

The Present Crisis and its Issues.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE LITERARY SOCIETIES

OF

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY,

Lexington, Va., 27th June, 1872,

BY REV. B. M. PALMER, D. D.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY,
June 27th, 1872.

To DR. B. M. PALMER:

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR: Permit us to express to you our high sense of the obligation conferred on the Graham Lee and Washington Literary Societies, by the appropriate and most impressive Address which you were so kind as to deliver before those bodies this morning; and to indulge the hope that you will yield to the wishes of the Societies, by placing in our hands a copy for publication.

Wishing you a safe return to your home, and hoping that you may long be spared, the distinguished advocate of Truth and Liberty,

We remain, very respectfully yours,

CAVE DESHA,
M. E. KLEBERG,
J. A. KIRKPATRICK,
Committee of G. L. S.

F. H. MITCHELL,
W. W. TOPP,
FRANK FIELD,
Committee of W. L. S.

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY,
LEXINGTON, VA., *June 27th, 1872.*

To Messrs. CAVE DESHA,

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J. A. KIRKPATRICK,

Com. of G.L.S.

F. H. MITCHELL,

W. W. TOPP,

FRANK FIELD,

Com. of W.L.S.

GENTLEMEN: In compliance with the wish so kindly expressed in your note just received, I take pleasure in placing in your hands the Address which I had the honour of delivering this morning before the Graham Lee and Washington Literary Societies.

With profound gratitude for the favour with which it was received by the lovers of country and of truth in this University,

I remain, Gentlemen, most truly yours,

B. M. PALMER.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

“Resolved, That the Faculty be requested, with the consent of the Rev. Dr. Palmer, to publish the very able and eloquent Address delivered by him this day, in the Chapel of the University.”

JACOB FULLER,
Cleric of the Board.

JUNE 27th, 1872.

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A D D R E S S .

HISTORY breaks itself into Epochs which constitute its natural boundaries, just as rivers and mountains define the limits of countries upon our globe. Annalists, therefore, who seek to partition it by centuries, are as foolish as geographers would be in making parallels of latitude the lines of separation between provinces upon their maps. Both serve a useful purpose in the way of general reference, but not as lines of demarcation. As rivers will run their free course, and lakes choose their own beds, and mountains throw their chain of spurs, in utter disregard of those imaginary lines of space ; so the great events which form the vertebrae of History will push their own way over these artificial divisions of time, culminating at last in the mighty Epochs which form the logical and actual conclusion of the entire series. The development may be slow or rapid, according to the intensity of the forces at work and the number of combinations involved. Usually, the progression is by easy and almost unperceived stages in the beginning; impetuous and precipitate, as by its own momentum, it rushes on to its close. Nor can the character of a given period be fully estimated until by a complete induction of all the facts, rendered at its termination.

It is true that careful observation, extended over many such periods in the past, will furnish analogies from which to prognosticate the future. Yet the value of these inferences is liable to be impaired by differences that continually emerge, and prevent History from being an exact repetition of itself. It would be easy to signalize the blunders in political science, springing from hasty and partial generalizations, and leaving a wide margin for adventurous prophecy of what may never be realized in the world

of fact. Lasting wounds have thus been inflicted upon the prosperity and life of a nation by attempting to carry over the experience of one age or race, as the absolute law to bind the free movements of other times and other generations. For what is called the Philosophy of History only yields the general causes that mould society; which yet are constantly modified, under the various conditions in which they are brought into play. However sound, therefore, the principles which are evolved by a careful analysis of the past, the application of them under perpetually shifting circumstances is necessarily more or less empirical. Still, in passing from one stage to another in any historical development, nothing is left us but to gather up the lessons of the one, to be applied, with a wise discretion, amid the perplexities of the other. For, as the Epochs which form the landmarks of History are connected by an inexorable logic, so must a nation's identity be preserved through the misty interval between them.

Let us, however, pause for a moment upon the terms we are employing. What are we to understand precisely by the word Epoch, destined to recur so often in the progress of this discourse? A descriptive definition is furnished to our hand by one of the most accurate scholars of the age. Time, in general, he considers under the aspect of simple duration, as the mere succession of moments; whilst an Epoch is "time" considered as "bringing forth its several births." Epochs are "the joints or articulations in this time; the critical periods when all that has been slowly and often unmarkedly ripening through long ages, is mature, and comes to the birth in grand decisive events, which constitute at once the close of one period and the commencement of another." Of course, the fruit that is borne in the first becomes a necessary factor in the product of the second : a principle I desire to emphasize, because indispensable to the continuity of History, and because it has an application to the discussion upon which we are presently to embark.

It is obvious now that these Epochs are of wider or narrower significance, according as they relate to Universal or to Particular

History. As instances of the first,—accepting the obvious illustrations of the writer already quoted—the birth of our Saviour into the world may be cited: which, as throwing a new life into the career of the human race, divides History into its two volumes, known as ancient and modern. So the conversion of Constantine, and the accession of Christianity to the throne of the Caesars, wrought a revolution in human affairs, whose tides have not ceased to flow through the fifteen centuries that have followed, The dismemberment of the Roman Empire, too,— sinking a melancholy wreck beneath the waves of Gothic invasion,—forms another Epoch in Universal History; since out of the chaos emerged, in due succession, the present Congress of European States, with the important parts they have sustained in the drama of the world's history ever since, Passing again over the long night of a thousand years which had settled upon the nations of Europe, the stupendous Reformation of the sixteenth century gave the dawn of another day, increasing in splendor; and not, we trust, to be eclipsed but with the extinction of time itself. There is no need of other illustrations hardly less conspicuous; for these abundantly justify Archbishop Trench's idea of the great births that are brought forth in those decisive events which make an Epoch the boundary stone between a closing and an opening cycle.

On the other hand, there are Epochs not less the hinges upon which local History turns. We cannot trace the career of any single people without noticing the points at which a new growth was formed, shooting out in directions we could never have foreseen. It required, for example, the lapse of five hundred years before the little Rome upon the Tiber could absorb the aboriginal Italian States, and thus control the entire Peninsula. Here was the end of one cycle: and it remained to be seen whether she would content herself with this as her natural domain, and simply be coordinated with the other powers of the earth; or whether her military ambition, evoked by five centuries of martial training, would aspire to the mastery of the globe. The destruction of

Carthage might have been construed as indispensable to her security and repose, as the two jealous rivals looked askance at each other across the narrow Mediterranean. It was in fact the first in a long series of conquests, never arrested until a prostrate world lay beneath the beak of her proud Eagles. Another cycle was passed; and the finger of destiny pointed to the hour of her last and fatal choice: either wisely to consolidate her rule by applying those principles of government and law, the solution of which has formed the true glory of the Roman name; or wantonly to break under the weight of her acquired dominions, and perish at last through the excess of her power.

To this latter class of Epochs, lying in the range of particular rather than general History, I desire now, Gentlemen of the University, to solicit your attention. That they are critical periods, is plain from the fact that they are periods of transition. The navigation is always dangerous through the narrow straits which connect two open seas. And the grave question arises, how a people, brought to the end of a given Cycle, may safely tide over the bar, and find the deeper sea-room lying beyond. The question is a most practical one to us upon this continent, to-day; for it involves the possibility of a great people “slouching down upon the wrong side of its crisis;” which a moderate share of virtue should enable it to turn with safety and honor.

There are at least two canons which experience has furnished, bearing upon this issue. The first is, *that no people has long kept its place in history after traversing the fundamental principles upon which the national character has been formed;* and which are, therefore, imbedded in the institutions of the country, and woven into the texture of a nation’s civilization and thought. It would be a prodigal waste of these precious moments to argue the point, that every truly historic race must be the representative of some distinct idea. It is just this want of identification with any great principle to be wrought out in their public fortunes, that has rendered so many nations on the globe completely unhistoric. They simply drift upon the tide, tossed to and fro upon the mere

chances of life, vexed by wars that terminate in no moral result, and sink at last into dark oblivion. When the history of the world is written, these are discounted just as though they had never been; simply because they have contributed no page to the record which is not an utter blank. The principles, then, which a nation undertakes to represent, become the key to its career. Whatever changes may be wrought in the external forms of its life, through the various crises it is called to pass, must lie in one general direction, and upon the plane of those original and fundamental convictions through which it was brought into being. Foreign war and civil discord, the stress of revolution and the intrigues of diplomacy, may strain these principles to the utmost, or even threaten their extinction. Yet can they never be surrendered. With the tenacity that belongs to the instinct of life itself they must be cherished, enshrined as a deeper faith in the nation's heart, and receiving a fuller expansion from the severity of the probation to which they are exposed.

It is amazing what outward perils a State may survive, and what inward corruptions its inherent life will slough away, so long as it remains true to its primitive and hereditary faiths. There is old England rising in her grandeur from the level of European history, like her own island from the bed of the sea; carving her destiny and working out her free constitution through seven centuries of stern conflict; keeping her steady march through changes of dynasty, through the wrench of civil wars as lasting as that of the Grecian Peloponnesus, against the jealousy of Continental rivals who have often combined to sweep her from her island throne: what has wrought this marvel of progress and of power, but her constant faith in the great principles of civil freedom which she had undertaken to assert? And what but the same loyalty to the cause of liberty and truth reclaimed to Netherland an empire from the waters of the very ocean, walling it with dykes against which the waves (lash in vain, and enabling her to wrest her independence, even in her youth, from Imperial Spain, under the powerful and crafty Philip?

If, on the contrary, you would know the slow but certain ruin into which the mightiest kingdom must crumble, that has traversed its principles and denied its traditions, look at Imperial Rome, faintly disguising its apostasy from republican integrity under the dead form of a Roman Senate. The day of her dignity was when her Consuls and her Tribunes were the free choice of the people; when to be a Roman was to be a freeman and a ruler; when citizenship in the great Republic was a patent of nobility equal to that of princes. But when she became the slave of her own armies, and the magistracy of the ballot gave place to the dominion of the sword, then came slowly but sternly the retribution that ever awaits political apostasy. And the marvellous fact stands before us, that the kingdom that has been the most thoroughly blotted from the earth, the most completely sucked up by barbarian hordes, existing only as a memory in the traditions of the past, is that very kingdom of iron, wrought out by the, most iron race the world has ever known, whose supremacy of force bowed the whole earth before it in the submission of absolute terror, but whose strength of iron was turned into the 'feebleness of clay when it slipped into an Empire and forgot the traditions of the Republic.

“The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
 Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
 An empty urn within her withered hands,
 Whose holy dust was scattered long ago!
 The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
 The very sepulchres lie tenantless
 Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
 Old Tiber, through a marble wilderness?
 Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, time, war, flood and fire,
 Have dealt upon the seven-hilled city's pride;
 She saw her glories, star by star, expire,
 And up the steep, barbarian monarchs ride
 Where the car climbed the capitol: far and wide,
 Temple and tower went down, nor left a site
 Chaos of ruins! Who shall trace the void,
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
 And say, 'Here was,' or 'is,' where all is doubly night ?“

The second canon is not less important, to wit.: *that in passing successfully through any crisis, a people must possess elasticity enough to adapt themselves to new conditions, and thus to meet the issues of another Cycle.* This is but the vigor of the national life seeking a new channel when the old has fallen through, just as a healthy plant throws off a new shoot and marks by a new joint where interference has given another direction to its growth. Nothing seals the fate of a nation sooner than the stubborn adherence to obsolete usages and forms which the progress of society is determinately throwing off. These are either simply outgrown, as a country passes through the different stages of its own development, or they are displaced by the new combinations which policy or force may compel from without.

History is always crystallizing anew. Fresh agents are perpetually introduced, old relations are dissolved, and new affinities are established. Every nation must, therefore, recognize the changes taking place in what is variable and contingent in itself; whilst it preserves, with a distinct consciousness, its own identity throughout. Unquestionably, a clear judgment is required to distinguish between what is essential to a nation's being, 'and what is merely accessory and accidental. And it is wonderful how Providence raises up in great conjunctures the men who are equal to this task; men of wise forethought and heroic courage, gifted almost with a prescience of the future, and with the sublime faith which draws that future up until it becomes their immediate present—men immeasurably in advance of their own generation as to the power of comprehending new and opening issues, and who are marked for leadership by that mesmeric influence which tones and subdues all with whom they are brought into contact. Thus it has come to be accepted as a sign that a nation has a future before it, when great men arise in these opportunities of history, giving form to its developments. It is the climax of statesmanship to strike the golden mean between the Radicalism which overturns only for the sake of change, and the fatal Conservatism which, in its blind attachment to inheritance and prescription, resists the progress it should aim to guide.

A clear example of this political sagacity may be found in the framers of the American Constitution. Born under a monarchy, and trained through its usages, they were yet wise enough to perceive that all its conditions were lacking upon this continent. There was no titled class with the prestige of nobility and rank from which a monarch could be chosen; and the teachings of History too plainly established the impossibility of lifting a single family from the general level to permanent presidency over the rest. They were too skilled in political science not to know that the wide interval between the commonalty and the throne must be filled with an intermediate class, rendering the ascent less abrupt and precipitous. Accepting the plain facts of their position, a republican form of government was with them as much a necessity as a choice. The tie of allegiance being severed to the British throne, the sovereignty, of course, vested in the colonies, standing forth in their organized form as free and independent States. It only remained to bind these together in a confederated Republic, with its written Constitution, and with those checks and balances furnished by two deliberative chambers, the Presidential veto, and State sovereignty. The whole political fabric was not changed from "turret to foundation stone;" but only so far as the pressure of events imperiously demanded. The existing organized governments were simply combined in new relations. The whole internal machinery of State rule by domestic legislatures was preserved intact, and the entire body of the English law was carried over for the protection of personal and civil rights. The country was safely navigated through the perils of an immense revolution by the conservatism which retained all that was essential to order and liberty, and by the judicious boldness which lopped off the external forms in which these had been enshrined, when their continuance would have impeded the fresh development which the occasion and the age demanded.

The particular application of these canons has no doubt been, partially anticipated by the intelligent and critical audience before me. Three-fourths only of a century had elapsed since the adop-

tion of the American Constitution, when the country was precipitated into one of those stupendous revolutions by which it is ever the fate of nations to be shaken. A period of unparalleled expansion and material prosperity was followed by an explosion of pent-up forces which threatened a universal wreck. And though the ravages of actual war have ceased, the State still rocks beneath the ground-swell of that fearful agitation, and every beam and timber groans under the pressure of the subsiding storm. It is undeniable that we are still within the jaws of an amazing crisis; nor can the wisest predict whether we shall survive its perils. The danger of a silent but complete subversion of the government is not a whit less real than the violent and noisy dissolution so recently menaced by the sword. The causes which work the final overthrow of nations, are none the less potent because, like the forces of nature, they work in secrecy and silence. The outward forms of administration may be observed, and the general order of society be maintained, while the national life may be gradually washing away. The inward canker may secretly eat out the substance of a nation's strength, whilst the outward shell is perfectly preserved, until at length it is crushed in and thrown away as rubbish.

The extraordinary panic occasioned by the late civil war, which, strangely enough, has not been allayed by the exhibition of tremendous force which the central authority found itself able to control; the appalling corruption which has suddenly spread like a gangrene over the whole land, pervading with its virus every form of business, and debauching public and private morals; the lawless Radicalism which has sprung like a winged dragon upon the earth, devouring every thing stable and sacred in the eyes of men; the sense of insecurity which fills capitalists with instinctive forebodings of the agrarianism that shall level their fortunes to the dust; the ascendancy of a profligate Party, bestriding the neck of the nation, like the Old Man of the Sea, and not shrinking from constructive treason to secure the permanence of its power; and the secret suspicion pervading many minds as to the impo-

tendency of Republican Institutions to perpetuate themselves upon the large scale of a Continent like ours: all these influences combine to centralize the power which it was the object of our Fathers to diffuse. If under their steady and combined assault, the checks and balances of the Constitution shall be destroyed, we slide as inevitably into an Empire as did ancient Rome; and, as I solemnly believe, with the same impending fate of ultimate disintegration and ruin. For a time, the Empire might indeed spread its purple skirt over the Continent, from sea to sea; its proud navy might ride triumphant upon every ocean, and a captive world be harnessed to its car of conquest. Its marble palaces might for a time glitter in the lacker and tinsel that belong to courts; and its cities throb with the pulse, of commerce, and all the activities of unbounded material prosperity. But what then? All this the world has seen before, and does not ask for hanging gardens and Belshazzar's feasts any more. It has had enough of Egyptian Pyramids and of Roman triumphs. One thing is certain; the sword that carves this Republic into an Empire will be the sword of her execution, and the tyrant who wields it will prove the author of her doom. So complete an apostasy from the faith of our Fathers will be overtaken at last with a destruction as memorable as that of a Carthage, a Babylon, or a Rome. For, if there be truth in History at all, it is that a nation, traversing its fundamental faiths, dies by an act *of felo-de-se*.

If there be, then, any deliverance for us in the present crisis, it must be sought in a return to those cardinal truths now so much in danger of going by default. And the only gleam of hope amidst these dark forebodings is, that possibly yet, far down in the People's heart, both North and South, those original faiths may be slumbering still, beneath the prejudice and passion that are working out the behests of a bitter, persecuting party rule. Political heresies, however great, may not be suffered to deepen into that final apostasy from which there is no recovery. Possibly yet, when the excruciating test shall put the virtue of the country upon its last probation, some master prophet will arise

whose voice shall rouse these sleeping convictions into play; and the majesty of the People's will shall once more enthrone the Constitution upon its old supremacy.

Do you ask for the enunciation of those doctrines upon whose re-assertion the perpetuity of the Republic depends? They are written in letters of gold upon those great instruments of Confederation and of Union, drawn up by the first fathers of the State. They are in the catechism of every honest party by which this country has been ruled. They are engrossed upon every page of our history, until these last days of disaster and of shame. They are graven, as with a diamond, upon all the institutions of the land. I had supposed them to be woven into the very tapestry of the people's thought. But familiar as these principles may be, like the Twelve Tables to the ancient Roman youth, I choose this day to give them voice and tongue: if perchance the faint whisper may gather volume as it is borne upon the breeze, and with its echoes rolling back from myriads of patriotic hearts, may fill the country with the sound. And you will pardon the timidity, springing from inacquaintance with political themes, which takes refuge in the exposition given by the immortal Jefferson. In his first Inaugural, upon the 4th of March, 1801, the following commentary on the doctrines of the Constitution was delivered: "About, fellow citizens, to enter on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principles of our government. I will compress them within the narrowest compass they will bear. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations—entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations of our domestic concerns and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the General Government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people; a mild and safe correction of abuses, which are lopped

by the sword of revolution, when peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of Republics, from which is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia., our best reliance in peace, and for the first moments in war, till regulars: can relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts, and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its hand-maid; the diffusion of information, and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason; freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of person under the protection of the Habeas Corpus; and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles,” adds this eminent statesman, “form the bright constellation that has gone before and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. They should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touch-stone by which to try the services of those we trust. And should we wander from them in moments of error and alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps, and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.” How solemn and prophetic the warning, and how pertinent the appeal in the present crisis, uttered seventy years ago by the author of the Declaration of American Independence!

This enumeration of principles is not indeed exhaustive. Delivered upon a popular occasion, it was not intended as a scientific analysis, but only as a general summary. There is the grave omission, for example, of the grand idea, which is the cornerstone of our system, that all just government rests upon the consent of the governed;, which abdicates force as the bond holding together these States. It omits the prime American doctrine of the total separation, both in theory and practice, between the State and the Church; whose jurisdictions are fundamentally distinct, It omits to name—what indeed the history of that day had not so clearly demonstrated as it has been since—the indispensable neces-

sity of some adequate provision for protecting the rights of minorities. But if you will examine it as a summary, you will discover its principles to be independent, with an exception or two, of the particular form under which a government may be administered; and that practically they are illustrated under a Constitutional monarchy, like that of England, as really as in our own Republic. They are the essential principles of civil freedom the world over, and can never be abandoned by us in any extremity to which we may be driven. If the Republic is to be perpetuated in its existing form, this can only be by a return to these as fixed and cardinal maxims. If the centralism of power should throw us into the embraces of despotism, then will the generation after ours be compelled to pare the claws of the beast and tame his ferocity, and recover constitutional freedom under constitutional guarantees, as England has done before us. Or if, by a sort of general dry-rot and the total sundering of all social and moral bonds, this Union shall fall to pieces; then, by the operation of these same principles, it will be necessary from the chaos to construct coexisting smaller republics, with the balance of power that has so long controlled European diplomacy. But in every case alike, the existence of regulated liberty will depend upon the maintenance of our Ancestral Faith. My earnest prayer in reference to our country, is, that its institutions may be preserved exactly as they came to us from a wise and patriotic ancestry. May God Almighty grant, out of the convulsive throes of this trying time, a party to be born, fresh from the people's heart, which shall, inscribe upon its banner these original doctrines of the American Creed! But next to that, if, by some sad transmigration, government must be clothed with another form, that at least those principles may survive which are necessary to the life of liberty itself.

It is needless to expand this point further. Indeed, anything beyond these broad references would carry me into the domain of politics, which I desire particularly to avoid. The brief space of time that remains to me will be required in the application of my

second Canon: the consideration of what we should endeavor to retain from the past, and what we should cheerfully surrender to the future. The suggestions under this head will be delivered with special emphasis to our own people; since it is precisely amongst us that the first great problems in the new cycle present themselves,

1. *Before all the others, there is the problem of Race*, in adjusting the relations between two distinct peoples that must occupy the same soil, It is idle to blink it, for it stares us in the face wherever we turn: and the timidity or sensitiveness which shrinks from its discussion, is equally unwise and unsafe; for the country needs to know the comprehensive principles which will compel its settlement. Under the old regime, the relation betwixt the two was exceedingly simple, because it was domestic. The bonds were those of guardianship and control on the one side, of dependence and service on the other. All this is now changed, and the two races are equal before the law. The suddenness of this translation, without any educational preparation for the new position, was a tremendous experiment It furnishes no mean illustration of the heroic boldness of American legislation; and its early and successful solution will afford the most conspicuous proof of the vigor of the national life. My own conviction is, that it is far too delicate and difficult a problem to be solved by empirical legislation—either by the State, on its political side, or by the Church, on its ecclesiastical. It must be patiently wrought out in the shape which an infinitely wise Providence shall direct—and it needs the element of time, with its silent but supreme assimilating and conciliatory influence. But so far as I can understand the teachings of History, there is one underlying principle which must control the question. It is indispensable that the purity of race shall be preserved on either side; for it is the condition of life to the one, as much as to the other. The argument for this I base upon the declared policy of the Divine Administration from the days of Noah until now. The sacred writings clearly teach that, to prevent the amazing wickedness which brought upon

the earth the purgation of the Deluge, God saw fit to break the human family into sections. He separated them by destroying the unity of speech; then by an actual dispersion, appointing the bounds of their habitations, to which they were conducted by the mysterious guidance of His will. The first pronounced insurrection against His supremacy, was the attempt by Nimrod to oppose and defeat this policy; and the successive efforts of all the great Kingdoms to achieve universal conquest, have been but the continuation of that primary rebellion,—always attended by the same overwhelming failure that marked the first. Among the methods of fixed separation between these original groups, was the discrimination, effected by certain physical characteristics: so early introduced, that no records of tradition or of stone assign their commencement; and so broadly marked in their respective types, as to lead a class of physiologists to deny the unity of human origin. I certainly believe them to be mistaken in this conclusion, and firmly hold to the inspired testimony that “God hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” But there is no escape from the corresponding testimony, biblical and historical, that the human family, originally one, has been divided into certain large groups, for the purpose of being kept historically distinct. And all attempts, in every age of the world, and from whatever motives, whether of ambitious dominion or of an infidel Humanitarianism, to force these together, are identical in aim and parallel in guilt with the usurpation and insurrection of the first Nimrod.

However true that the specific varieties within these groups may safely intermingle and cross each other, the record of four thousand years confirms the fact, that there can be no large or permanent commixture of these great social zones, without ruin : and that ruin as complete as can be conceived, since it extends to the entire physical, intellectual, and moral nature. Why, just follow the history of colonization by the Anglo-Saxon and Latin races, respectively. The former, distinguished by what I may be permitted to term the instinct of race, has steadfastly refused to

debase its blood by such admixture : and over all the world, in all latitudes, their colonies have thriven. England, for example, besides the glory of giving birth to such a nation as our own, boasts to-day of her immense dependencies amid the snows of Canada and the jungles of India. On the other hand, the latter, with a feebler pride of race, has blended with every people, and filled the earth with a mixed breed,—the most emasculated to be found upon the globe, incapable of maintaining a stable government any where, or of developing the resources of the lands they burden with their presence.

In carrying over this doctrine to the solution of our own problem, I have no opinions to conceal. What I “proclaim upon the house-top” to-day, I have uniformly “spoken in the closet” to the representatives of the black race, as I have had opportunity. I have said to them—and to their credit be it testified, the proposition has generally been accepted as the counsel of wisdom—if you are to be a historic people, you must work out your own destiny upon your own foundation. You gain nothing by a parasitic clinging to the white race; and immeasurably less, by trying to jostle them out of place. If you have no power of development from within, you lack the first quality of a historic race, and must, sooner or later, go to the wall. I have said to them, I deny nothing to you which, with our positions reversed, I would not refuse to myself. Were I a black man, I should plead for a pure black race, as, being a white man, I claim it for the white race : and should only ask the opportunity for it to work out its mission. This it is at once the duty and the desire of our people to afford. Accepting squarely, as the terms of national pacification, the Negro’s emancipation and his political status, however hastily or unwisely conferred, along with these franchises should go the privileges of education and culture. But let these stand upon their own footing. The true policy of both races is, that they shall stand apart in their own social grade, in their own schools, in their own ecclesiastical organizations, under their own teachers and guides : but with all the kindness and helpful cooperation

to which the old relations between the races, and their present dependence on each other, would naturally predispose. As to all the details of the problem, they will find an adjustment through the gradual changes of time, in the exercise of practical Anglo-Saxon sense, and under the direction of a wise Providence which still binds the destinies of the two together.

2. The problems in a nation's career are never single. *This changed relation of the two races draws after it the whole labor question.* I do not here refer to the insufficiency of labor for the country's wants, nor yet to the inadequate control over that which exists. Both these must be remanded to the science of Political Economy, to be resolved by the quiet application of its fixed laws. The allusion is rather to the new condition of things, exacting a personal devotion to labor, rather than a mere superintendency of it as wrought by others. Undoubtedly the old system of large baronial estates must yield to that of small proprietorships, filling the country with a denser population, and inducing a sharper competition, out of which only the more energetic and thrifty will emerge into success. The dainty descendants, who might have been content to repose upon the laurels of an honorable ancestry, find themselves suddenly thrown into the position of those ancestors themselves, and called to the high office of being the founders of families in their turn. In all this there is nothing for a wise man to regret; for it is far more honorable to be an integer in the social arithmetic than to range in the line of decimals into which a noble lineage must eventually thin out.

The diversity of pursuits in the development of our mineral wealth, and the branches of mechanical industry to which this will give rise, will open the door to activity and enterprise for our ambitious youth, who must enter with ardor the new fields of toil, or find themselves rooted out by hardy adventurers from abroad, reaping the ample rewards and filling the social niche they will then have fairly earned. The instinctive wisdom of our people has already foreseen the peril; and in the enlarged curriculum of this Institution, and in the simultaneous adjustment of all our Col-

leges to fit our young men for the practical businesses of life, we discover the provision to meet the exigencies of our new position. A healthy sentiment is thus created, which we must at once formulate into a doctrine; that as an advanced civilization creates new wants and multiplies forms of industry, so no species of labor is disreputable whose products swell the volume of that civilization, and cement more firmly the parts of the social fabric. The usages and habits which formed around the old state of things, should gracefully yield to those which necessity enforces in the new. A proper elasticity of character, adapting us to the change, will bound us over the crisis, and carry us forward to new and better destinies.

3. *In this connection, a caveat must be entered against that coarse and selfish Utilitarianism which measures all things only by a material standard.* This is the peril which I most dread in the impending crisis; that in the friction of these competitive industries, the fine sense of honor which formed the beautiful enamel of Southern character, may be rubbed away, to be followed by the swift decay of virtue, of which it was at once the protection and the ornament. Materialism, sitting in the Schools and speaking through the forms of Philosophy, is not perhaps much to be dreaded. It is too monstrous to be believed. It shocks our moral convictions, and startles the pride of self-love, to be told that thought is only a secretion of the brain—that the rapture of joy and the pathos of grief are only currents of electricity along the tissues of the body. We can safely leave this to the instinct of human scorn, which resents as an insult such a libel upon our nature. But the Spirit of materialism, infused into all the transactions of business and common life, is the Angel of Pestilence dropping the seeds of death from its black wing wherever it sweeps. It is this subtle and dangerous spirit which is at the bottom of that fearful demoralization that has spread like a leprosy over the land. It is rapidly displacing legitimate commerce by the silent invasion of its fixed laws; rendering the individual trader helpless in the grasp of a powerful combination controlling the market by irregular and unnatural

methods, and making it to depend upon the interest and caprice of large capitalists. It is corrupting public justice through venal juries, no longer impartially selected, but chosen from the hangers-on of courts, whose sole subsistence is the bribe of the wealthy litigant. It is filling the noble profession of the law with mendicant attorneys, prostituting the solemn priesthood of their office by opening the subterfuges of legal chicanery to villainy and fraud. It invades even the sanctity of the bench, and overwhelms judicial integrity by the pressure of political and commercial combinations. It is converting public office from a ministry of responsibility and trust into a place of emolument, where the perquisites to be enjoyed outweigh the duties to be performed. And worse than all, it is sapping the truthfulness, the honesty and honor of private life, and silently destroying the moral bonds by which society is held together. Through all its grades, from the highest to the lowest, every man is striving to outstrip his neighbor in the possession and exhibition of wealth; and the most sacred claims of love, and all the sweet charities and refinements of social life, are sacrificed upon the altar of universal greed.

Few, perhaps, suspect the deep and hidden sources from which this foul idolatry draws its inspiration. A virgin continent in the possession of the most aggressive race upon the globe; its rich and varied soil, to reward the labors of agriculture; its stores of mineral wealth, to throw a charm around even the grime and toil of the miner; its vast opportunities of commerce, lying between two great oceans, with an extended coast-line upon both, and traversed through its whole extent by broad navigable streams—the tide of immigration bringing to its shores the thews and muscle necessary for its rapid development; all combine to stimulate the spirit of acquisition in our people, and lead them to exaggerate material prosperity as the chief good in life.

Paradoxical too, as it may appear, the influence of our democratic institutions bears strongly in the same direction. For whilst all stand professedly upon one general level, the only recognized distinction is that of wealth, which is, therefore, the more intensely

coveted as the only badge of preeminence. The suddenness with which a few shoot up from the depths of obscurity and poverty, and the obsequiousness which bows down in worship of this rapidly acquired wealth, intoxicate and render men delirious in its pursuit. The most vulgar of all aristocracies is thus created, entrance into which is open equally to all, and stimulates an ambition at once the most grovelling in its character and the most debasing in its influence.

Strangely, too, the very science of the age lends its aid both to increase and to sanctify this gross materialism. It is distinguished, not only by the comprehensiveness of its range, but even more by the steady application of its discoveries to the arts of practical life. It penetrates deeper into the mysterious mechanism of nature, interprets its more complex laws, and evolves its more hidden forces; but not content with these achievements, it harnesses them all in the service of man as agents to execute his will. It tunnels our mountains, spans our rivers, weaves the network of travel over the face of the earth, lays its wires beneath the ocean's bed, over which the nations whisper diplomatic and commercial secrets across a Hemisphere. Not only so—it bakes and brews, it stitches and weaves, and through its witty inventions, relieves the drudgery of domestic toil. But the effect of all is to intensify the lust of acquisition, until it becomes a supreme passion, which is even ennobled by the splendors of that science with which it is associated, and by which it is indirectly fed. A nation's glory comes to be placed in its railroads and factories, its populous cities and gorgeous palaces, its extensive commerce and accumulated capital. An external and material prosperity is made the measure of national greatness, when the country may be rotting to its foundation in dishonesty and crime; private virtue, the public faith, even liberty itself, being freely sacrificed to purchase grandeur and power.

It would be an immense protection against these debasing tendencies if amid the exactions of our new position, we could carry over those gentlemanly instincts which have hitherto characterized

our people. In employing this unusual term, I do not mean that dainty mannerism which puts on the air, without the quality, of the gentleman. But I refer to that exquisite education of the conscience which makes duty and benevolence the habit of the soul; that fastidious honor which cannot, even in thought, condescend to meanness; that lofty self-respect which will observe the proprieties and practice the virtues of life, with the readiness of impulse; that nobleness of principle which makes it as easy to be brave and true as it is to breathe; that instinct of rectitude which shrinks from the false and the base as from the contamination of the plague. It would be a rare combination this, of courtly honor with the hardness of toil. But if labor is ennobled when wrought by the hands of a freeman, how much more .when associated with the dignity of the gentleman!

Let us guard, then, with the jealousy of genuine alarm, against that despicable spirit of Utilitarianism which, like a hucksterer in the shambles, is always haggling with truth about her price. She is immeasurably more precious in herself than in all the uses to which men may put her. Truth, integrity, and honor are the highest attributes of any people, and the enjoyment of regulated freedom, under a wise and constitutional government, is its noblest privilege and reward.

4. Coupled with this, *we must retain from the past that individuality of character which makes a man a solid unit in society*. This attribute has with us been largely the product of circumstances. An agricultural people, living apart from one another, every man in the centre of a given circle of dependants for whom he was called to think and plan, there was nourished a personal independence which we cannot afford to lose. On the contrary, in a crowded population, men are cheapened in value, like the leaves in a forest. The individual comes to be little more than a single brick in a blank wall, answering only to so many square inches of a common surface. Through a perpetual commingling, thought ceases to be a fresh production of the mind, and there is substituted for it a public opinion which is caught and given back, just

as one breathes in and breathes out a common atmosphere. This explains the amazing rapidity with which the wildest heresies are propagated amongst the masses; whose multiplied voices are but the reverberations of a single sound which echo prolongs. It explains the caprice with which hosannas are turned into execrations at the bidding of demagogues, who are “the pest of republics as courtiers are of monarchies.” It explains the sadder fact, how the few who do think are browbeaten and crushed, and yield up their convictions and conscience, to be trampled in the dust by the buffaloes of the herd, as they snuff the air and scour the plain.

This is one of the chief perils of the Republic. For as the people are the fountain of power, they must, in the elective franchise, coalesce in a joint expression of will : and as with the increase of population, the drill of party becomes more and more rigid, the sense of personal responsibility becomes more obscure, and the exercise of it more difficult. You will not understand me as advocating that impracticable individualism which splits upon hairs into a thousand schisms: but that honesty of mind which will lead every man to contribute his quota to a true public sentiment, of which his conscience will not be ashamed. For, depend upon it, with the extinction of this individual responsibility, there is no longer the possibility of virtue. In the massive language of Mr. Webster; “a sense of duty pursues us ever; it is omnipresent, like the Deity.” If the sense of it be lost within the soul, there is the rejection of the Divine control; and the nation slides down the steep declension into moral decay and death.

5. Finally, *we must carry over to the future a patriotism that is born of adversity and trial, more intense and purer than in the prosperous and joyful past.* Love of country is inextinguishable, because it is filial. It ranks with that we owe to the parents who begot us, and have given to us their image and their name. But I plead for it not upon the cold footing of duty, but as a precious sentiment of the heart. As a principle, it strikes its root far down into the conscience; but its bloom must expand into a holy passion, and its fruit ripen into acts of enduring service for the public weal.

The best affections of the soul are those which strengthen under trial. The alloy of selfishness burns away in the crucible, and the pure love comes forth with a power of endurance which nothing can exhaust. It is thus we bear up each other under the discipline of life; not through the compulsion of necessity, nor the cold obligation of duty, but with a warm devotion which finds its joy in those ministries of love. A genuine patriotism is not that which shouts itself hoarse amid holiday celebrations; but when the country groans in the anguish of a great crisis, waits upon its destiny, though it be that of the tomb. And this land of ours, furrowed by so many graves and overshadowed with such solemn memories, calls for a consecration of the heart which shall be equal to its grief. The patriotism which these days demand, must refine itself into martyrdom. It must suffer as well as act. Strong in the consciousness of rectitude, it must nerve itself to endure contradiction and scorn. If need be, it must weep at the burial of civil liberty; and wait with the heroism of hope for its certain resurrection. Such a spirit will wear out the longest tyranny, and assist at the coronation of a brighter destiny.

Young Gentlemen of the University, I have delivered the message with which I felt myself charged. I have not been able to address you with the fopperies of Rhetoric. I have done you the higher honor of supposing you capable of sympathizing with the deep emotions of my own heart. When your note of invitation reached me some months ago, it touched me with the solemnity of a call from the grave. I felt, as I turned my steps hither, that I was making a pilgrimage to, my country's shrine. I should be permitted to stand uncovered at the tomb of the immortal, Chief who sleeps in such grand repose beneath the academic shades where he found rest after heroic toils. Should I look upon it as the emblem of my country's death? or should I prophesy beside it the birth of a new career? Memories holy as death have been throwing their shadow upon my spirit; and I have spoken in the interest of country, of duty, and of truth. The dim forms of Washington and of Lee—twin names upon American

History, as well as upon your own walls—appear before me the Rhadamanthus and the Minos, who shall pronounce judgment upon every sentiment uttered here. If aught said by me should draw the frown of their disapproval, may the Angel of Pity drop a tear and blot it out forever! Standing upon the soil which gave birth to a Washington, a Madison, a Jefferson, a Henry, a Randolph, a Marshall, a Jackson and a Lee; and lifting the scroll which hangs, around the ensign of my native State, the names of Pinckney, Laurens, Rutledge, Lowndes, McDuffie, Hayne, Calhoun; I summon their immortal shades around his tomb whom a nation has so lately mourned. In their dread presence I solemnly declare that the principles of our Fathers are our principles to-day; and that the stones upon which the temple of American liberty was first built, are the only stones upon which it shall ever be able to stand. And you, Gentlemen, representing the young thought and hope which must shortly deal with these mighty issues, I swear each one of you by an oath more solemn than that of Hannibal, not that you will destroy Rome, but that you will save Carthage. I charge you, if this great Republic like a gallant ship must drive upon the breakers, that you be upon the deck, and with suspended breath await the shock. Perchance she will survive it; but if she sink beneath the destiny which has devoured other great kingdoms of the past, that you save from the melancholy wreck our Ancestral Faiths, and work out yet upon this continent the problem of a free, constitutional, and popular government. And may the God of destinies give you a good issue!