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Christian Education in its Principles.

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A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

In New Orleans, La., May 12th, 1858,

IN BEHALF OF

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

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## S E R M O N .

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“Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”—MATTHEW 28: 19, 20.

THESE are the words of the Great Teacher. They were uttered by him who was truly styled by Nicodemus, “a teacher come from God.” Concerning him also, it was the involuntary testimony of emissaries sent by his enemies to apprehend him, “never man spake like this man.” Accordingly, a serious study of the whole life of our incarnate Lord will inevitably lead to the conclusion that he came into the world *to teach*. To this end we find him, at the age of twelve years, in the temple, sitting among the doctors, “both hearing them and asking them questions,” thus preparing himself to become a teacher of others, and styling this, the being “about his Father’s business.” The prophets, in whose sublime writings Christ is the prominent subject, speak of him as the Counsellor, from whom God’s word and wisdom were to proceed in the form of instructions coming with authority divine. That phrase proper for human prophets commissioned of God, as a preface to their deliverances, “Thus, saith the Lord,” was to be substituted in the precepts of Christ by the emphatic declaration, “Verily, verily, I say unto you.” And his history is the record of the great system which he came to establish. Whether, therefore, by his preaching in the synagogues, when all “wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth;” or, on the Mount, when he opened his mouth and taught the multitude by rectifying the false interpretations and glosses of the Jewish teachers, and presenting the true theory of his own moral code; or, to other multitudes that thronged and pressed upon him in his journeyings, by parables of inimitable beauty and appositeness; or at the well-side, in Sychar, where he sat wearied, and revealed to the sinful Samaritan, not only her sins, but the way of life and salvation; or, in the retired circle of his own immediate family, when he expounded to them more clearly the things of the kingdom; or by the refutation of cavils proposed by the designing

enemies who constantly beset his path; or by the amazing wisdom which confounded those who sought to entrap him by questions into an expression of blasphemy or of disloyalty; or by miracles which, while they manifested forth his glory, and proved his divinity also in their character as redemptive acts, forcibly adumbrated some great doctrine of his Gospel; or when tempted in the wilderness; or when turning his cheek to the smiter, and giving his back to the scourge; or when going like sheep before his shearers, dumb to the slaughter, and instead of blasting with a bolt of holy indignation the murderous rabble on Calvary, praying for his enemies, and meekly bowing his head and giving up the ghost: we may not fail to gather from this view of the life-work and dying agony of Jesus, our master, that he was *a teacher*. True to this great office, he is to be found, during his life, gathering around him multitudes whom he taught, as a vast school, those great truths which entered into the soul, and shed there a light, scattering the natural darkness of the mind, and the clouds of still more palpable gloom engendered by the false teachings of which they were the victims. A clear inspection of his system will present him narrowing his instructions within a circle of *seventy*, whom he qualified and sent forth to be themselves teachers of the erring and the ignorant. And yet again, we find him selecting from the number of his followers, *twelve*, as the favored recipients of the great truths of his Gospel, and daily for three years keeping them in constant attendance upon himself as the members of his own family, and then commissioning them as his representatives to teach all nations. And once more we may detect a still more minute subdivision of this class of twelve, in the favorite three, Peter, James, and John, to whom he imparted lessons, and whom he admitted to privileges of intimacy granted to none others, on the consecrated summit of Tabor, and in the memorable garden of Gethsemane. To have recorded the lessons of wisdom that fell from his lips, or were imparted by his acts, is an acknowledged impossibility; the world itself would not have contained the books that should have been written to set them forth. We only catch glimpses as it were of the Sun of righteousness as it beamed upon the darkness that covered the earth, sufficient to assure us of the exhaustless nature of the Fountain of light. Confirmatory of this truth is the office assigned him in all scriptural systems of theology, as the prophet of his Church. Let it be observed that while the word of God is clear in setting forth that Christ is a priest and a king as well as a prophet, yet it is a very easily demonstrable fact, that these offices are both inseparably interwoven with, and indebted for their vital efficiency to his prophetic office. For while the priestly office of Christ in its execution is the divinely appointed method of accomplishing the only plan of salvation, it is undeniable, not only that the knowledge of God, the knowledge of Christ, the knowledge of ourselves, the great truths of the scheme of redemption, must be taught before

we can receive Christ as a priest ; but also, that the very sacrifice itself, ~~the~~ the most impressive form in which these truths can be taught. For it is beyond all doubt, that when the Son of God was crucified, and offered as a sacrifice for his ransomed Church, he was filling the office of teacher of the great doctrine of the atonement, not only *no less* than by actual precept, but with far more impressive and irresistible energy and power. By the teaching office ~~the~~ men are enlightened in the knowledge of those truths embodied in the sacrifice he offered as the great high priest of our profession. Again, as to his kingly office in its dependencies upon his prophetic office, as the Church of Jesus Christ is the only visible representative of his kingdom, and as this kingdom is spiritual, and includes the solemn ordinances, the holy oracles, and the heaven-appointed ministry, you perceive from the very constitution of this kingdom, that the prophetic or teaching office is of primary importance, and absolutely essential to its establishment and prosperity. For, while he reigns as king in Zion, it is obvious that his ordinances symbolize, his oracles confirm, and his ministers expound and vindicate those truths, which are at once the law of his kingdom, the instruments of its conquests, and the bulwarks of its defence. In his own declaration to Pilate, in reply to the question, "Art thou a king?" while he acknowledges that he claims this office—"thou sayest I am a king"—he also bears his own testimony to the teaching character of his kingly office: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Thus declaring that as a king he reigns over men by enlightening, and efficiently controlling their hearts and affections by the influence of the truth, applied spiritually and not by force. By his teaching office it is then that Christ, as King in Zion, first subdues us to himself, then reigns in and defends and crowns the work by conquering all his and our enemies. It is then a truth, of which we must not lose sight, that Christ Jesus the Lord was the model teacher. His teaching office he makes prominent in all he ever said to men on earth. It stands forth pre-eminent among the offices he fills in his Church. He taught in the temple, in the synagogue, in the desert, on shipboard, on the mountain, by the wayside, in cities and in villages. His example taught when in the wilderness with the tempter, and on the cross with his murderers. He was teaching as he sat at meat ; he was teaching as he journeyed on the highway. He taught by parable, he taught by miracle. He taught when in the Mount of Transfiguration. He taught in the Garden of his agony. He taught on bloody Calvary. In life and in death he was the great teacher, and thus indicates to the Church he bought with his blood, and established as his kingdom on earth, that the teaching office was the peculiar distinctive function she was designed to fulfil.

Nor did his labour of love in communicating instruction to his disciples cease at his death. But having arisen and appeared

among them by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, he continued his favourite occupation of teaching by speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Let us attend then to the confirmation of our position, that teaching is the function of the Church, furnished by the text and the circumstances under which the words were uttered. At a meeting with his disciples, specially called by the Redeemer, he appears on a mountain previously appointed, where he was to have with them his parting interview, and deliver to them his parting counsels. And while some doubted as to the reality of his presence, he begins by the announcement of his universal authority: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." And then by virtue of his authority, he commissions them as ~~the~~ representatives in the great work of teaching: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." With what solemn weight must these words have fallen upon the hearts of the disciples! He had closed his earthly ministry. He had taken leave of the world. He was about to ascend. He was now for the first time about giving to his Church an organized form, and then to take leave of his disciples. When we bring into view the Author of this commission, the circumstances of its delivery, the persons commissioned, the work assigned them, the authority with which they were clothed, and the support pledged to them in the faithful discharge of duty, it is difficult to imagine an interview, the whole circumstances of which carry with them greater impressiveness and weight. Certainly the history of the world furnishes no parallel. A Divine Being in human form, at his last communication with a chosen band, bequeaths to them as his parting gift the mantle of his own beloved office, and sends them forth to disseminate the truths of his Gospel to a world sunken in ignorance and lying in wickedness. He endows them with ample powers for the fulfilment of their mission, and graciously promises them his ever-abiding presence to sustain, comfort, protect, and insure them success. To leave a most impressive seal to this communication, he grants them the privilege of witnessing his ascension to glory. "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight." It is no matter of wonder then that "they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God."

This being a legitimate inference from both the example and the injunction of Christ, there prevails very generally an erroneous conception of the true office of the ministry. The ordinary and accepted sense in which it is held by many is, that it is the sole duty of the preacher to make public proclamation of the truths of the Gospel, and that nothing can be considered as a compliance

with the terms of the great commission, save the pulpit efforts of the minister. True, indeed, the Gospel is to be the sum and substance of all preaching. Its proclamation is to be the great end of the whole system of means and efforts authorized by the word of God. It is, however, carefully to be borne in mind, that public preaching is one among many methods of inculcating Divine truth contemplated by the Bible; and that, throughout the whole, the radical idea is that of Teaching. Whether, therefore, it be in the home-circle, the school-room, by the press, or from the pulpit, *Divine knowledge* is to be conveyed. Whatever may be the name given to the method adopted, whether parental precept, scholastic training, the periodical journal, or the printed volume, or the sacred desk, it is all accomplished, if rightly accomplished, by Teaching. And while Paul declares that "it has pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe," still, to limit this passage to that interpretation which sets forth only the one method adopted in the pulpit, will fall short of its true meaning. A due attention to the context, will remove such an impression. There, the writer seems to be forming an estimate of the influence of the world's wisdom in imparting a saving knowledge of God; and, having decided that "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," because "the world by wisdom knew not God;" therefore he tells us that it pleased God to compass this end by a different sort of wisdom, viz., by the Gospel. It is done by the substance, not by the mere form or manner in which it is imparted. If this, therefore, be the legitimate interpretation of the passage, whatever other method may set forth, the Gospel will accomplish the end, the salvation of the soul. Any other method which, co-operating with preaching and contributing to its efficiency, promotes this end, will be regarded as a part of God's appointed system of instruction, and meet with his approval and blessing. And therefore every means which will contribute to the enlightening of the mind in the true knowledge of God, and leading the soul to salvation, may be adopted by the Church, as an indispensable part of her great function.

It may, indeed, appear that some of the forms of instruction which the Church has adopted, as entitled to her fostering care and her assiduous efforts, are very remotely, if at all, connected with the function of religious teaching. Those who hesitate not to accord to her the right to teach, would nevertheless restrict her operations to the inculcation of religious truth, denying that she should directly control secular education. They therefore charge her with a manifest departure from her true position when she essays to give direction to the intellectual training of the youth of the land. But the advocates of this restrictive system have overlooked certain great principles which underlie the true theory of Education. A little investigation will convince an unprejudiced mind that she is no intruder in claiming the honor of being a party

in Education. Nay more, that she is verily guilty of dereliction of duty, if she fail to put forth every legitimate effort to infuse into the system of education in progress around her, that spirit of Divine knowledge which shall cultivate immortal beings not for time only, but for eternity; not for secular usefulness alone, but for purposes of God's glory here and hereafter. Let us advert to the primary original truths which lie at the basis of this whole subject.

1. Our first principle has its origin in man's nature as an *immortal being*. Time and eternity stand to each other in the relation of the season of preparation and the state of ultimate destiny. Time is but the period during which, and this world the place in which men are to be prepared for eternity,—a state of changeless life. All the training that man is to receive here will have its bearing, not upon the future of time singly or chiefly, but all ought to be conducted with reference to that endless future which lies beyond the grave. And whether all educators bear this in mind, or entirely omit its consideration, it is nevertheless true that the education men receive, be it small or great, salutary or injurious, will mould them for eternity. We should, therefore, not forget that man's abode on earth is not permanent nor final. We should remember, in the school-room as well as in the sanctuary, that he was not created to aspire after earth's glories as his chief end. We are to train him as a being constituted to take his highest bliss not amid the joys of earth. We are evermore to bear in mind that even the good he might do, though it may equal the philanthropy of Howard, is not the final or highest limit of the purpose for which he was placed in this world. He is to be trained under the perpetual influence of the supreme truth, that these are subordinate ends. That while they are no doubt connected to some extent with his life, and while devoting some portion of his existence to pursuits which do no violence to God's claims, even though they, in their immediate results, end in this world, he is acting in obedience to a law of his nature; still the true doctrine has been standing for all time past prominent in God's word, in substance, as it stands at the beginning of our own standards, that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

2. Consider also man as a *moral being*. It is a truth consistent with reason, that no department of his nature may be neglected in his culture. If, therefore, you take in charge the helpless infant, and cultivate its physical powers, and cherish its developments of bodily organs, so as to rear it to the stature of vigorous and graceful manhood, having in the meantime ignored its intellectual powers, you admit that this is not education. Superadd thereto the cultivation of the mind, by affording the most valuable facilities for a finished, liberal, scientific, and literary training, and *this* is not education complete. Such a being, however elegantly and vigorously formed in person, and gracefully polished in manner



and habit, however highly accomplished under the influence of the most exalted intellectual culture, can be regarded at best but an ill-adjusted, improperly balanced combination of powers, some of which have received the most finished nurture, and others have been utterly neglected. For the very teachings of sound reason will convince us that the bestowment of moral powers is presumptive evidence that they were designed to be cultivated. And that position assumed by some, that a mind thoroughly trained in secular knowledge and accomplishments may be safely intrusted with the direction of its own moral education, will be readily shown to be utterly indefensible when brought into contact with another sad truth taught in God's word, that,

3. Man is a *depraved being*. This fact at once refutes the idea that, by the force of intellectual training alone, man may control his moral nature. The testimony of Scripture is, that the imagination of the heart of man is only evil and continually. There is, therefore, not only no disposition in the heart to pursue the path of virtue, but a decided and inveterate tendency in the opposite direction. Now it is certainly obvious to any observer, that with this fatal bias of the moral man to evil, already enstamped upon it, the most natural course into which all the powers of the mind would be directed by an education merely intellectual, would be that which would lead it away from virtue and holiness. The attractions of the world beckoning the young mind glorying in its pride of intellectual culture, operating upon a moral nature predisposed to forget God or to hate a life of holiness, would easily overcome the faint and stifled remonstrances of conscience. Intellectual culture, so far then from being of itself adequate to the great work of directing the moral education, will only the more thoroughly qualify a man for exerting an influence for evil here, and for a dreadful destiny in eternity. Native depravity strengthens the demand for a most earnest and assiduous cultivation of the moral department of man's constitution. It is surely established then, from a consideration of man's immortality, that his education should be conducted not solely with a view to his earthly existence. It follows also, from his moral nature, that this department should receive no less attention than any other. And especially if this moral part be diseased, is it to be insisted upon that all the remedial agency of a proper education be early, vigorously, unceasingly brought to bear upon it.

4. The next principle to be considered respects the proper agent in this educational enterprise. We base the claim which the Church sets up to the control of the work, upon the design of her establishment. *God has made her the sole depositary of the Truth*. Be it known also that this Truth, of which the Church is the divinely appointed guardian, is the highest form of Truth. The professed object of all education is the discovery and mastery of Truth. The authority by which Christ intrusted this precious

charge to his Church, will not be disputed; inasmuch as he pre-faced the commission with the declaration: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." She, then, is rightfully in possession of it. The State has it not in her keeping. Individuals, as such, have never had it intrusted to them. Not only is this true, but they are destitute of the qualifications by which they can control and guard it. They may communicate some truths in science and general knowledge, but thus far they go and no further. They are compelled, from absolute incapacity, to stop short of a complete communication of Truth, which is enshrined within the bosom of God's Church. This is the prerogative therefore of the Church, who alone possesses it as a sacred trust; and, in order that men may be conducted to the attainment of the Truth, it is needful that the Church direct and control preliminary and subordinate Truth.

Again, *Christ has made it the duty of the Church alone to impart this truth.* "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." It is seen, then, that the Church is bound to teach. But it is simply an impossibility to discover such warrant in any part of God's word, for other agency than the Church. *Her* he has clothed with the authority. *Her* he has furnished with the oracles, the ordinances, the ministry. Her whole system is a teaching system. Her ancient oracles, intrusted of old to the Jewish Church, and handed down not only entire and unimpaired, but brilliantly illustrated by the New Testament Scriptures, contain the great revelations which constantly teach all who come within their sphere of influence. Her solemn ordinances teach most impressively our natural pollution, the need of purification, the way of salvation. Her living ministry, intrusted with the keys of discipline, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, is composed of a band of teachers. The word of God, however, will be searched in vain, as a book of constitutions, wherein to discover that any such powers or prerogatives have ever been imparted to the State, or any such injunction has ever been laid upon it. On the Church alone has her Great Head bestowed this honour, and of her He requires the performance of the duty.

And yet, once more, *the training of men for heaven is the high and ultimate end of the Church in her organization on earth.* No other can meet this obligation. She may call in the aid of the family institution; and then only do parents meet the whole demand of duty when they respond fully to this call. She may press into her service every other agency which can be directed to this great end. But all is to be done with strict reference to "the chief end of man." The Church is the asylum for the sinner seeking protection and shelter from the wrath to come. She is the city of refuge wherein he may escape the avenger of blood. But

how is he to reach, or even to know of the existence of this place of refuge, or learn the path leading thereto, save through the teachings bestowed upon him by the agency of the Church. She is also the nursery wherein, by assiduous instruction, men are trained for both time and eternity. Collect this array of truth and look upon it, and answer, how can the Church ever consent to surrender the control of the education of her children, without thereby stultifying the principles of her constitution, and neglecting the injunctions of her Lord and Master? How shall she succeed in meeting the responsibilities of her rank in the scale of God's appointed agencies, without setting herself to the control and direction of this great matter from its earliest to its latest stage? Man is immortal, hence his training must have reference to his eternal state. He is a moral being, hence his soul as well as intellect must be educated. He is depraved, hence this fatal moral taint must be rectified. The instrument by which this is to be effected is the Truth, and the Church alone is intrusted with the charge of this Truth. The solemn obligation has been imposed upon her by her Lord, to impart it to men. And, finally, she alone has it in charge to train men for heaven, the great end of all right training. Now, therefore, if we are asked, what connection there exists between secular and religious knowledge? What peculiar fitness does the Church possess to superintend and control institutions, the avowed purpose of which is to impart the knowledge of literature and science? Why should she not be content to preside in the conduct of theological schools, and in imparting the knowledge of divine things, leaving the control of secular education to the State? Our answer is to be found in the bearing of those truths to which we have adverted on the whole subject. We say to those who would exclude us from a participation in the work of education in all its departments, "We ought to obey God rather than man." Our work has to do with all the various departments of the man, and we are pressed continually by the obligation to look into the fountain heads of the prevalent systems of education, that we may see what is the nature of those waters there welling up. We are bound by considerations of duty, from which we cannot release ourselves, to see to it, that if these waters be the waters of Marah, the leaves of that tree which was for the healing of the nations, be cast in, to the intent that those waters be not noxious, but healthful. And if those fountains give out waters that are naught, amidst land that is barren of all good, we must go and cast in the salt of divine grace, so that the Lord may heal those waters, and that thence no more may come death or barren land. And when into the vessels of mental aliment, set on for our sons and daughters, have been shred the wild gourds of error and infidelity, and the cry comes forth, "There is death!" it is for us to cast in the meal of divine truth—the only antidote—so that there be no harm from such food.

And further, we, as an organization of the Lord Jesus, for the highest purposes, feel bound to interest ourselves in education, not merely to rectify the character of secular knowledge, but to adopt it as a subordinate agency to a nobler form of knowledge. Wherefore, it is the historical fact that the true Church of God has always been free to yield her hearty co-operation in all right efforts to cultivate the mind. Whatever instruments of mental discipline have been tested by the experience of past ages as most efficient, she has always adopted. All true science, all the exhaustless treasures of literature, she incorporates in her systems. And precisely because the intellectual powers when most highly cultivated are best fitted to serve their great Author, does the Church in discharge of her legitimate function claim to participate in the work of training them. The Church is the friend of secular learning as in itself valuable, and as a means of human elevation, of incalculable worth. She is bound to foster sound secular learning, because of its capability of facilitating the acquisition of Divine knowledge. All knowledge that deserves the name is inseparably intertwined with the truths of the Bible and the knowledge of God. If it be true then that the State ought to provide for the instruction of her children in astronomy and physics, so that the knowledge of the useful arts should be widely diffused and her sons be leaders in the fields of discovery, it is equally the province of the Church, since these sciences afford theatres the most inviting and magnificent for the display of God's works of creation and providence. Secular seats of learning are expected to impart the knowledge of ethics, that men may learn the force of moral obligation, but into this field the Church must enter, since moral science can never be authoritatively taught without reference to God's law, its only true basis. And if the metaphysics of the schools be a prominent element of secular education, that man should know the laws of mind, equally vital is it to the Church system, since a knowledge of the constitution of the human soul is indispensable to a knowledge of its perversion and recovery. The science of philology is wisely pursued in the institutions which are independent of Church supervision, because it purifies, elevates, and ennobles the mind, and invigorates every faculty by the wholesome exercise it demands, wherefore the Church fosters this science not only for this good influence, but likewise because it furnishes the only key which can unlock the secrets of the word of God. The schools of the men of the world make in our day a special demand for the cultivation of the infant science of geology, merely because of its utilitarian value. But because the excessive devotion of men of science to its pursuit has been found bearing the adventurous mind like a bark abroad into the unknown boundless sea of speculation, therefore it is that the Church must enter this region also, not to check investigation, but to throw around it the limits set by the word of God.

Secular learning then, all knowledge, has a direct bearing upon the knowledge of God, and of his holy word. And this being the case, the Church is not to be thrust rudely aside as an intruder when she essays to enter the delightful walks of literature and science. In them she claims to have a deep and abiding interest. Let no man deny her the exercise of her inalienable right to cultivate and enjoy them. They all qualify the mind the better to grasp that ultimate Truth of which she is the sole depositary, the knowledge of which she alone can impart. Taking the view thus established, that all science, all learning may be made subservient to truth and holiness, we are not to omit the consideration of the opposite fact, already intimated, *that they may be perverted to purposes of fearful mischief.* It cannot have escaped the notice of any thinking mind that this is the tendency of many schemes of education which have acquired high repute. The culture of mind to the last point of refinement, the advancement of science to the most exalted degree which it is capable, are held up as the main purposes of a modern education. This system ignores "*man's chief end.*" Its mode of training is directed to the attainment of objects whose theatre of operation lies within the limits of this world, making no account of that coming scene wherein man is to act eternally. And what is the result? When this life and its pursuits are arrested by death, the victims of a system so godless are found "quite unfurnished for the world to come." To such educators it rarely occurs that man has moral as well as intellectual faculties. They regard it as highly objectionable, if not absurd, to intermingle the system of religious truth with the regular curriculum of collegiate study. "Teach religion in the family. Teach it from the pulpit. But secular learning must be supreme in the school." It is notoriously true that religious influences, even in the best of our secular seminaries of learning, are tolerated but not encouraged. Man's moral nature is not provided for, but is left to take care of itself, under a false view that a young man's morals must be moulded in other scenes and by other agencies. The melancholy testimony borne by the history of many such institutions, to the insufficiency of this theory, might suffice to lead men to its abandonment, were they not wedded to the system with inveterate infatuation. And since the principle upon which such institutions are conducted dishonours God and his truth, no other result need be anticipated, save that which, alas, too often follows, that from them come forth infidels, or careless, godless, educated minds, spreading often by their precepts, and always by their example, those deadly influences which curse the earth.

The state of the Scottish universities, as represented by Dr. McCosh, so truthfully sets forth a similar state of things in our own country, that we avail ourselves of his testimony. "There is, at the present time," says this eminent man, "no effectual provision for securing that the students are under the care of any pastor, or

indeed under any religious influence whatever." He then goes on to give a picture (for which many students of American colleges might have sat, in its main features), being that of "a youth of fifteen or sixteen who had come up from a country district to attend the classes at Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrew's, or Aberdeen. He has paid his fee to his professor, who gives him excellent instruction in the class, but does not feel that he is called upon to exercise any superintendence over him when he is without the college. Beyond the college walls the student has in fact no one to look after him,—his health, his comforts, his companionship, his morals, his religion." He then states his own college experience. "I was five sessions at Glasgow (I am grateful still for the instruction I received there), and I attended public worship regularly at the College Chapel, or elsewhere; but during all that time I never had private intercourse of any kind with a professor or pastor of any denomination. My case was not singular,—it was that of nearly all my fellow-students who came up from the country districts. The effects which might be expected follow from such a state of things. Every year a number of these students are tempted to turn aside to the paths of vice under some of its seductive forms. From time to time certain of the students introduced to materialism (not by the professors of course) in the Medical classes, or to David Hume and German Pantheism, in the Art-classes, begin to be oppressed with doubts, and in the end cast away their faith. In not a few cases, the two influences combine. Having lost their moral purity, they take refuge in skepticism; or, having lost their faith, they rush into vice, in which their infidelity confirms them. The youth who is under these temptations has no one to whom he can unbosom himself, or who may be ready to enter into his feelings, and to advise or admonish him. It requires no prophet to anticipate the consequences. A set of educated men, and dangerous from their education, are let loose on society, without religious or even moral principles. Fearful effects have followed from the fall of a single youth of promise at college."

Directly in point is the terrible testimony of British India, where, as is well known, the introduction of the Bible into their schools was expressly prohibited, and where the conversion of a native soldier to Christianity was made a penal offence. "Our Christianity," says Dr. Guthrie, "was blinked in India. We pandered to caste there; we made concessions to a false religion and bowed down to priests; and what have we made of it? That system of policy has been by Almighty God condemned in the blood of the best and bravest of this country, and it is high time that the Government of this country, and of every other, had done with a policy that tampers in the smallest degree with the principles of eternal truth."

We may add that the principle is identical whether we "pander to caste" in India, or to corrupt public sentiment in Christendom.

The policy of excluding Christianity from the Government schools in that unhappy country has given to India an educated demon in the person of Nena Sahib, and the result is, that her plains have been deluged in the blood of thousands, not only of her own heathen children, but of those who were "bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh." Nor may we expect a result less disastrous to the best interests of truth in our own Christian land, if we continue to pursue the same suicidal policy in our institutions of learning.

It is a work uncalled for, fathers and brethren, that I should urge upon you the importance of this enterprise. It is matter of deep gratitude to God that our own beloved Church seems to be rousing herself to the great interests of Christian education. It is not, therefore, for any such purpose that one of the humblest of your co-laborers has ventured to set forth on this occasion the principles we adopt. But called by your predecessors in office to plead at your bar the interests of this cause, we would take occasion to reiterate the principles which constitute the basis of our educational operations. We desire to vindicate the position we have taken, in supervising as a Church, the mental and moral training of the children and youth of our land, by an appeal to the eternal and changeless foundation of God's truth, upon which we plant ourselves. It is for us then, my brethren, to say to all who ask us why we claim this high and solemn office to ourselves, that we trace this our claim back by a chain that has never been sundered, though sometimes obscured it may be, to the origin of God's Church—to the patriarchal era. We claim to be the most ancient class of teachers the world has ever known. We claim that the Church in all ages has been intrusted with the guardianship of the interests of education. We find it set up by God as his system, from the time of Abraham, his "servant who commanded his children and household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." We find it under the Mosaic dispensation of the Church, during which the entire tribe of Levi were solemnly set apart to the office of religious teachers. We find the schools of the prophets in the subsequent ages of the Jewish Commonwealth, and the Jewish Synagogue schools, in which the youth were instructed in the law. Then, "in the fulness of time," was ushered in the wonderful epoch of the Great Teacher, who illumined the world with the true light that came down from heaven. We find all the previous authority of the Church reaffirmed and marvellously enlarged by the great commission given to his Apostles to teach all nations. We find the chain still unbroken in the historical fact that in the primitive Church, "schools were set up simultaneously with the regular administration of the ordinance of the Gospel." In God's word we are not without witness of our claim, inasmuch as the sacred writer declares that "God hath set some in the Church, first, Apostles; secondly, Prophets; thirdly, *Teachers*, &c.;" and that among the ascension gifts of our Divine Lord were not only "Apostles, prophets, evangelists,

and pastors," but Teachers as well; and no less is set forth by implication in Paul to the Church at Rome, wherein he recognizes teaching as one of the offices in the Church, on which one class should wait, or attend with diligence, as being second only to the ministry. We trace the system all through the earlier period of the Church. The night of the middle ages only obscures the history with its gloom, but does not break the chain, since even then we find emperors and councils enacting their decrees that human and divine learning should not be separated, that both should be taught in the schools, and that the Church should superintend. And amid all the corruption of the Church, it is a settled point that the learning of the world was in her keeping. Travelling with the good Columba in his pilgrimage to Scotland to preach the word of God, we find his missionary college amid the solemn scenery and rude customs of remote Iona, and "the walls of his chapel," says D'Aubigné, "still exist among the stately ruins of a later age." We find the chain of our succession again burnished at the era of the Reformation, when the Church of God emerged from the night of ages, and brought with her from the slumbering guardianship of the monks, the treasures of learning. Then Luther is found "inseparable from the University of Wittenburg," and then, too, is found Calvin, "the father of popular education, the inventor of the system of free schools," inaugurating and maturing schemes of Christian education, at Geneva, which resulted in the establishment of "a complete educational system, consisting of common schools, a grammar school, a college, and a university." Look, again, at John Knox, the Apostle of the Reformation in Scotland, careful to erect "the school by the side of the Church." The time would fail to tell of the educational schemes of the Reformed Churches of England, and France, and Holland, and Germany, and Prussia, all confirming the position, that the matter of education has ever been considered by the wisest and best of all ages, as inseparable from the work of the Church. Coming to our own continent, we find the Puritans of New England, true to their training, among the earliest of their acts founding Harvard and Yale, that their youth should be trained in "piety, morality, and learning." And what is more to our purpose, we find the fathers of the Presbyterian Church, one hundred and nineteen years ago, establishing, amidst all the disadvantages of their position, with few and feeble country churches, under the frown of the laws, an Academy, at New London, Pennsylvania, which became the nucleus of a college. In this Academy provision was made for uniting religious and secular learning, for the employment of a Christian teacher, and no other, for the gratuitous instruction of the indigent, and all under the care of the Church. Nor in this enumeration can we omit the "Log College," the Alma Mater of the theological giants of those days, and "the germ of venerable old Nassau Hall."

Not to pursue this list further, it remains simply to add, that in



our educational policy we are but moving in the line of march trodden by the Church of all the past. It is no novelty. It is one of the old paths. Too conservative to be driven by the cry of progress into the inauguration of any new system, simply because it is new; too stern in her adherence to the tried and the good, to give up a policy because it is old; too deeply settled upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets to be shaken from her position by agitation, this ancient division of "the sacramental host of God's elect" has fixed it in her great heart as her changeless purpose, to control the education of the rising sons and daughters of this land, just as God shall give to her the opportunity, as he shall open before her a door of entrance, and as he shall lay bountifully to her hand. She will hinder none in their work. She will bid them God speed, even though they walk not with her. She will gladly and joyfully behold the work of Christian education, advancing under whatsoever banner it may be. She will only say to those who challenge her right, "We have a work to do which can be done by none other than ourselves." The State, indeed, is in possession of the pecuniary means. But apart from the established fact that she has never been justly authorized by the great Lord of the Truth, to impart the truth, the fact is not to be disguised, that in public sentiment there exists a rooted and growing aversion to the introduction into the State institutions of that form of decided religious instruction and influence which alone can meet the exigencies of our Church. We, therefore, first of all in obedience to the command of our Lord, then in faithfulness to our children, then in compliance with the loud and increasing calls of our own people, last of all in the purest self-defence, have thrown ourselves into this stupendous enterprise of Christian education.

There are pressing upon the hearts and minds of God's people in this day all the vast and varied interests of his kingdom. This kingdom has been partitioned into several distinct fields of operation, upon the acknowledged principle of a division of labor. This principle is announced by Paul as pervading all the framework of God's Church. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit, and there are differences of administration, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." And in the further discussion of this point he gives us clearly to understand, that God does not mean for all his people to be apostles, or all to be prophets, or all to be teachers, or workers of miracles, or interpreters. Acting upon the theory divinely enunciated to the primitive Christians, our own beloved Church has distributed the great work she is called upon to do into various subdivisions, all tending by diverse methods to the same result, all converging like radii to one centre. She therefore has organized her noble system of benevolence into associations for the promotion of missions both at home and abroad, for the publication of sacred truth in every form for circulation, for the

erection of church buildings, as a means of extending the Redeemer's kingdom abroad, and for the education of the pious poor for the work of the ministry, and for other walks of Christian life and usefulness, embracing also the care and encouragement of schools, academies, and colleges. Here, under these five organizations, she has erected five receptacles for the offerings of the people of God, and thus she has opened five channels through which these offerings may flow as tributary streams, to fill and swell the great river of influence which is to fertilize, and gladden, and renovate the earth. It is true I plead before you the cause of education. But how shall we separate one of these great causes from the rest? Who can touch one of them without awakening the sympathies of all the rest? It is one indissoluble bond of brotherhood by which all are united. And yet, my brethren, I have no fear of being charged with undue partiality in the assertion that this great cause of Christian education is at the basis of all the others. For I speak to a Church whose explicit deliverance in all stages of her progress has ever been, that it is highly reproachful to religion and dangerous to the Church to intrust the holy ministry to weak and ignorant men. She has ever insisted upon the highest mental culture as a necessary co-ordinate qualification, with undoubted piety, as a prerequisite to the office of the ministry. This being so, while there is a natural interdependence among all these great causes of benevolence, not one of them becomes fully operative in the production of its proper and legitimate results, until this has done its work. You call for labourers to work in the vineyard of the Lord in China, or India, or Africa, or the Islands of the Sea, or among the red men of the forest, or amid the ~~wild~~ and desolate ~~lands~~ <sup>wastes</sup> of the home field. And you do well to keep the heart of the Church awake to these pressing demands, and to give her no rest, lest she settle down in the belief that the work is done. The wail of our martyr missionaries from bloody Cawnpore has been wafted over the wide sea to us, and has stirred the great deep of the Church and of the ~~world~~, and the solemn question is, Who shall fill the places of these fallen soldiers in the Lord's army? It is the proper question, and should be pondered deeply by the rising ministry. But when the honoured fiduciaries of the foreign mission cause, in endeavouring to respond to this demand, look earnestly and anxiously around for recruits, it is to the Board of Education and the institutions of learning, and the theological seminaries that they turn most naturally and hopefully their thoughts. To this Board they address the soul-moving appeal: "Come over and help us." The noble Christian literature which is constantly issuing from the press of our Board of Publication is the production of the minds of an educated ministry and laity. And among its authors, unless we are greatly mistaken, are found already some of those who once enjoyed the fostering care of our Board of Education. And while there is a loud demand for the erection of new houses of worship in the destitutions of our Zion, it is

manifest that these houses must be occupied by an educated ministry, perchance sent forth from the Church colleges and seminaries of our land. To plead for these precious causes then is to plead for education; and when we feel, as feel we must, that Foreign and Home Missions, publication and church extension are objects of the most pressing and urgent importance to us as a church, we cannot fail to remember that to meet their just and sacred rights in their highest sense, the cause of education, Christian education, possesses claims to our attention inferior to none other. It would be indeed a short-sighted policy were we to expend all our energies, means, and prayers upon the *present exigencies* of these causes, pressing as they unquestionably are, and thus make no provision for the supply of the labourers in those fields who are to be furnished alone by your scheme of education. Not more irrational would he be who should be pouring drops into the stream whose fountain was exhausted.

But, brethren, we are not of those who can ever think lightly of education. All the principles of our Divine original, all the lessons of our past history, all the monitions of the trials which have beset us, all the voices of our dead fathers, and all the bodings of the future call on us to go forward. The example and the precepts of our Divine Lord, the mission of his Church, as set forth in the great commission to teach all nations, the great cloud of witnesses which encompasses us all along our path, and the manifest need that there is for the Church to guard the mind from false impressions in its plastic period, admonish her evermore to be vigilant, firm, and faithful in the maintenance of a system of Christian education. And we should, as wise men, make timely preparation for the emergencies which are pressing upon us in sure prospect. The encroachment of the enemy in his varied forms can never be met by any successful opposition save the divinely appointed, thoroughly educated ministry. And never was there a time in the history of our world when these invasions were more bold and aggressive. The atheism of other days vanquished in its original form has been revived in the French and German schools, and infidelity, in its varied aspects of pantheism, naturalism, indifferentism, and formalism, has set itself vigorously to work by the agency of godless cultivated minds, to overthrow by plausible sophistry what they dare not attack in undisguised warfare. This is the day, too, of the inroads of Papal corruption. Hoary with age she is making gigantic struggles to compass the ends of her destructive system. All these forms of error, I repeat, can be safely and successfully encountered only by a pious, eloquent, and educated ministry. Let us therefore watch unceasingly the precious interests of this cause through all its stages. In the Christian home let our Christian mothers give the impress of Divine truth to the infant mind, after the example of Lois and Eunice training the infant Timothy. In our Christian schools let the Bible be a prominent text-book. In our Christian colleges let

sacred and secular learning go hand in hand. "We see no reason," says a fine modern writer, "why, as models of beauty, or as exercises of mental culture, the language and literature of Rome or of Athens should be preferred to that of Jerusalem." And what are the utterances which echo to us from the graves of the great dead of our own communion? In the cemetery of Princeton sleep side by side the ashes of seven intellectual giants of a past generation. And as you stand by the tombs of Burr, and Edwards, and Davies, and Witherspoon, and Finley, and Smith, and Green, the dead presidents of Nassau Hall, and the graves of the sainted Alexander and Miller, it needs small effort of fancy to realize their voice of cheering encouragement and earnest exhortation to go on in the great work of Christian education. The lamented Young, Kentucky's gifted son, whose majestic form, noble even in physical ruins, moved feebly yet earnestly among us in the midst of our last Assembly, the renovator of Centre College, the literary and spiritual father of more than two-thirds of the ministry of that great State, speaks even though dead, by his toilsome life, and triumphant death, and "bids you undismayed go on." Yes, fathers and brethren, and by many in the present Assembly, the same voice is heard in these far southwestern vales coming up from the bloody grave of the beloved and martyred Chamberlain. His ashes sleep amid the classic shades of Oakland College, the child of his affections. For her he toiled and for her he prayed, for her he pleaded, for her he wept, and for her he died. And the seed of her present prosperity was the blood of her murdered father. The smile of peace that irradiated the countenance of God's servant, even amid the agonies of a dreadful death, seeming to all as the face of an angel, while it was doubtless the expression of assured welcome to the rest of heaven, we may hail as his testimony to the righteousness of the cause in which he fell a martyr. The voice of his life and of his death, borne upon the bosom of the mighty river, hard by whose roaring surge his ashes sleep, comes to us, his surviving co-laborers, to-day, with the cheering words, Onward, onward, in your glorious enterprise. And let us hear the words of one of our venerated fathers who, for half a century, has presided over one of our most honoured seminaries. I allude to the venerable President of Union College.

"Let us therefore hereafter connect Jerusalem with Athens; intertwine the ivy of Parnassus around the cedar of Lebanon; weave into the wreath of flowerets plucked from the vale of Tempe, the rose of Sharon; and remember at our festivals that among the hills of Palestine there is a hill of tenderer interest and higher hope, than either Ida or Olympus. Yes! let us plant the banner of the Cross upon the temple of science." And as it streams in freeness and beauty from our battlements, let our motto be, "UNDER THIS SIGN WE CONQUER!" It is the symbol of Gracious Omnipotence assuring us of the conquest of the world.