

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

THE BOARDMAN LECTURESHIP
IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS

I

THE GOLDEN RULE

GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN, D.D., LL.D.

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THE BOARDMAN LECTURESHIP IN
CHRISTIAN ETHICS

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HISTORY OF THE FOUNDATION.

On June 6, 1899, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania accepted from the Rev. George Dana Boardman, D. D., LL. D., and wife, a Deed of Gift, providing for a foundation to be known as "The Boardman Lectureship in Christian Ethics," the income of the fund to be expended solely for the purposes of the Trust. After provision for refunding out of the said income, any depreciation which might occur in the capital sum, the remainder is to be expended in procuring the delivery in each year at the University of Pennsylvania, of one or more lectures on Christian Ethics from the standpoint of the life, example and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the publication in book form, of the said lecture or lectures within four months of the completion of their delivery. The volume in which they are printed shall always have in its forefront a printed statement of the history and terms of the Foundation.

On July 6, 1899, a Standing Committee on "The Boardman Lectureship in Christian Ethics" was constituted, to which shall be committed the nominations of the lecturers and the publications of the lectures in accordance with the Trust.

On February 6, 1900, on recommendation of this committee, the Rev. George Dana Boardman, D.D., LL. D., was appointed Lecturer on Christian Ethics on the Boardman Foundation for the current year.

THE BOARDMAN LECTURESHIP IN
CHRISTIAN ETHICS

(FOUNDED ANNO DOMINI 1899.)

THE GOLDEN RULE

INAUGURAL LECTURE
DELIVERED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF
PENNSYLVANIA

November Eighteenth, 1900

BY

GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN, D. D., LL. D. 1837

FOUNDER OF THE LECTURESHIP

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BOARDMAN LECTURESHIP IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

Gratefully appreciating the peculiar honor done me by the Provost and Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania in inviting me to deliver the introductory address in the Lectureship in Christian Ethics, it is appropriate that in this inaugural address I should outline the purpose, the range, and the spirit of this Lectureship, and the qualification for the Lecturer.

I. PURPOSE OF THE LECTURESHIP.—And, first, the Purpose of the Lectureship. This purpose is not to trace the history of the various ethical theories; this is already admirably done in our own noble University. Nor is it the purpose to teach theology, whether natural, Biblical, or ecclesiastical. But the purpose of this Lectureship is to teach *Christian Ethics*; that is to say, the practical application of the precepts and behavior of JESUS CHRIST to everyday life.

And this is the greatest of the sciences. It is a great thing to know astronomy; for it is the science of mighty orbs, stupendous distances, majestic adjustments in time and space. It is a great thing to know biology; for it is the science of living organisms—of starting, growth, health, movements, life itself. It is a great thing to know law; for it is the science of legislation, government, equity, civilization. It is a great thing to know philosophy; for it is the science of men and things. It is a great thing to know theology; for it

is the science of God. But what avails it to know everything in space from atom to star, everything in time from protoplasm to Deity, if we do not know how to manage ourselves amid the complex, delicate, ever-varying duties of daily life? What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world—the world geographical, commercial, political, intellectual, and after all lose his own soul? What can a University give in exchange for a Christlike character? Thus it is that ethics is the science of sciences. Very significant is the motto of our own noble University—“*Literae Sine Moribus Vanæ.*”

And Jesus of Nazareth is the supreme ethical authority. When we come to receive from him our final awards, he will not ask, “What was your theory of atoms? What did you think about evolution? What was your doctrine of atonement? What was your mode of baptism?” But he will ask, “What did you do with Me? Did you accept Me as your personal standard of character? Were you a practical, everyday Christian?” Christian Ethics will be the judgment test.

In sum, the purpose of this Lectureship in Christian Ethics is to build up human character after the model of Jesus Christ’s.

II. RANGE OF THE LECTURESHIP.—Secondly, the Range of the Lectureship. This range should be as wide as human society itself. The following is offered in way of general outline and suggestive hints, each hint being of course but a specific or technical illustration growing out of some vaster underlying Principle.

1. *Man’s Heart-Nature.*—And, first, man’s religious nature. For example: *Christian* (not merely ethical) precepts concerning man’s capacity for religion; worship; com-

munion; divineness; immortality; duty of religious observances; the Beatitudes; in brief, Manliness in Christ.

2. *Man's Mind-Nature*.—Secondly, man's intellect-nature. For example: *Christian* precepts concerning reason; imagination; invention; æsthetics; language, whether spoken, written, sung, builded, painted, chiseled, acted, etc.

3. *Man's Society-Nature*.—Thirdly, man's society-nature. For example:

(a) *Christian* precepts concerning the personal life; for instance: conscientiousness, honesty, truthfulness, charity, chastity, courage, independence, chivalry, patience, altruism, etc.

(b) *Christian* precepts concerning the family life; for instance: marriage; divorce; duties of husbands, wives, parents, children, kindred, servants; place of woman, etc.

(c) *Christian* precepts concerning the business life; for instance: rights of labor; rights of capital; right of pecuniary independence; living within means; life insurance; keeping morally accurate accounts; endorsing; borrowing; prompt liquidation; sacredness of trust-funds, personal and corporate; individual moral responsibility of directors and officers; trust-combinations; strikes; boycotting; limits of speculation; profiting by ambiguities: single tax; nationalization of property, etc.

(d) *Christian* precepts concerning the civic life; for instance: responsibilities of citizenship; elective franchise; obligations of office; class-legislation; legal oaths; custom-house conscience; sumptuary laws; public institutions, whether educational, ameliorative, or reformatory; function of money; standard of money; public credit; civic reforms; caucuses, etc.

(e) *Christian* precepts concerning the international life; for instance: treaties; diplomacy; war; arbitration; disarmament; tariff; reciprocity; mankind, etc.

(f) *Christian* precepts concerning the ecclesiastical life; for instance: sectarianism; comity in mission fields; co-operation; unification of Christendom, etc.

(g) *Christian* precepts concerning the academic life; for instance: literary and scientific ideals; professional standards of morality; function of the press; copyrights; obligations of scholarship, etc.

In sum, *Christian* precepts concerning the tremendous problems of sociology, present and future.

Not that all the lecturers must agree at every point; often there are genuine cases of conscience, or reasonable doubt, in which a good deal can be justly said on both sides. The supreme point is this: Whatever the topic may be, the lecturer must discuss it conscientiously, in light of Christ's own teachings and character; and so awaken the consciences of his listeners, making their moral sense more acute.

4. *Man's Body-Nature*.—Fourthly, man's body-nature. For example: *Christian* precepts concerning environment; heredity; health; cleanliness; temperance; self-control; athletics; public hygiene; tenement-houses; prophylactics; the five senses; treatment of animals, etc.

In sum, the range of topics for this Lectureship in *Christian Ethics* should include whatever tends to society-building, or perfectionation of personal character in Christ. Surely here is material enough, and this without any need of duplication, for centuries to come.

III. SPIRIT OF THE LECTURESHIP.—Thirdly, the Spirit of this Lectureship. Every lecture must be presented from the

standpoint of Jesus Christ. It must be distinctly understood, and the founder of the Lectureship cannot emphasize the point too strongly, that every lecture in these successive courses must be unambiguously Christian; that is, from the viewpoint of the divine Son of Mary. This Lectureship must be something more than a lectureship in moral philosophy, or in church theology; it must be a lectureship in Christian morality, or practical ethics from the standpoint of Christ's own personal character, example, and teachings.

IV. QUALIFICATION OF THE LECTURER.—Fourthly, the Qualification for the lecturer. The founder hopes that the lecturer may often be, perhaps generally, a layman; for instance: a merchant, a banker, a lawyer, a statesman, a physician, a scientist, a professor, an artist, a craftsman; for Christian ethics is a matter of daily practical life rather than of metaphysical theology. The founder cares not what the ecclesiastical connection of the lecturer may be; whether a Baptist or an Episcopalian, a Quaker or a Latinist; for Christian ethics as Christ's behavior is not a matter of ecclesiastical ordination or of sect. The only pivotal condition of the Lectureship in this particular is this: The lecturer himself must be unconditionally loyal to our only King, our Lord Jesus Christ; for Jesus Christ himself is the world's true, everlasting ethics.

Having thus rapidly outlined the purpose, the range, the spirit, and the qualification of this Lectureship in Christian Ethics, let me devote the remainder of this inaugural address to a study of the Golden Rule, venturing to present it as a sort of sample of what this Lectureship ought to be, alike in theme, in scope, and in manner.

THE GOLDEN RULE.

All things therefore whatever ye wish that men should do to you, so do ye also to them; for this is the law and the prophets.—*Matthew 7 : 12.*

It is our King's law of altruism or social equilibrium.

“THEREFORE” THE TELLING WORD.—Is this law to be taken absolutely, in all literalness of strict construction? Let me put the case concretely. Here is an ignoble drone, begging alms; does the Golden Rule require us to do to him as he wants, and so pauper him in his wicked laziness? Or here is a reeling sot, thirsting for another potation; does the Golden Rule require us to gratify his accursed thirst? You see at once that this Rule is not to be taken in absolute literalness. What then does our King mean? Note then that the emphatic, telling word in this command is the illative conjunction “*Therefore,*” thus connecting the Golden Rule with what has immediately gone before:

What man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he shall ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him? All things *therefore* whatever ye wish that men should do to you, so do ye also to them; for this is the law and the prophets.—*Matthew 7 : 9-12.*

It is an appeal to God's fatherhood. It is as though our King had said:

Since God is your Father and treats you as sons, giving you good gifts according as you ask him; *therefore* do ye yourselves have your Father's own spirit, doing to others as he does to you, giving them the good gifts they ask of you, even as he gives you the good gifts you ask of him. Your Father treats you as his sons; *therefore* treat your fellows

as your brothers ; for common fatherhood implies common brotherhood.

Thus this illative conjunction "*therefore*," instead of seeming abrupt or inconsequent, is profoundly connective and morally inevitable, illumining the Golden Rule with a blaze of light. Your heavenly Father gives good gifts to the sons who ask him ; *therefore* whatever you as sons of God—actuated by your Father's spirit, having his sense of right and propriety, feeling his love—would that men should do to you, do ye also to them. In other words, treat your brothers from your Father's viewpoint. Thus treating them, you will neither judge censoriously nor give that which is holy to dogs ; but you will live as God's sons, like him giving good gifts to them that ask you, being merciful even as your heavenly Father is merciful. Thus treating your brothers, even those who are your enemies, you will be children of your Father who is in heaven ; for he causes his sun to rise on evil men and good, and sends his rain on righteous and unrighteous. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. In fact, the Golden Rule is the criterion of character ; our sonhood to God is tested by our brotherhood to man. Our Father who art in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

ORIGINALITY OF THE GOLDEN RULE.—Thus interpreted, the Golden Rule is profoundly original. I am aware indeed that cavillers allege that this Rule was already one of the commonplaces in Jewish and classic literature. Thus Gibbon, speaking of Calvin's persecution of Servetus, says :

A Catholic inquisitor yields the same obedience he requires : but Calvin violated the golden rule of doing as he would be done by, a rule which I read in a moral treatise of

Isocrates (in Nicole, tom. I, p. 93, edit. Battie) four hundred years before the publication of the gospel.—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. LIV, note 36.

But, as Guizot has partly pointed out, Gibbon, notwithstanding his eminent scholarship, makes here a twofold mistake. First, he misquotes Isocrates by representing him as uttering an affirmative maxim, "Do to others as ye would that men should do to you;" whereas the maxim of Isocrates is merely negative, "What would anger you, if done to you by others, that do not to them." Secondly, Gibbon misquotes Jesus himself by overlooking this pivotal word "*therefore*" (that is, in view of Christ's teaching of God's Fatherhood), and so misses the very gist of the Golden Rule. In other words, the maxim of Isocrates appeals to self-love; the maxim of Jesus appeals to God's Fatherhood. Accordingly, Gibbon's sneer is as unscholarly as it is malignant. No, the Golden Rule is in its spirit absolutely original.

EPITOME OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.—And now observe how the Lord of the Kingdom summarizes the Old Covenant in the words which he adds to his Golden Rule: "For this is the law and the prophets." It recalls the fuller statement which he afterward made in answer to the lawyer who imagined he was raising an embarrassing question when he asked the new teacher, saying, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. A second is like it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.—*Matthew 22* : 35-40.

That is to say, the loving your God with all your heart is the being true to God as your Father; and the loving your

neighbor as yourself is the being true to man as your brother. And so it comes to pass that love is indeed the fulfilling of the law, the very bond of perfectness; for God himself is love. If then we would be perfect even as our heavenly Father is perfect, we must be merciful even as our heavenly Father is merciful. And of this perfect love our King himself, God's firstborn among many brothers, is the perfect example. He not only taught the Golden Rule, he also practised the Golden Rule in the divinest of ways: loving his neighbor not only as himself, but even more than himself: laying down his own life in very love for his foes. Verily, he came not to destroy the law, or the prophets: he came to complete them.

THE GOLDEN RULE MANKIND'S COLOSSAL BALANCE.—Thus interpreted, the Golden Rule, what is it but mankind's colossal balance; God's own constellation of *Libra* in the spiritual heavens? And when this colossal balance shall be truly adjusted, then will every man indeed love his neighbor as himself; that is to say, his neighbor will become to him as though he himself were duplicated, his neighbor becoming to him his own other self.

NEED OF AN ALTRUISTIC IMAGINATION.—Let me add that no one can really obey the Golden Rule in its spirit without exercising an altruistic imagination. For why was this Godlike gift bestowed on man? Godlike I say; for even Deity himself—I say it reverently—did not create till he had first imagined; the creating idea or plan preceding the created thing. Faith itself, what is faith but a transfigured imagination? And no man, I repeat, can truly obey the Golden Rule of doing to others as he would have others do to himself until he exercises the otheristic imagination, placing himself

as it were in their position. "Put Yourself in His Place" is the title of one of the novels of the late Charles Reade, written as you remember against certain social wrongs. It is, so to speak, an echo of St. Paul's saying to the Corinthians, "Let no one seek his own, but each his neighbor's good;" and again to the Philippians, "Regarding not each one his own things, but each one also the things of others;" that is to say, Let each of you exercise the otheristic imagination. I have spoken of the Golden Rule as the Golden Balance for corporate mankind, holding the members of the one social body in functional and moral equilibrium. And the justness of the balance will be in proportion to the sensibility of the otheristic imagination. Let me press this point; for it is the very delicacy of it which makes it practically momentous.

SAMPLES OF OTHERISTIC IMAGINATION.—To illustrate: Were we in the habit, when considering our relations and duties to others, of putting ourselves first of all in their respective places, asking ourselves what we would think it right to do were our respective places exchanged, not one of us would for a single moment take personal advantage, for instance, of environment, misfortune, necessity, ignorance, legal ambiguity, verbal quibble, or anything of the kind; not one of us would talk loudly in a hotel corridor at night or tramp over an upper floor, or take up too much room in a church-pew, or talk too long in a prayer-meeting, or keep a friend waiting beyond the time agreed upon, or write a letter of inquiry without enclosing a return-stamp, or chafe a professor with a thoughtless prank, or abash a student with a professorial snub, or keep a borrowed book, or try to escape personal responsibility and trouble by endorsing the appeal of an unknown

ecclesiastical visitor (for even we Protestants have our own mendicant orders of begging friars and little sisters), and benignly getting rid of the unwelcome stranger by speeding him with a letter of recommendation to the Christian brotherhood in general. It is just the absence of these little weights of altruistic consideration—these tiny ounces and drams and scruples and grains of otheristic imagination—which keeps the social balance in perpetual oscillation or unstable equilibrium. Beware then of cherishing a selfish idiosyncrasy, or a personal eccentricity which throws the social forces out of focus. To use a phrase of our scientific friends, add the constant which is needed for personal equation. Here doubtless is one of the reasons why our King in appointing his Seventy sent them forth two and two, in order that the peculiarities of the one might be balanced by the peculiarities of the other, thus preserving the general equilibrium. On the other hand, were we in the habit of cultivating conscientiously as well as affectionately the otheristic imagination, then we would be able to obey the Golden Rule indeed, becoming eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, fathers to the needy, searchers out of the cause of him whom we knew not. Then the scales of society would be in stable and sacred equilibrium, demand and supply balancing each other, even as it is written :

He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack.—*II Corinthians* 8 : 15.

What our poor world needs is not division of spoils, but reciprocity of life ; not compassion, but co-passion ; not pity, but sympathy. Yes, there is something which mankind needs more than law or liberty or comfort or even education ; man-

kind needs the sense of a corporate life, the consciousness of *esprit de corps*. For human society is, so to speak, one vast moral corporation, in which are no limited or silent partners, but in which all mankind have a joint interest, sharing alike or at least reciprocally the profits and losses of our common corporate life. And when mankind shall reach this exalted stage of social equilibrium, then will it fulfil, though in a transfigured sense, the long-ago military order of King David:

As his share is that goes down to the battle, so shall his share be that carries by the baggage; they shall share alike.—*I Samuel 30 : 24.*

THE GOLDEN AGE.—This then is our King's law of altruism, or doctrine of society. As our Father loves us, so we are to love our brothers. The Golden Rule is the golden key to the Golden Age. In that perfected society, that ideal Commonwealth, that Kingdom of God, which will yet most surely come, wherein "all men's good shall be each man's rule," the lowly Nazarene will himself be enthroned in the heart of mankind, his golden sceptre being the Golden Rule.

THE GOLDEN RULE IN SCHOLARSHIP.—Remembering that this Lectureship in Christian Ethics is a University Lectureship, let me proceed to apply the principle of the Golden Rule more particularly to the academic life.

TRUE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION.—First of all, let me remind you of the true purpose of education. Of course, nothing is triter in this connection than to recall the etymology of the word "education." To "educate" is to educe, bring out, draw forth; in short, to make most of a child. All this is hackneyed enough. Vastly more important it is to ask: For

what purpose do we educate or make most of this child? Do we educate him for his own sake, or for the sake of others? To cultivate him as an individuality for his own sake, or as a corporate member of the one social body? To unfold him egoistically, or altruistically? Just here is one of the radical differences between knowledge as mere knowledge, which as such may be only egoistic; and wisdom, which as such is altruistic. For a man may be thoroughly versed in all the lore of the universities—civic, historic, literary, philosophical, scientific, theological—he may know all that has been or can be known about matter, mind, man, nature, things—yet if he has not learned how to use all this magnificent lore, not only for the advantage of himself and family, but also for the advantage of his fellowmen, who with himself constitute corporate mankind—this so-called learned man is only a superficial scholar; he is not a wise man; he is not in the true sense of the word an educated, unfolded man. How many brilliant instances of splendid erudition there are; for example,

Philologists, who chase
 A panting syllable through time and space,
 Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark
 To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark—

COWPER'S *Retirement*—

who after all, in the majestic realm of Christian ethics, are no wiser than poor idiots!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—For mere intelligence will not secure us the heavenly immortality. Satan is intelligent; in fact, intelligence is probably his strongest point; nevertheless he is still Satan, his name in Hebrew being Abaddon; in Greek, Apollyon; in English, Destroyer. Knowledge did

not save Chaldea or Egypt or Greece or Rome. Something more than knowledge is needed in order to be truly wise; it is personal religion, or the knowledge which knows how to use knowledge wisely; that is, in the long run celestially. What avails it your boy, about to enter his profession, that he embarks in a ship however gallant, and knows every part of her from keel to pennant, and is supplied with every chart, and understands every rule of navigation—what avails all this if after all he has no peaceful haven to make at the end of his voyage, because untrained in the art of calculating his moral longitude from the divine meridian of the Nazarene? After all, it is the Bible which is the keystone of our national prosperity. Say what you will, it is the Church—not, of course, the church as a human organization, whether Baptist or Episcopal or Methodist or Presbyterian—but the Church as the aggregate of Christly characters, whatever the denomination, which is the real secret of American greatness. Education and Christianity, the School and the Church, facts and truths, knowledge and wisdom, these are the two colossal piers of the Divine Mediator's bridge across the river of Time. Here after all is the secret of redeeming your gamins, your waifs, your "delinquent children." Listen to Charles Dickens:

Hang me all the thieves in Gibbet street to-morrow, and the place will be crammed with fresh tenants in a week. But catch me up the young thieves from the gutter and the doorsteps; take Jonathan Wild from the breast; send Mrs. Shepard to Bridewell: but take the hale young Jack out of her arms; give him some soap instead of whipping him for stealing a cake of Brown Windsor; teach him the Gospel instead of sending him to the treadmill for haunting chapels and purloining prayer-books out of the pews; put him in the way of filling shop tills instead of transporting him when he crawls on his hands and knees to empty them: let him know

that he has a body made for something better than to be kicked, bruised, chained, pinched with hunger, or clad in prison-gray; let him know that he has a soul to be saved: in God's name, take care of the children, somebody; and there will soon be an oldest inhabitant in Gibbet street, and never a new one to succeed him.—DICKENS' *Household Words*.

“KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.”—But, be it ever borne in mind, that education brings with it grave responsibility; and the fuller the education, the graver the responsibility. For, as Francis Bacon was wont to say, “Knowledge is power.” For example: Who, in the last analysis, administers our governments? Not the politicians whom we elect in this or that passing campaign; but the scholars who framed our majestic Constitution itself; politicians come, and, thank God, go; but the Constitution—the real power behind the throne—stays. Who, in the last analysis, are the real managers of your great corporations—your railway companies and manufacturing syndicates and colossal mechanical enterprises? Not so much the men who sit as the board of directors as the scholars whom these directors employ—the trained men who understand the laws of nature and mechanics and engineering. Who really guides your mighty steamers across the trackless seas? Not the captain on land, but the scholar on deck, who had prepared the Nautical Almanac. Yes, “Knowledge is Power.”

KNOWLEDGE TEMPTS INTO EGOISM.—And just because knowledge is power, the sense of knowledge tempts us into a sense of personal superiority. The first temptation in human annals was a temptation into the pride of knowledge:

The serpent said to the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God knows that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God (gods), knowing good and evil.—*Genesis* 3 : 4, 5.

It was an adroit appeal to one of the noblest instincts of mankind—the thirst of knowledge. It is in an eminent sense the characteristic temptation of these modern times. Satan still tempts us to become as wise as God. He still tempts us to renew the Jewish outlawry during the period of the Judges: “In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Satan still tempts us to say with the king of Babylon: “I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will be like the Most High.” Self-worship is that awful and final form of blasphemy which the apostle Paul describes when he speaks of the revelation of the man of sin, that son of perdition who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshiped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Let us take care lest, being puffed up, we also fall into the condemnation of the Devil.

“KNOWLEDGE PUFFETH UP.”—For, alas, it is as true in our day as it was in St. Paul’s that “knowledge puffeth up.” Not that the apostle denounces knowledge as knowledge; for the capacity for knowledge is perhaps man’s highest capacity; and Christianity is ever the friend of what is highest; and what can be higher than to know God, and him whom God has sent, even Jesus Christ? And St. Paul himself was a shining example of this divinest science. No, the knowledge which this apostolic scholar denounces was that peculiar kind of professional knowledge of sacred mysteries on which the false teachers of his day were beginning to pride themselves—a kind of religiously aristocratic science already specified as “gnosis” or “gnosticism;” as when this

same Apostle Paul later on wrote to his dear son in the Gospel :

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called ; which some professing have erred concerning the faith.—*I Timothy* 6 : 20, 21.

Or more literally :

O Timothy, guard the deposit, turning away from the profane vain discussions and antitheses of the pseudonymed gnosis ; which some professing have erred concerning the faith.

And this kind of knowledge or falsely called science does puff up. For when knowledge takes the guise of gnosticism or alleged mastery of celestial arcana, it not only becomes selfishly aristocratic ; it also becomes intensely egoistic and vaporous. What can be more airy and empty than an ancient gnostic, unless, indeed, it be a modern agnostic ? As Banquo said of the vanishing witches of the heath :

The earth hath bubbles as the water has,
And these are of them : whither are they vanish'd ?

And Macbeth replied :

Into the air, and what seem'd corporal melted
As breath into the wind.—*Macbeth*, I. 3.

The capacity for distention is an admirable thing when used for purposes of pulmonary inflation, ærial navigation, or even juvenile bubble-blowing ; but it becomes a distressingly bad thing when it takes the form of moral levitation, religious tumefaction, or spiritual flatulence. The zephyr is delicious, even the gale is sometimes invigorating ; but it

is intolerable to live in the cave of Æolus, everlastingly whirled about by wind and whirlwind.

And what is true of the pride of gnosticism, or to use the modern term, theosophy, is also true of the pride of secular knowledge. There is something in the very sense of being erudite or intellectual that somehow tempts into airy self-conceit and mental puffiness. The very sense of superior mental attainment is apt to separate the scholar from the people, not by the upbuilding force of moral growth, but by the inflating force of moral emptiness. There is, for example, the egoism of pedantry, or erudition on a perennial tour of self-exhibition. Again, there is the egoism of occultation—mysterious, sapient, portentously oracling in mystic cabalas, cryptograms, runes; or, if I may draw an expression from astronomy, hiding in the circle of perpetual occultation. Again, there is the egoism of culture for culture's own sake; whether as in the mediæval scholasticism—acute, quibbling, self-centered, but as useless as the undertaking

“To distinguish and divide
A hair 'twixt south and southwest side;”

or as in the modern dilettantism—aristocratic, dainty, supercilious; indulging in a choice delicacy too refined for the vulgar taste, and therefore, like the speech of Hamlet's first player, a “caviare to the general.” Once more, there is the egoism of knowledge for the sake of the personal profits knowledge may bring; like the false prophets of old, “judging for reward, teaching for hire, divining for money.” Recall the sad case of Balaam of Mesopotamia. Taking into account the age in which he lived, Balaam was in an eminent sense a gifted man. Keen in insight, sublime in range, poetic

in expression—Balaam was pre-eminently a son of genius. Nevertheless, Balaam was at the same time pre-eminently an unprincipled man, “following the rewards of divination, loving the wages of wrong-doing, running after hire.” But why do I go back to the mercenary priests and teachers of antiquity? Alas, how many modern scholars there are who stand ready to sell their scholarship and talents for gold! Most lamentable of all, there are even in my own sacred profession a few who stand ready to adjust their creeds to passing popular caprices :

What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
 About two hundred pounds a year.
 And that which was prov'd true before
 Prove false again? Two hundred more.

—BUTLER'S *Hudibras*.

Let Francis Bacon sum up for us this whole matter of selfish knowledge or egoistic education :

The greatest error of all is the mistaking or misplacing of the last or furthest end of knowledge. For men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most times for lucre and false profession (alas, Bacon himself, “The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind,” did not heed his own warning); and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men; as if there were sought in knowledge a couch, whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace, for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state, for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground, for strife and contention; or a shop, for profit or sale; and not a rich storehouse, for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate.—*Works of Francis Bacon, Vol. VI, page 134.*

“LOVE BUILDETH UP.”—And now remember that although St. Paul asserts that “knowledge puffs up,” he immediately adds that “love builds up.” And love or Christian altruism is the greatest of builders; for educated Christian character is the greatest of structures. Christian scholarship is the layman’s university. Who founded the great universities of Christendom? Who founded the University of Oxford? Harvard College? Yale College? Princeton College? University of Pennsylvania? Brown University? Williams College? Vassar College? Wellesley College? Bryn Mawr College? Christian men and women. Who were the school committees in that glorious New England which has shaped the noble school system of America? Christian clergymen. Who are trying to uplift the humbler classes in our cities today? Christian men and women. And who are the men, let me ask, who in these latter days affect to sneer at Christianity as an ignorant and effete superstition but the very men whose chief title to distinction in some cases is that their diplomas come from the very institutions whose fundamental principles they stupidly deride? God pity the miserable ingrates!

Yes, I love this word “build.” I think that the craft of making things—whether in the realm of matter or in the realm of spirit—is the noblest of crafts. And love, I repeat, is the sublimest of builders. For while egoistic knowledge expands by distention and ends in collapse, altruistic knowledge expands by construction and ends in edifice. Knowledge as mere knowledge is apt to swell into a balloon; love is sure to grow into a minster. Satan’s *amour propre* rears Towers of Babel; Jesus’ Golden Rule rears the Temple of God. Ah, here is the real office of knowledge; it is to be

the servant of love. The true science, the genuine art—oh, that everybody understood and believed it!—is to know how to build. Here is the acme of human genius; here is the culmination of human majesty. As Coleridge sings:

'Tis the sublime of man,
 Our noontide majesty, to know ourselves
 Parts and proportions of one wondrous whole.
 This fraternizes man, this constitutes
 Our charities and bearings.

—COLERIDGE'S *Religious Musings*.

May God be pleased to accept this Lectureship in Christian Ethics, and bless it to the weal of the University of Pennsylvania and the upbuilding of mankind!

ed

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