The Organic Life of the Republic
Compliments of the Committee.

The Organic Life of the Republic

A THANKSGIVING DISCOURSE

BY

JOHN BODINE THOMPSON

At a meeting of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the First Presbyterian Church of New Brunswick, N. J.,
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Rev. J. B. Thompson, A.B.

Dear Sir:—May I express my assurance that the discourse will conduct to the more general appreciation of the relation of individuals to the organic life of the nation, if you believe that the printing of the transcript is at your service.

Yours truly respectfully,

A. Scott, Ph.D., L.L.D., President of Rutgers College, and Others:

Fellow Citizens,

If you believe that the printing of the discourse will conduct to the more general appreciation of the relation of individuals to the organic life of the nation, I have no right to object. The manuscript is at your service.

God save the Republic!

Highland Park,
New Brunswick, N. J.,
November 29, 1892.

John B. Thompson
THE ORGANIC LIFE OF THE REPUBLIC.

Isaiah lxv. 22.—As the days of a tree are the days of my people.

The prophet means that a nation is like a tree, because

There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again,
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease:
Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,
And the stock thereof die in the ground;
Yet through the scent of water it will bud,
And bring forth boughs like a plant.¹

It has a future. It has a vital energy that is self-perpetuating. It has life. It is an organism.

And the same thing is true of the nation.

It is an organism.

In recording the history of the Israelitish nation the sacred writers have given us the principles which underlie also this nation, by conformity to which it will perpetuate its own existence, by the violation and destruction of which it must perish. They show how the nation came into existence according to the divine working. They show that a nation is not a mere aggregation of units. It is not merely a mass of people; nor a merely voluntary association for mutual advantage. Nor is it a governmental machine. It is an organism. It is not shaped from without. It is shaped from within. It grows, like a tree. It roots itself in the past, and grows into the future. It develops. It has relation to those who have died and to those who are yet to be be born. It

¹ Job xiv. 7-9.
passes through one stage of existence after another; yet it is ever the same individual organism. Even Cicero perceived this when he wrote: "The republic is not of one time or of one man; it is planned for perpetuity." Every nation has its own characteristic life, which is, and is designed to be, self perpetuating. Its members are intelligent beings, having more or less knowledge of it, and of their relations to it, and to each other. They are moral beings, knowing more or less of the duties and privileges which grow out of these relations. They are persons, acting in their proper capacity as parts of one organic whole.

The American Indians are not citizens of the Republic; for they are isolated from its organic life by allegiance to their chiefs. Abandoning their tribal organizations, accepting land in severalty and becoming integral parts of the living nation they must have a voice in the government. People who act apart from the organization are not members of the body politic. They can constitute only a mob, whether they be Indians or Chinamen, whether they be laborers, or scientists, or religionists.

This is what Shakespeare means when he represents Caius Marcius as saying to the Roman rioters, with infinite scorn, "Go, get you home, you fragments!"

With the same thought in mind does Edmund Burke say explicitly that a nation is not "a partnership agreement to be taken up for a little temporary interest and dissolved at the pleasure of the parties," "not a partnership in the things subservient to the gross animal existence of a tem-
porary and perishable nature," but "a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection."

All this, and more, was implied in the saying of the ancient philosopher that the design of a national government is "not merely to enable men to live, but to enable them to live nobly."¹

This is more definitely expressed by the modern philosopher who describes a nation as "the rational life of self-conscious freedom, the order of the moral world, the realization of the ethical idea."²

The nation is a moral organism. Paul calls government "God's deacon."³ It exists in order to carry out God's purposes. And its existence is warranted, and its prosperity secured, to the degree in which it conforms to the divine idea.⁴ The fact that the nation is such a moral organism alone justifies the punishments visited upon traitors and the rewards bestowed upon patriots.

This scriptural notion of the nation underlies the Battle Hymn of the Republic:

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me;
As he died to make men happy, let us die to make men free:
Our God is marching on.

National life, like all other life, comes from God.

There is no effect without a cause. Whatever

¹ Aristotle. ² Hegel. ³ Rom. xiii.4 (Greek).
⁴ Not the form of government, but the fact, is ordained of God. (Rom.xiii.1.) The divine right of kings is of precisely the same nature as the divine right of constables. This is emphatically taught by the picture alongside the throne in the British Parliament House, representing the arrest of the heir to the throne by a London constable.
exists to our apprehension existed potentially as vital energy in the great First Cause before it issued forth into distinct, actual, objective existence. "What has been made was life in Him" before it was made. And He is not only above all, but also in all. He is the transcendent Father of spirits with whom our spirits may have communion, and He is also the immanent motive power of the universe, to whose motions we may correspond, carrying out in voluntary action the informing idea. Only by grasping this divine conception of the nation, and throwing ourselves heartily into God's plan for the progress and perfecting thereof shall we be able to fulfill the object of our existence as citizens of the Republic. The religion of the Bible is constructive, having in itself the power of making, preserving and developing the nation, because the nation as such is determined through the moral principle which, whether men know it or not, is essentially religious.

This conception of the nation as an ethical organism, deriving its distinctive life from God, as really and truly as the church and the individual, has been the underlying principle of the United States of America from the very beginning. One motive of Christopher Columbus in seeking lands beyond the sea was to extend the religion of Him who had said: "I am come that they might have life." And when the explorer returned to Palos

1. John i.4(Westcott and Hort).
2. The politics of a nation will always correspond to the morality of the people, and that morality will always be the consequence of their real (not necessarily their formal) theology.
3. John x.10.
successful, carrying with him specimens of the inhabitants of the New World to whom he had made it possible for the Christ-life to come,

To the church, with open portals,
Glad bells ringing, blow on blow,
Andalusian banners under,
Leads he, mid the eyes of wonder,
All his faithful men, through Palos,
All his sun-browned men, through Palos,
Ancient Palos,
Long ago.

And the Viceroy at the altar,
Kneeling by his captives low,
Bowed to praise the Lord of Heaven
For the world that He had given
To the sceptre of Fernando,
To the crowns of Isabella,
To the Cross of Christ forever!
So arose the first thanksgiving,
For the New World,
Long ago. 1

The earliest public thanksgiving in the New World was in 1607 by the colonists on the Kennebec, who soon after, however, returned to England. The next was that at Plymouth in 1621, by those who came to this land and stayed here, the originators of the nation. They came not as individuals, nor as a business corporation, nor as a state, but as a church. And when they proposed to organize a government which should be (as Lincoln long after designated it), "of the people, by the people, for the people," they said: "The civil state must be raised out of the churches." 2 And it was so raised, as students of our colonial history well know. Politics, as well as religion, is a part of the Kingdom of God. 3

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3. As is also esthetics. Compare the quotation from Edmund Burke at top of page 5.
This nation did not spring into existence suddenly and unaccountably out of nothing. Chancellor Kent reminds us that the organization of government by the American people "took place while they were colonies of the British Empire, and owed allegiance to the British crown." For more than a century the innate life had been struggling to the birth, just as for more than a century since it has been struggling toward a more and more nearly complete realization. The development was slow, but it was sure. The living principles implanted and fostered by the God of Nations, in due time wrought out the result designed by him, and the founders of the Republic acknowledged their obligations to Him. In the convention that framed the Constitution Benjamin Franklin said: "We have been assured in the sacred writings that 'Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also firmly believe this, that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. We shall be divided by our little, partial, local interests; our projects will be confounded; and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a by-word down to future ages."

The two greatest statesmen in our history have been Washington and Lincoln; and Washington held the conception of the organic and moral being of the nation with a more profound sincerity and grasp of thought than any American statesman before Lincoln. First the revolutionary war, and then the civil war, gave convincing proof that the only hope of the nation lay in its realization of the
dignity and importance of its own divinely-implanted organic life. President Washington in his first inaugural address said: "No people can be bound to adore the hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States."¹ And President Lincoln's last inaugural was the unbroken expression of the spirit of the Hebrew scriptures respecting the life of the nation. Its whole thought was gathered up in their words in the recognition of One who will establish righteousness on the earth, 'whose judgments are righteous and just.'

This same spirit finds expression in our national thanksgiving services. The proclamations acknowledge God as the author, preserver, and benefactor of the nation; and "God is not the God of the dead, but the living."² "The living," says the prophet who gives the key-note for this discourse, "the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day."³ This living nation praises God to-day for its abundant life.

Special thanksgiving services have been observed on special occasions and for special purposes by all people in all ages.⁴

¹ In his farewell address he said: "Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles." And so Jefferson in his first message as president asked, "Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure, when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God?"
² Mat. xxii.32.
³ Isaiah xxxviii.19.
⁴ The Dutch of the New Netherlands (which included what became afterward the colonies of New York and New Jersey) kept a thanksgiving day in 1644 for victory over Indian foes,
But our annual thanksgiving is something different from these. The last Thursday of November had been designated as a day of thanksgiving during the revolutionary war; and the congress which adopted the Constitution of the United States by special resolution requested President Washington to "recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a constitution of government for their safety and happiness." In accordance with this request the President appointed the last Thursday of November for that purpose. Here is precedent both for the choice of this day and for devoting it to the consideration of political privileges.

In some parts of our country thanksgiving day has been chiefly a day of gratitude for blessings of a local character. Sometimes it

and another in 1645 for peace, the proclamation for which, being interpreted, reads thus: "Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God in his unbounded clemency and mercy, in addition to many previous blessings, to suffer us to reach a long wished for peace with the Indians: Therefore, it is deemed necessary to proclaim the fact to all those of New Netherland to the end that, in all places within the aforesaid country where Dutch and English churches are established, God Almighty may be specially thanked, praised and blessed on next Wednesday forenoon, being the 6th of September, the text to be appropriate and the sermon to be applicable thereto. Your Reverence will please announce this matter to the Congregation next Sunday, so that they may have notice. On which we rely."

1. This resolution was offered by Elias Boudinot of New Jersey. It passed the House by an overwhelming majority and met with no opposition whatever in the Senate.
THE PRESIDENT.

has been chiefly a harvest-home celebration. Sometimes it has been made a day of praise for spiritual and eternal blessings. All these things are good, excellent, important; and they may fitly be commemorated on this day. But the distinctive characteristic of the day should never be forgotten. The last Thursday in November is the day for the consideration of political affairs and for thanking to Him who "hath not dealt so with any nation." As such it was instituted by President Washington. As such it was proclaimed by President Lincoln. As such it has been proclaimed by every president since Lincoln. And no one of them all has more clearly recognized the fact of the organic life of the nation and of its dependence upon God for it than the Christian man in accordance with whose proclamation we are all here assembled before God this day. Hear it!

The gifts of God to our people during the past year have been so abundant and so special that the spirit of devout thanksgiving awaits not a call, but only the appointment of a day when it may have a common expression.

He has stayed the pestilence at our door.

He has given us more love for the free civil institutions in the creation of which His directing providence was so conspicuous.

He has awakened a deeper reverence for law.

He has widened our philanthropy by a call to succor the distress in other lands.

He has blessed our schools, and is bringing forward a patriotic and God-fearing generation to execute His great and benevolent designs for our country.

1. Psalm cxlvii.20.

2. From this statement the name of the lamented Garfield must be excepted, only because he died too soon. That he held the same view of the relation of the national life to God is evident from the first words of his address in New York upon the assassination of Lincoln: "Fellow citizens! God reigns, and the government at Washington still lives!"
He has given us great increase in material wealth and a wide diffusion of contentment and comfort in the homes of our people.

He has given His grace to the sorrowing.

Wherefore, I, Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States, do call upon all our people to observe, as we have been wont, Thursday, the 24th day of this month of November, as a day of Thanksgiving to God for His mercies and of supplication for His continued care and grace.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the City of Washington, this fourth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two, and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and seventeenth.

By the President.

BENJAMIN HARRISON.

JOHN W. FOSTER, Secretary of State.

I have taken so much time for the exposition of the principles underlying the proper observance of this day that I can call your attention only in the briefest manner to the reasons for thanksgiving enumerated by our chief magistrate.

He recognizes the fact that the spirit of thanksgiving in the people presses forward toward organic manifestation for which his proclamation furnishes the opportunity.

First of the reasons which he mentions for thanksgiving to Almighty God is the fact that "He has stayed the pestilence at our doors." What fearful forebodings filled our hearts but a few short weeks ago! But the God-given wisdom of our rulers and the no less God-given knowledge and skill of our sanitarians have warded off the danger, at least for the present. Let us show our gratitude by ceaseless "supplication for his continued care and grace," while we also show our faith by works of righteous purification in order that He may answer our prayers in the future as in the past.1

1. Gen. xviii.19; James ii.22.
Every one of the items enumerated by the President has its political aspect which we ought to consider to-day. If we are to escape entirely the threatened invasion of cholera it seems to be necessary to establish a national quarantine; and this question involves that of the relation of the states to the general government. But this need give us no anxiety. The nation is an organism having life, and therefore capable of adapting itself to its ever-changing environment. This question must be considered and decided soon after the assembling of the next congress; and it will be decided, as other new questions have been, in such manner as shall best conduce to the welfare of the people. “The safety of the people is the supreme law.”

We are exhorted to thank God also that “He has given us more love for the free civil institutions in the creation of which His directing providence was so conspicuous.” From the Atlantic to the Pacific not only, but equally also from the Lakes to the Gulf, the Stars and Stripes are esteemed, honored, revered. Those who once fought against the national government, if occasion called, would now fight with equal bravery for it. And we are training our children to be more intelligent and devoted patriots than we. The national flag waves over our public schools and the care of it is the reward of faithfulness among the youth instructed there. Discovery Day has recently been celebrated with exercises designed to enable the pupils, in due season, to act well their part as sharers in the organic life of the nation. The Republic grows better day by day through the betterment of the people, young and old.
God has awakened in us a "deeper reverence for law." The government shows this by arranging for the settlement of difficulties between nations by arbitration. Our people show it by patient submission to even unrighteous laws.

Lord Macaulay prophesied danger to our free institutions when our population should be largely increased, regarding the Republic as only an association of individuals for mutual advantage. This view of government as merely a commonwealth was held also by Calhoun and those who followed in his footsteps, and has been taught by noted publicists of the empirical school since. But the fact is that the commonwealth *presumes* the nation and subsists in it. We need never despair of the Republic. It is not merely a commonwealth. It is a nation, an organism, which by virtue of its own indwelling life adapts itself to every emergency; stamps out anarchy when it manifests itself; educates the ignorant up to an appreciation of their privileges and duties as free members of the living organism; and thus provides for its own perpetuation notwithstanding the temporary evils arising from emancipation and immigration and ignorance or passion.

The question of immigration is now the most serious one; not only because of the danger of cholera, but still more because of the danger from so large an influx of ignorant and vicious people. We have forbidden the incoming of the lowest classes of Asiatics with their unmentionable vices. The action was wise; though many have not yet been able to see that it was so. The action was wise; though the manner of doing it was something
to be ashamed of. It is time now to forbid, in a proper manner, the incoming of the lowest classes of Europeans, who are almost equally unfit for association with the children of the Republic. Immigrants should be admitted no more rapidly than they can be assimilated and made competent members of the body politic. The national life is vigorous; but its powers of digestion and assimilation should not be too severely tested.

The evil arising from emancipation is passing away. Under the direction of those most familiar with the disease, the vital force in the nation is effecting a cure as rapidly as is consistent with the permanent welfare of the whole body.

The solidarity of the peoples, first thus proclaimed in this country by Kossuth, is apprehended more clearly year by year. The brotherhood of man is recognized, and our people contribute gladly of their abundance to supply the necessities of the destitute in other lands; for which increasing likeness to Him who always gives and never receives we rejoice and give thanks.

The progress made in education may well excite our profoundest gratitude. Twenty per cent of our entire population are in school. This is a better showing than that of any other country except Saxony; though many other countries of Europe have much a longer annual school session than we have. (Here is the proper place to show improvement in future years).

The undervaluation of physical training is a thing of the past. Hygienic culture is making itself felt. Manual dexterity is more highly valued. The Stanford University in California makes physi-
cal training the basis of all its educational work. Every state has its school of agriculture and applied science; and the \textit{Stoyle} system in our normal and public schools will soon enable our boys and girls to use their faculties of body, as well as of mind, as never before.

Defects in methods for the education of youth are exposed and corrected (though there remains also very much yet to be done in this direction). College and University Extension (with public libraries) now offer a higher education also to those whose youth was denied such advantages.

Best of all, the necessity of ethical training begins to be generally felt. Instruction is provided in civics and ethics. Institutions of learning are establishing University Settlements in the midst of the poor, showing them how to live better and happier lives. Individuals here and there are working to the same end, ignoring caste, choosing friends among the lowly, and trying really to live as Jesus lived. The churches which have put stress upon ritual and creed are now putting stress also upon the spirit of Christianity and giving attention to the ethical import of both ritual and creed more than ever before. Christian people are beginning to see that the object of the Christian, so far as he is a Christian, is not to get something, but to give something. Even those who doubt or deny the existence of Him in whom "we live and move and have our being," are multiplying schools for ethical culture and doing all they can, thus handicapped, for the development of the moral sense.\footnote{1. Acts xvii.28.}
More books upon morals have been published during the last decade than during all the years that had elapsed before since Europeans first landed upon these coasts. A new word has come into use among those who do not profess and call themselves Christians to express their apprehension of the ethical import of Christianity. "Altruism" consists in living for others instead of for self. And the recognition of this individual altruism is of even more importance than that of the solidarity of the peoples, for it is the basis of the moral consciousness of that solidarity, and of every other good with which we may make the world the better and not the worse for our living in it.

By all these means is God "bringing forward a patriotic and God-fearing generation to execute His great and benevolent designs for our country."

I would like to speak of the "great increase of material wealth and the wide diffusion of contentment and comfort." But where shall I begin or end?

The newly settled states on the Pacific are furnishing their productions to every part of the Union, and even to British America and Europe.

The value of property in the southern states has increased during the last ten years from three billions to five billions of dollars; and more than half of the forty cotton factories established during the present year are in those states.

The central states of the Mississippi Valley produce from their fertile soil more than any equal amount of territory in the world. Of wheat alone there were on sale in Chicago yesterday more than sixty-seven millions of bushels.
Seventy-five northern cities have manufactured goods during the past year to the amount, in round numbers, of five billions of dollars; and the wages of their employees have increased during the decade more than forty per cent. Our annual exports now amount to a billion of dollars, and four-fifths of these are agricultural productions.

In 1800 the total product of each man, woman and child in the United States did not amount to ten cents a day. In 1850 it had increased to twenty-five cents. In 1880 it amounted to forty cents. It now comes to nearly or quite fifty cents per day. The total increase of wealth in the last decade was twenty billions of dollars, a sum greater than the aggregate of wealth previous; so that a single decade has added more than all the wealth that had been created during all the centuries since the discovery by Columbus.

The Columbian Exposition will far surpass anything that the world has ever seen, and promote, more than anything that has gone before, the development of the material and esthetic resources of the nation. Our population has increased to sixty-five millions of people, who consume and enjoy of the products of human labor more than twice as much as any equal number of people in the world. Never before has the country been so prosperous, or contentment and comfort so widely diffused.

The decision for a change of administration is due, not to discomfort, but to the doubt and inquiry which precede increase of knowledge. The people differ as widely as the politicians respecting the comparative advantages of a tariff for protection
and a tariff for revenue. Four years ago President Harrison was elected because a majority of the voters believed that a protective tariff would be best for the country. Now he has been defeated because they have doubts upon that subject.

Other elements have entered into the contest so recently decided; but the tariff was the controlling question. No change that will suddenly unsettle values need be feared; but there will be a change. Then, if the present prosperity shall continue and increase, the decision of 1892 will, doubtless, be ratified and confirmed by that of 1896. On the other hand, if the present prosperity shall be destroyed or diminished, another change will, probably, then take place. We all need to acquire knowledge; and we shall, I trust, all learn by experience.

There are many things in connection with the recent election that augur well for the future of the Republic. The candidates for the presidency were men of whose integrity the people had no doubt. Never before has there been such a contest with so little vituperation, so little foolish and unfounded enthusiasm, or so much calm deliberation on the part of the voters. More people broke loose from the trammels of party than ever before. On all hands the campaign was a campaign of education; and all parties accept the result unquestioningly.

These are evidences of the promised reign of righteousness. When President Lincoln issued the emancipation proclamation, joyously the freedmen sang:

\[
\text{It must be now the Kingdom Coming,} \\
\text{And the year of Jubilee.}
\]

\[
\text{It was the "Kingdom Coming." And still that}
\]
kingdom comes; and shall come more and more until
the nation stands complete in righteousness. Christ
is King of nations, as well as King of saints. The
divinely-implanted moral life develops. The nation
grows like a tree; and we take hope and courage
from the assurance that thus its citizens "shall
long enjoy the work of their hands." 1 In this
confidence, I pass on to speak of a still more im-
portant phase of our election contests.

The secret ballot, so called, has been introduced
into a majority of the states; but there is still much
to be done in this direction. I urge all good men
to insist upon the complete secrecy of the ballot to
secure the independence of the voter. It is in evi-
dence that this can be accomplished by the use of what

1. Isaiah lxv.22. This verse (from which the text is taken)
reads thus:

They shall not build and another inhabit;
They shall not plant and another eat;
For as the days of a tree are the days of my people,
And mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

There have been recent denials of the possibility of the fulfil-
ment of this and other similar prophecies respecting the future
of the Israelitish nation. It is said that the promises have come
to naught because the nation ceased to exist centuries ago. Even
pious Christians have been wont to "spiritualize" the predictions,
as if the Kingdom of God did not include the state as well as the
church. The error is the not uncommon one of confounding
the nation with the government or the commonwealth. These
have been overthrown; but the national spirit has never died
out. The national life perdures. Even as I write it is regathering
its materials, which it has kept distinct for so many centuries,
and will from these re-organize the commonwealth. The Czar
is driving out from his domain more Jews than ever dwelt in the
Holy Land. Other nations are likely to follow his example.
Great Britain and the United States are preparing to erect bar-
riers against them. The South American colonies fall. The
Sultan receives them gladly. A hundred thousand of them are
VENAL VOTING.

is known as the Australian ballot. Departures from that form, pretending to be improvements, prove to be devices to destroy its efficiency. But to the Australian ballot it is necessary to add also a Corrupt Practices Act, like that existing in Great Britain. The crying sin of our elections is the purchase and sale of votes. Both the great parties are equally guilty in this respect; to our shame be it said. Statistics upon this subject have been collected in Connecticut; and Connecticut is probably not more venal than New Jersey, or many another sister state. If the proportion of venal votes there exists here and throughout the country, there are more than two million purchaseable votes in the United States! The danger is alarming. The evil is, not only that it may

already in the Land of Canaan; and all their brethren who hold fast faith in the Lord God of their fathers are looking thither with longing eyes. If the increase in population during the past decade continues, the twentieth century will dawn upon a million of Israelites in Palestine. Synagogues, schools of learning, hospitals, and other public institutions are constantly increasing in Jerusalem. The water supply has been improved. Streets have been opened beyond the walls. Telegraph and electric lights have been introduced. Factories have been set up; and the railway between Jerusalem and Jaffa is stimulating activity more and more. Modern inventions and modern methods will presently provide sustenance for a population more numerous than that of the palmiest days of prosperity under Solomon.

The European peoples will not much longer endure taxation to support the immense armaments now deemed necessary for the prevention of war; and the governments are likely in the not distant future to re-establish the Israelitish nation in its ancient seat, (as half a century ago they re-established the Greek nation), in order to preserve the peace of the world.

The inability to discern the signs of the times, with the apparent engerness to discredit the sacred scriptures, evinces a fatuity, on the part of some who claim to be higher critics, that seems like judicial blindness.
thwart the will of the people, but still more that it debases and depraves the people, sinking them lower and lower in the scale of moral being.

Most of you know all this. Many of you wink at it. Men of high position in the church, as well as in the state, contribute money that they know is used in the purchase of votes; and men of lower position in the church, as well as in the state, themselves purchase votes; while those in the lowest positions sell their votes outright. On election day a man of unquestioned integrity in other than political matters, busy at the polls, took from the outside pocket of his overcoat a roll of two dollar bills, and without apparent thought of concealment, turned them over, one by one, in my presence, in such manner that I could not avoid seeing that he had nearly or quite fifty of them, with others of larger denominations.

"They say there is no right or wrong in politics," said a woman to me; "my husband and our neighbor were both engaged to buy votes, and our neighbor claimed money for the purchase of men whom my husband had bought and paid for." And the innocent woman gave me detailed information respecting the bargain and sale of individuals whose names were upon both the lists presented by these men to the Corruption Committee. Grand Jurors perjure themselves by refusing to find indictments for such crimes.

1. Both of these men are communicants in Christian churches. My impression is that neither of them has any sense of sin in the matter.

Another man in this city takes credit to himself for having accepted fifteen dollars for his vote from his own party though the other party offered him twenty dollars this year!
The great evil is this debasement of conscience until people come to believe, really, that there are spheres of thought and action exempted from moral accountability! What, think you, would be the word of the merciful Lord Jesus to those who do these things and teach men so? Would it not be the same that He spoke to such debasers of the public conscience when He was upon earth? "Woe unto you, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves. Ye serpents! Ye offspring of vipers! How can ye escape the damnation of hell!"¹

I beg and entreat every one of you to set your face as a flint against this evil, and to insist upon a detailed Corrupt Practices Act which shall put an end to it. It can be done. It has been done in Great Britain.² It will be done here whenever the honest people of the land determine that it shall be done and throw themselves heartily into God's plan for the protection and development of the moral life of the nation. "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say!"³

The last topic which our chastened President mentions as a cause for thanksgiving to God is that "He has given His grace to the sorrowing."

¹. Mat. xxiii.15,33.
². One of Mr. Gladstone's adherents has just been unseated from parliament because he furnished money for a picnic during the election canvass and another for "treating."
³. 1 Cor. x.15. The decline and disasters in modern communities have generally been relative to their degree of sedition against the Semitic principle. England, notwithstanding her deficient and meagre theology, has always remembered Zion. The great transatlantic republic is intensely Semitic, and has prospered accordingly.—Lord Beaconsfield.
The President speaks from experience. Alas, what honors of earth can fill the place made vacant by death! The mother, the daughter, the sister, the wife is gone! In the presence of such sorrow the nation can but stand with uncovered and bowed head in silent sympathy.

I have left myself no time to speak of the "homes of our people," nor of the fact that by long precedent this day is sacred to family joy. The family is the hope of the state, as well as of the church. And let me exhort you not to forget the homes that have less comfort than ours. Can we not do something to make some other family more happy to-day before we sit down to our own heavily-laden tables?

And now, "Go your way! eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord; neither be ye sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength!" 1 And the blessing wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Joseph, be upon you:

Blessed of the Lord be his land;
For the precious things of heaven, for the dew,
And for the deep that coucheth beneath,
And for the precious things of the fruits of the sun,
And for the precious things of the growth of the moons,
And for the chief things of the ancient mountains,
And for the precious things of the everlasting hills,
And for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof,
And the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. 2

Amen.
