiment of public education, under the most favorable circumstances." Indeed we have not tried it all. We have a poor school system—a system which cannot, which ought not to succeed in our country. But we have not tried any system of general education—the attempts which have been made were too feeble to be called attempts! We need not, and I trust we shall not conclude that the State must forever abandon this great and all important work! Our people desire a system of universal common-school education. Devise a plan suited to their wants and they will adopt and sustain it. Give them the opportunity to educate their children, and they will embrace it. But any plan, to be successful, must be universal—the name and the principles of the poor school must be abandoned—we must open the school room alike to all—in this respect the State must become the parent of all—and under her fostering care all her children must be trained up in knowledge, and be thus fitted to defend and honor their common parent.

To accomplish this work with success, the State must commit it to the care of a distinct department of the Government. There must be an efficient and permanent officer, to whom the whole subject of common-schools shall be entrusted. There should be at the head of this department a man who will devote his life to the accomplishment of the object, and who will consider its accomplishment the most desirable and the most enduring monument which can be erected to his memory.

We want a man who, by his pen and by his eloquence, can arouse the citizens of the State to the importance of this subject—a man who would visit, and revisit every county and neighborhood, and from a careful knowledge of the peculiar circumstances of each, adapt the system to the respective wants of all. This would be a work sufficient to employ the most eminent talents; and its successful accomplishment would ensure a fame sufficient to satisfy the most ambitious. Who would not prefer, and greatly prefer, this inscription upon his tomb, "who, as superintendant of common-schools in Georgia, succeeded in putting in successful operation a general system of elementary instruction"—to this—"who was President of the United States, and during whose administration the country was most prosperous and

happy ?" The great work of general education should be commenced at once, and with the determination that it must be accomplished. If ten years will not be sufficient for its perfection, twenty shall be devoted to it—and if, in twenty years, it be only commenced, and one hundred be necessary for its full accomplishment, it must be urged on until "knowledge cover the land."

But have we the means to effect this object? Is not our treasury exhausted, and our public domain all divided among our citizens? Other States are possessed of large school funds—they have made ample provision for the education of their children. But where can we find means to carry on so expensive a scheme of public instructions?

Many of our citizens are, doubtless, in error upon this subject. The most ample fund possessed by any State affords only a mere trifle in the annual expense of its public education.

Massachusetts has, perhaps, at this time, the most efficient and perfect system of common-school instruction in the United States; her permanent fund, for this purpose, is about one million of dollars, and its annual income affords less than fifty cents to each child educated in her public schools. Connecticut has a fund for this purpose, amounting to over two millions of dollars. This is the pride and the boast of the State, and often the admiration and almost the envy of other States. And yet this celebrated fund affords annually, only about one dollar and forty cents to each scholar in her public schools. New York has about two millions of dollars vested in a common-school fund; and last year about seven hundred thousand children attended her public schools: the interest on her school fund affording to each child about 18 cents!!

Can it be possible that the want of a sum, so inconsiderable as that afforded by either of the school funds of these States, prevents Georgia from establishing and successfully sustaining a system of public education? No, we want not the paltry sum of 18 cents, given to each of our children, to secure for them the blessing of a respectable education. But we want our people to feel the importance of the subject—we want our good men, and our great men, and our rich men, and the rulers of the land, and especially every parent and guardian in the State, to feel a much deeper interest, than is now felt, in this subject. We want some general plan of education, which will afford its privileges equally to all. And with this system we want a permanent officer, exclusively, devoted to this business—a man imbued with the

spirit of his station, and possessing such talents as such a work ought to command, and such talents as the State can furnish.

Give us these, and the difficulties, which to many seem numerous, would soon vanish, and the obstacles which appear so formidable would be speedily annihilated.

A large portion of our State, when we consider the mildness of its climate, is as favorable to the maintainance of permanent common-schools as any State in the Union. Much the larger portion may be laid out into districts, including a sufficient number of children to employ a competent teacher, and yet requiring no child to go an unreasonable distance.

Would it be a reasonable objection to a plan of common-schools, that most of the children would be obliged to go five or six miles each day? Would such a distance require more bodily exercise than is absolutely necessary for the health of our children? Were every child in the State, who attends school, obliged to rise in the morning at sun rise, and travel six miles, would he not be benefitted rather than injured—would he not be prepared for the duties of the school far better by such exercise, than by the listless hours which too many spend in bed, or the too violent sports in which others engage! I apprehend the most valuable system of labor-schools which we could adopt, would be to send our children regularly to a school from 4 to 6 miles from home. Our people may be persuaded that a few miles distance is a matter of no importance in locating the school-house. It may be demonstrated to them that the State can be laid out into districts, that a school permanently established in each, would be within a reasonable distance of nearly all.

We need not regard any existing civil or military divisions of the State—the subject is one of State interest, and should not be embarrassed by any local considerations.

Those portions of the State, where the population is too sparse to afford a sufficient number of children, within a reasonable distance for one school, may easily be provided for by the itinerant method. Hardly a family can be found in any county which will not be within four or five miles of a few other families. In that part of the State, where this sparse population is found, the climate is exceedingly mild and the means for constructing houses, which would be comfortable for a few scholars, are abundant and cheap. An intelligent teacher, spending his time, alternately, between two of these schools containing each only half the usual number of scholars, or successively with three or four, containing only one-third or one-fourth the number of children,

generally found in schools, would, probably, benefit them nearly as much as though his whole time were spent with all united. But should such an arrangement not meet the views of the citizens, they might doubtless be induced to make provision for the boarding of their children, in turn, within the reach of the several school houses, and thereby have all instructed at the same time, though successively at different places.

A well digested common-school system of education—one which would be universal in its operation, would be productive of great convenience to the citizens generally, as well as diminish the expenses attending the present method of sustaining schools through the State. That our private schools are both inconvenient and expensive, as well as exceedingly imperfect, is acknowledged by all. Teachers are usually unwilling to engage in the business of giving instruction for a shorter period than a year. Parents must, therefore, bear the expense of the yearly tuition, and the loss of the services of the child, during any portion of the year in which those services might be much needed. This loss is, to many, an important consideration, and one which deters numbers from educating their children. Many of the children and youth of the State are never sent to school, because their parents or guardians cannot have the privilege of doing this when it would be most consistent with their interests, and for such periods as suit the circumstances in which they are placed. This large and increasing class are therefore permitted to grow up in ignorance—are subject to all the moral disabilities incident to a want of knowledge, and deprived of all that large share of happiness, which, in this age, comes to the man of common education. The burden, therefore, of sustaining schools, at present falls upon a few, and falls upon them too with all the inconvenience of the yearly system.

Had we schools permanently established and limited to a suitable length of time, and that time fixed to suit the convenience of the citizens, the expense of the whole public education would not be as great as that attending our present private, partial and very imperfect system.

It is said that we have not, and cannot now obtain suitable teachers for our common schools. But a judicious system of public instruction would raise up teachers among us—it would hold out an inducement to many poor young men to prepare themselves for this service—a service which would soon repay them for the expenses incurred in preparing themselves for it, and give them a profession in which they could, with less difficulty, support themselves, than they now can in the ordinary pursuits of life. Such a system of public education would call to the

school-house many who are now anxious to advance still further in the road to knowledge, but who find themselves wholly destitute of the means—it would ultimately bring forth thousands of young men from the humble walks of life, who, but for such a system, would forever remain in obscurity, and who, under its fostering influence, would be prepared to honor and to bless the State. What is now doing in other States may be done in our own. To say that our citizens will not, when properly enlightened upon the subject, sustain a system of public education is, I trust, a libel upon their intelligence and their patriotism. All, I apprehend, which is now needed, is, the united and persevering efforts of those who feel that this is a subject of vital importance to the welfare of the State.

Our Legislature must be approached with petitions, and, if necessary, with remonstrance—our men of learning and influence must unite in pressing this subject upon our people—our towns and cities and literary societies must come forward, and, with united zeal and united counsel, aid in arousing public attention, and in enlightening the public mind, until the public shall act upon the Legislature, and the Legislature shall respond to that action by cheerfully adopting, and patiently and perseveringly carrying out some general plan of useful instruction.

And might not the Historical Society of Georgia move in this matter, and exert an important influence upon our people and upon our Legislature? I am aware, gentlemen, that this subject may seem to have little connection with the object of your association. But if it have not now an important connection with the grand object of your society, it will be an important subject for the pen of our future historian. The honor and prosperity, if not the independence of Georgia, will, I doubt not, depend in no small degree, upon the course which the present generation pursues with respect to this subject. The chartered rights which we have received from our ancestors cannot be preserved without that intelligence which is the only safeguard of rational freedom.

The venerable arch upon which our constitution is inscribed, cannot be supported when its firm pillars are removed. The firmest of the three is now crumbling. The second already trembles upon its base, and the sacred instrument must soon be precipitated from its proud height, and become but the broken fragments of a once glorious monument!

And might not Savannah, which has often taken the lead, and never withheld her aid in all that tends to the honor and welfare of our State, set also the example in the noble cause of general and systematic and permanent education? Her citizens may reflect with pleasure upon

the institution and the honorable efforts of the Georgia Historical Society—a society which has already brought to light many facts and rescued many records from impending destruction, which tend, in a high degree, to illustrate the history of the State, and to make known the virtues and the noble deeds of an ancestry worthy to be the founders of a great State. Savannah may rejoice at the triumph of her citizens in opening to the interior of the State a great highway, over which are brought to her wharves the various products of industry and of art, and upon which are daily returned to the doors of our people the necessaries and conveniences and luxuries of life, which have been received in exchange for the fruits of their own labor.

Her inhabitants may also point, with grateful hearts, to her sacred temples and her schools and seminaries of learning—institutions where their children are blest with instruction, which fits them for usefulness and honor in life—temples in which they are taught the pure and sublime precepts of that religion which, with the blessing of God, will prepare them for higher and holier and nobler employment. With more than pleasure can the favored inhabitants of this city recur to that unambitious, yet most useful association, which has so long, by its charities, dried the orphan's tears, and trained the friendless children of poverty to virtue and honor. Such a union as your benevolent Union Society has effected, and such blessings as that union has produced on one worthy the great and good men to whose wisdom and charity it owes its origin, and of those generous descendants and their worthy coadjutors who are still so unitedly and successfully accomplishing its praiseworthy, benevolent object. And with still more pleasure may the inhabitants of this highly favored city, behold the efforts of their wives and daughters, in finishing the good work which others had left undone—going out in obedience to the command of their "Master" and compelling the children of poverty and ignorance to come and partake of the blessings of knowledge, which their charity has provided. Would that the State would take pattern from the ladies of your city, and imitate their noble example by providing a free school for all its children! Do not the poor and the fatherless, who are scattered over the State, need the advantages of knowledge and the blessings of education as much as those of your city? Should not the State become a great Union Society—should not a general system of public free schools be provided, so that all her children may be rescued from ignorance, and under her fostering, parental care, be raised to usefulness and honor?

And with no small pleasure can the citizens of Savannah turn over

the records of State legislation upon the subject of education in all its departments. Those records bear ample, honorable testimony to the liberal and patriotic views which the representatives of your city and county have ever entertained upon this important subject. In all the conflicts of political parties, the representatives of Chatham have known no party feelings upon the subject of education. They have ever rallied to the rescue, when any of the institutions of learning needed their aid; and it has long since become an axiom with the friends of the State University, when inquiring to whom that institution might look for support, that the representatives of Chatham need not be doubted. And often, in the hour of need, has that seminary been indebted, in no small degree, to your representatives for, if not its existence, at least for much of that assistance which it has received from the Legislature, and by means of which it has been enabled to accomplish much of what it has thus far effected.

And I will again ask, may not, will not your city come forward in the great and all important work of general education? Can she not in her wisdom devise, and by her public spirit and patriotism cause to be put in operation, a system which will ultimately bring the blessings of education within the reach of every child in our State? May she not, by her efforts and by her example, excite other portions of the State to emulation, and thus arouse the energies of our people, until every citizen of Georgia can read the constitution of his country—until no freeman of Geergia shall be unable to write his own ballot when about to give his vote for the rulers of the country?

There may be many difficulties which must be overcome to secure the blessings sought. But the difficulties, however numerous, will be few, compared with the numberless blessings which in rich variety would be spread over the State. There may be many obstacles which must be removed, before the object of the friends of learning can be fully attained. But are these obstacles insurmountable—are they so formidable as to appal the philanthropist and the patriot? Are they as formidable as those which have been overcome by the energy of this city in effecting her great work of internal improvement.

The importance of some cheap and direct communication to the interior of the State was long since perceived by many, and urged upon the consideration of the people and of the legislature. The difficulties also in the way of this important work were seen and acknowledged to be neitheir few nor small.

I need not mention the disappointments and discouragements to which this city and the people of a large portion of the State were sub-

jected in the failure of plans, and in the unsuccessful expenditure of funds. Had the friends of internal improvement despaired under these failures and disappointments—had they finally concluded that, desirable as might be the object, it could not be accomplished, the city of Oglethorpe would at this time exhibit little of that increased prosperity which it enjoys and a large portion of the State, unblest with the means of disposing of the fruits of their industry, would present much less of that growing wealth which now marks the wisdom of your policy, and shows how rich may be blessings which spring from an energy of purpose, not weakened by discouragements, nor paralyzed by repeated failures.

But what are the blessings, rich and varied as they evidently are, which your city enjoys, and which the State reaps from your wise and successful system of internal improvement, compared with the blessings which city and country would reap from a wise and successful system of general education? The moral power which would thus be put in operation and the economical effects which would result from its operation upon the production of wealth, and from the consumption of objects of foreign commerce and of domestic manufactures which must pass through your city, would be incalculable.

The increased prosperity and wealth of your city would, I donbt not, exceed in a far higher degree even its present highly flourishing condition, than the force of your most powerful locomotive exceeds that of the humble animal which draws the rudest cart to your market.

An uneducated people will be an indolent people—an uneducated people will be a wasteful people—wasteful in the use of even the energies which it possesses—wasteful in the consumption of the few products which it creates, and utterly regardless of the prosperity of others.

The natural resources of that part of our State whose products must pass through or be consumed in this place—are incalculable. With an intelligent and industrious population, such a population as the country under proper culture could support, the business and the wealth of Savannah would increase an hundred fold. No one can cast his eye over the map of the State, without seeing that the country which must depend on Savannah for a market, and upon which Savannah must depend, for its greatness, is capable of making her a great city. How much would its business be augmented, were even the county of Chatham as highly cultivated and as thickly inhabited as the common districts of Belgium and Holland? And why should not every part, not only of this county, but of almost every county in the State, be as thickly

dotted with intelligent and industrious inhabitants as the countries to which I have alluded. Are our swamps and morasses more inviting than were those of Holland in the days of Cæsar? Are our pine barrens less susceptible of improvement then were then many countries in Europe, which are now highly cultivated? Can we believe that a large portion of that vast territory which borders our seaboard and that through which your Rail Road runs, were designed by the Creator for barren wastes? Shall most of the large counties which surround this city, continue in their present condition? Must they support only a meagre population—such as is now scattered over them? Must their descendants, generation after generation, pass away unblest with the advantages of an education, which would arouse their energies and excite to industry and economy—to wealth and to a still higher degree of civilization and refinement? I trust not! for the honor and prosperity of our State, I believe not! Must the healthful regions of the Northern part of our State with their rich vallies and their fertile hills, be longer neglected? Must the hardy yeomanry of that portion of the commonwealth be longer, and still longer, deprived of the means of raising their children to a level with those of more favored portions of the State, and of the confederacy? They may not now pour into our public treasury, the same amount of taxes which come from the more wealthy parts of the State. But let war invade our soil, and they will, they must, according to the laws of the country, pour out much more of their blood to defend the possessions of those who are now enjoying, in so high a degree, the blessings of education, and the refinements which spring from wealth. We greatly err, when we suppose this section of our country, incapable of a high degree of culture. Its physical resources are incalculable, and its moral susceptibilities well worthy the first care of our government.

Educate its sons, elevate its inhabitants, by showing them the value of knowledge, and you will soon produce a population which will turn those now barren hills into fruitful fields, and those rich vallies into the very garden spots of the State.

Your Savannah would then be covered with boats, laden with the products of their soil, and your Rail Road would teem with cars freigited with the fruits of their manufacturing industry and skill.

Cultivate their intellect, and you will cultivate their soil, you will put in operation all the arts which harmonize and bless life.

Were good elementary schools in operation only four months each year, in every portion of the commonwealth, how different would soon be the state of the country and how vast the increase in the business of

every section of the State, and especially the business of our principal towns and cities!

In the present advanced state of science and the arts, it is not difficult to infuse into elementary instruction so much knowledge of the science of agriculture, and of the mechanic arts, as to inspire the young with the desire for further knowledge and for improvements in all the departments of life. But now it is saddening to the heart of the patriot and the christian, to observe the indifference manifested by multitudes with respect to almost every thing which can bless and adorn life! There is an apathy upon the subject of education and the improvements in the arts and in agriculture, which is far more fatal to our prosperity as a State, than all the causes which the imagination of the demagogue has ever presented to our people.

Our people must be aroused, they must be educated before any thing like general prosperity can be expected—before our towns will flourish—before our Rail Roads and Steam Boat Companies will prosper —before our city—I shall be pardoned the term, she *must* be our city,—will become what nature designed her—what her great and good founder designed her, and what every enlightened patriot of the State would rejoice to see her—a great emporium, of a great, and intelligent, and prosperous people.

APPENDIX.

PAGE 6th.

SINCE the printing of the first sheets of this address, I have received a letter from my esteemed friend and former pupil, JONATHAN ADAMS, M. D., of Meriwether county, giving me some facts relative to the adventure of his father, to whose services I have alluded on the 6th page. From the information given me by Dr. ADAMS, I find I have not stated correctly the history of that expedition. I heard the General speak of it many years since, and at the time, took no memorandum. The following is a concise, and, I apprehend, correct account: In September, 1793, the frontier settlements, and especially those of Hancock and Green, were thrown into alarm by the hostile incursion of the Creek Indians. It was believed by many to be very important that an attack should, at once, be made upon these savages in their own territory. But there were orders of the Executive on the subject which seemed to forbid the officers in command of the militia from effecting any such purpose. Gen. ADAMS (then a Major) and his friends considered the emergency so pressing, that he determined to lead a company into the territory of the hostile Creeks. Seventy-five or eighty men immediately started, as most of them supposed, in pursuit of some marauding bands, and followed them through what are now Putnam and Jasper counties, to the Ocmulgee river. There the design of the expedition was made known to all; and as the leaders and the principal men were determined to go on, the others were unwilling to return, especially through such an Indian country. They pursued their march, and on the 21st of September, late at night, reached the east bank of the Chattahoochee, and by the barking of dogs and other indications, found themselves opposite an Indian village. They were ignorant of the river, of the country, and strength of the enemy: but knew that an exhibition of their own weakness would ensure their destruction. Adams, therefore, proposed to one or two of the company to explore the river, and, if possible, make their way across, and learn the situation of the town and the best mode of attack. The attempt was made, and all failed of reaching the opposite bank but Adams. He succeeded, and alone, accomplished the object—was driven from the midst of the town by the dogs—returned to his own men—led them across the river—destroyed the town, killed most of the warriors, captured some thirty or forty of their women, and led his men safe again to the other side of the river, and finally, with only one killed, safely home, through a wilderness of more than 150 miles. This was the first expedition of the whites into the territory beyond the Chattahoochee, and was believed to have been followed

by a most favorable impression upon the savages. The Indian town destroyed was about six miles above what is now West Point, Troup county, and is still known as the burnt village.

PAGE 14th.

I had determined to throw into this Appendix a considerable amount of statistical information concerning the Academies in different parts of the State. Much which I expected to obtain has not been procured—in some instances because I have not been able to ask for it, and in others because I could not obtain it. But I find, that the more I become acquainted with the history of these institutions, the more fully am I persuaded of the truth of the remarks made on the 14th page, concerning them. In almost every part of the State, where there are students to be educated in such institutions, the inhabitants have been liberal in the erection of buildings and in the support of teachers. We have, at this time, many Academies well conducted, and the teachers liberally sustained by the tuition of pupils. Had we good elementary schools, a much larger number of pupils would, doubtless, be found in Academies—the children of the country would be incited to the pursuit of knowledge by the impulse given to them in these primary institutions—parents would be urged on to the education of their children by seeing the improvement of their minds, and by reflecting upon the advantages arising from this improvement.

How long will the citizens of our State slumber over the most, by far the most important, subject which can engage their attention and employ their Legislature? Is not this a subject concerning which all can agree? a subject, with respect to which, party politics and sectional jealousies need not exist? That our people are disposed to sustain good Academies, when the advantages of such institutions are urged upon them, is fully proved by the ease with which almost any individual possessing talents and respectability, can succeed in persuading the citizens of a county or a neighborhood to establish such a seminary. What immense sums of money have been expended in our State during the last thirty years in building houses and in furnishing the means for giving instructions in these institutions. I am aware that the zeal of patrons often languishes, and that these houses and these means are too often permitted to remain useless—only the monuments of the former zeal and of the present apathy of our citizens. But let the education of the State be a distinct department of the Government, and the officer having the control of this department be a man of zeal and energy and ability, and this apathy would be prevented—these walls of science would not be dilapidated.

PAGE 21st.

There is no truth more fully established, concerning the early history of the State of Georgia, than that its most distinguished citizens early resolved to make the education of our people a prominent subject in the administration of the Government. It stands out in bold relief upon our institutions, and upon the early legislation of the country. The education of the whole

people was the object at which they aimed, and the measures which they adopted, show the purity of their motives and the ardent desires which they felt upon this great national subject. No one can fail, upon looking over the records of our legislation, to see with what disinterested feelings the great and good men who controled the destinies of our State during the struggle for independence and immediately succeeding that eventful period, devoted themselves to its general interests, irrespective of all sectional partialities. I have said the difficulties attending the organization of the University, were many and formidable. This may be seen by recurring to the condition of the country, when it was resolved to establish such an institution. The location of the principal seminary, was a subject of no small difficulty. For the convenience of the then population it should have been placed in a very different part of the State from that which was selected. The men, however, who had influence in the councils of the country looked to the ultimate welfare of the commonwealth. They had, as far as I can discover, no difference of opinion on this subject, farther than as to what would be for the best interests of the State when all our territory should be obtained, and the whole country covered with an intelligent population. By casting the eye over the map of the State, it will be seen that the seat of the University, was at the time of its selection, just upon the northwestern boundary of our territory—it was perhaps the most inconvenient location for the then population which could have been selected—it was just upon the Indian territory, far removed from the principal population, and almost inaccessible from want of roads or any public conveyances to and from it. Had the Indian title to the lands farther north and west been extinguished, the University would doubtless have been located still farther west. And yet, notwithstanding the location was so inconvenient, the friends of learning in the low country, readily acquiesed in the selection, and united heartily in endeavoring to organize and put it in operation. The records of the Trustees and the Senatus Academicus, and the Legislature, show that all the distinguished men of the State, were united in endeavoring to carry out this important measure. The funds of the University, however, were very small, when the Legislature and the Trustees determined to commence the institution. No lands belonging to it were thought suitable for a seat of the College. And when one was selected on 6th of July, 1801, by a committee consisting of Geo. Walton, Abraham Baldwin, John Milledge, John Twiggs, and Hugh Lawson, Gov. Milledge generously purchased the tract of land at a cost of about 1000 dollars, and made it a donation to the institution. On this land, it is well known, the town of Athens has been principally built, and from the sale of lots the Trustees have derived probably not less than 30,000 dollars. When the Board determined to commence a building suitable for such an institution, the funds at their disposal were wholly inadequate, nor was the State at that time able to make any large appropriation for such a purpose. The institution very soon became involved in debt, thework was obtained, only, at very high prices, and for many years the Trustees labored under peculiarly embarrassing circumstances. A re-

spectable number of officers could not be sustained, the College building already commenced could not be finished without incurring a still heavier debt, and the institution could not be suspended without jeopardizing its existence. Under these circumstances, Baldwin, Jackson, Milledge, Early, the Houstons, the Habershams, Clay, Few, Brownson, Taliafero, Stephens, Walton, Jones, and indeed all the distinguished and leading men in the State, persevered in their determination to establish a respectable institution. Though the College was in its infacy and had few advantages, Gov. Jackson, then probably, by far the most popular man in the State, sent his sons to it to receive their education. His example and that of other distinguished men had a large influence in inducing others to send their sons. For many years the institution labored under difficulties which would have defeated the design of its distinguished founders, had not its early friends resolved that the State must and should have a College of its own. It is one of the most interesting portions of our history to see with what zeal and perseverance the great men of the State labored for such a length of time, and under such adverse circumstances, to establish a literary Institution which they believed would ultimately be an honor and a blessing to their country.

If there be any subject concerning which many of the early patriots of Georgia, may be said to have been disinterested, it is that of the Univerisity. A large portion of the citizens, in the first settlement of the country, felt that they could not enjoy any immediate, direct, advantage from an institution of this kind, and were unwilling that the State should sustain it. The College was therefore very unpopular. And yet the principal men of the State often risked their popularity in its support. And this has been true with the men of all parties, down even to the present day.

PAGE 24th.

Georgia has often been represented as more inattentive to the great interests of education than almost any other State in the Union—a statement which does great injustice to our citizens. A correct history of our State will show that those who have preceded us have done much for the cause of education—a full statement of all which has been given by the citizens of the State would, doubtless, surprise many. I cannot at this time give a history of what has been done by our citizens in the cause of education. A few instances will, however, be sufficient to sustain me in the remark, that we have not been as utterly regardless of the interests of knowledge as many suppose. A number of our Academies have respectable, and some of them very ample endowments; the result of both legislative aid and private liberality. Meson Academy, at Lexington, Oglethorpe county, received from ten to fifteen thousand dollars, a permanent endowment from the individual whose name it bears. The Burke county Academy has a permanent fund of more than seven thousand dollars, and within a few years the citizens of this county have given to other institutions probably over $20,000. The Richmond Academy has buildings and library and apparatus worth, probably, $30,000—an

annuity from real estate amounting to $1600, and Bank stock to the amount of $12,000, besides lands which are rapidly increasing in value. Here, also, is a Medical College endowed by the State to the amount of perhaps $35,000, and possessing buildings, apparatus, library, and the usual means for conducting such an institution, to the amount of $50,000. This institution is now well established, and justly meriting and largely receiving the patronage of the State and other States. The Chatham Academy has large and valuable buildings, and funds sufficient to sustain an institution of superior character. In the village of Washington, there is, besides the Male Academy, which has always been well sustained, a female institute of very high character, for the establishment of which the citizens of that county have come forward with liberal subscriptions. They have a beautiful building and library, and apparatus sufficient to render it an institution of high order. In La Grange, Troup county, are Academies, both male and female, upon which the inhabitants of that village and county have expended large sums, and where hundreds of both sexes have for years enjoyed superior advantages for instruction. No one can visit these and many other Academies and High Schools, which are found in all our older and thickly settled counties, without seeing that a large amount has been expended by our citizens for purposes of education. The Montpelier Institute, under the patronage of the Episcopal church in Georgia, has probably cost $20,000 in its establishment. One individual gave $10,000. The Female College at Macon has probably cost not less than $70,000. For the establishment and endowment of Emory College, there have been raised between 80 and $100,000. For the establishment and endowment of Oglethorpe University between 80 and $100,000. For the establishment and endowment of Mercer University and a Theological Seminary, between 150 and $200,000 have been given. The citizens of Georgia have given to the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., about $60,000. To Randolph Macon College, N. C., $10,000. To the Columbian College, D.C. $25,000. To the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J., $25,000. To the Theological Seminary at Andover, Mass., a considerable amount—how much I am unable to say, as I have received no answer to an inquiry touching that subject, which I addressed to one of its Professors. I know that Mr. John Whitehead of Burke county gave $2500. We have here for the purpose of establishing institutions of learning, private subscriptions by the citizens of Georgia, and that within a few years, to the amount of more than $600,000. I have mentioned only a small part which has been given for this purpose in the State. Our people are not—they never have been, regardless of this subject—but from our peculiar situation, we have thus far failed to unite and concentrate the action of our whole people. They have the ability and the disposition to spread the light of knowledge over our State. Let them be properly enlightened, and they will come forth with an energy which will overcome all obstacles. That our University has not accomplished more is undoubtedly a source of regret to every friend of knowledge—that it has accomplished as much as it has, is, perhaps, a cause of rejoicing to all its friends. It will not be denied by any one, that this Institution has been gradually advancing in usefulness since its funds have been sufficient to sustain the expenses necessarily incident to a respectable College. These expenses

are much larger than many, who have had no experience in the management of such institutions apprehend. The University of Georgia had for an endowment 40,000 acres of land, located by the Surveyors in what are now Hancock, Green, Oglethorpe, Clark, Jackson, Franklin, and in the fork of the Tugalo and Seneca rivers. By the treaty of Beaufort, the last tract was lost by falling into the State of South Carolina. Thus, 5000 acres, equal in value to more than one-eighth of the endowment of the University was wholly lost. The remaining lands were long unsaleable, and could not be rented for any valuable consideration. The country was new, lands abundant and cheap—much, even of a good quality, could be obtained by merely surveying it and paying the fees for granting. The lands, therefore, of the University, could not be made available for any valuable purpose, and the Trustees were unable to commence the institution. None of the lands belonging to the University were sold until 1803, and then only a small portion and at a low price. Most of them remained unsold and unproductive till 1816, when they were nearly all sold, and $100,000 vested in Bank stock, as a permanent fund for the support of the institution. The Legislature, in consideration of the large amount of bonds for these lands over the $100,000, guaranteed that this permanent fund should yield annually eight per cent.

The College was nearly suspended from 1816 to 1819, and by aid of the surplus funds, during this period, the debts of the institution were paid, the buildings repaired, the small library increased, and the Philosophical and Chemical Apparatus, greatly enlarged. From this period the Institution began to assume a respectable stand—its students increased—the Board obtained the services of a respectable number of officers, and continually enlarged the Library and Apparatus.

The first Commencement was on Thursday the 31st May 1804. The exercises were held udor an arbour, erected in the campus—the number of graduates was nine. Of these 4 are now living, viz: Col. Gibson Clark, Gen. Jeptha V. Harris, Col. Wm. H. Jackson, and James Jackson, at present Professor of Chemistry and Natural History, in the University. The Hon. Augustus S. Clayton one of its most untiring friends, to the day of his death, was also a member of this class. Thomas Irwin, Jared Irwin, Robert Rutherford and William Williamson, were the four remaining members. The whole number of graduates is 533, among whom are found a large number of our most useful and distinguished citizens.

The University has buildings which have cost perhaps 75 or 80 thousand dollars. It has a very extensive and complete Philosophical Apparatus—a good Chemical Labratory—a large Mineral Cabinet, and a very neat Botanic Garden. These have cost at least 25,000 dollars. It has a Library of very valuable books to the number of about 8 thousand volumes, which have cost at least 20,000 dollars. The two Literary Socities, have Libraries amounting to about 5 thousand volumes. The officers of the University are now a President, six Professors and two Tutors. Considering all the circumstances, may it not be said that its Trustees have done much—that they have not betrayed their trust—and that though the State may not have done as much as many friends of learning could desire, she has done more than many apprehend—more than many States which are supposed to have been very liberal in their endowment and support of seminaries of learning? It is true, that the citizens of the State, as individuals, have given but little to this Institution. It has not been the recipient of such legacies and donations as have been bestowed upon the older Colleges. But may not the liberality of our citizens which has been so free towards other and private seminaries, be yet turned towards this? And since so much has been done by the Trustees to carry out the designs of its patriotic, and enlightened founders, may we not reasonably suppose that the State will hereafter appropriate to it whatever may be necessary to place it by the side of the most favored, and useful Colleges in the land.