
✓ EVERETT'S ADDRESS
BEFORE THE
PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY
IN YALE COLLEGE.

1833

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY

IN YALE COLLEGE,

NEW HAVEN, AUGUST 20, 1833.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

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ADDRESS.

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

It has given me peculiar satisfaction to obey your call, and appear before you on this occasion. I take a sincere pleasure, as an affectionate and dutiful child of Harvard, and as an humble member of the branch of our fraternity, which is there established, in presenting myself, within the precincts of this ancient and distinguished seminary, for the discharge of the agreeable duty, which you have assigned me. I rejoice in the confidence, which your invitation implies, that I know neither sect nor party, in the Republic of Letters; and that I enter your halls, with as much assurance of a kind reception, as I would those of my own revered and ever gracious Alma Mater. This confidence does me no more than justice. Ardently and gratefully attached to the institution, in which I received my education, I could in no way so effectually prove myself its degenerate child, as by harboring the slightest feeling of jealousy, at the expanded and growing reputation of this its distinguished rival. In no way could I so surely prove myself a tardy scholar of the School, in which I have been brought up, as by refusing to rejoice in the prosperity and usefulness of every sister institution, devoted to the same good cause; and especially of this the most eminent and efficient of her associates.

There are recollections of former times, well calculated to form a bond of good feeling between our Universities. We cannot forget that, in the early days of Harvard, when its existence almost depended on the precarious contributions of its friends,—contributions not of munificent affluence, but of pious poverty,—not poured into the academic coffers, in splended dotations, but spared from the scanty means of an infant and destitute country, and presented in their primitive form, a bushel of wheat, a cord of wood, and a string of Indian beads,—(this last, not a little to the annoyance of good old President Dunster, who, as the records of the Commissioners of the United Colonies tell us, was sorely perplexed, in sifting out from the mass of the genuine quahog and periwinkle, bits of blue glass and colored stones, feloniously intermixed, without the least respect for the purity of the

Colony's wampum),* we cannot forget that, in that day of small things, the contributions of Connecticut and New Haven,—as the two infant colonies were distinguished,—flowed as liberally to the support of Cambridge, as those of Plymouth and Massachusetts. Still less would I forget, that, of the three first generations of the Fathers of Connecticut, those, who were educated in America, received their education at Cambridge; that the four first Presidents of Yale were graduates of Harvard; and that of all your distinguished men in church and state for nearly a hundred years, a goodly proportion were fitted for usefulness in life within her venerable walls. If the success of the child be the joy of the parent, and the honor of the pupil be the crown of the master, with what honest satisfaction may not our Institutions reflect, that, in this early and critical state of the country's growth, when the direction taken and the character impressed were decisive of interminable consequences, they stood to each other in this interesting relation. And while we claim the right of boasting of your character and institutions, as in some degree the fruit of a good old Massachusetts' influence, we hope you will not have cause to feel ashamed of the auspices, under which, to a certain extent, the foundation of those institutions was laid and their early progress encouraged.

In choosing a topic, on which to address you this morning, I should feel a greater embarrassment than I do, did I not suppose, that your thoughts, like my own, would flow naturally into such a channel of reflection, as may be presumed at all times to be habitual and familiar with men of liberal education or patriotic feeling. The great utility of occasions like this and of the addresses they elicit is not to impart stores of information laboriously collected,—not to broach new systems, requiring carefully weighed arguments for their defence, or a multitude of well arranged facts for their illustration. We meet, at these literary festivals, to promote kind feeling; to impart new strength to good purposes; to enkindle and animate the spirit of improvement, in ourselves and others. We leave our closets, our offices, and our studies, to meet and salute each other in these pleasant paths; to prevent the diverging walks of life from wholly estranging those from each other, who were kind friends at its outset; to pay our homage to the venerated fathers, who honor with their presence

* Hazard's State papers, Vol. II. p. 124.

the return of these Academic festivals ; and those of us, alas, who are no longer young, to make acquaintance with the ardent and ingenuous, who are following after us. The preparation for an occasion like this is in the heart not in the head ; it is in the attachments formed and the feelings inspired, in the bright morning of life. Our preparation is in the classic atmosphere of the place, in the tranquillity of the academic grove, in the unoffending peace of the occasion, in the open countenance of long parted associates joyous at meeting, and in the kind and indulgent smile of the favoring throng, which bestows its animating attendance on these our humble academic exercises.

When I look around upon the assembled audience, and reflect, from how many different places of abode throughout our country the professional part of it is gathered, and in what a variety of pursuits and duties, it is there occupied ; and when I consider that this our literary festival is also honored with the presence of many from every other class of the community, all of whom have yet a common interest, in one subject at least, I feel as if the topic, on which I am to ask your attention were imperatively suggested to me. It is the nature and efficacy of Education, as the great human instrument of improving the condition of man.

Education has been, at some former periods, exclusively, and more or less, at all former periods, the training of a learned class ; the mode, in which men of letters or the members of the professions acquired that lore, which enabled them to insulate themselves from the community, and gave them the monopoly of rendering the services in church and state, which the wants or imaginations of men made necessary, and of the honors and rewards, which, by the political constitution of society, attached to their discharge.

I admit, that there was something generous and liberal in education ; something popular, and, if I may so express it, republican, in the educated class ;—even at the darkest period. Learning, even in its most futile and scholastic forms, was still an affair of the mind. It was not like hereditary rank, mere physical accident : it was not like military power, mere physical force. It gave an intellectual influence, derived from intellectual superiority, and it enabled some minds, even in the darkest ages of European history, to rise from obscurity and poverty, to be the lights and guides of mankind. Such was Beda, the great luminary of a dark period, a poor and studious monk, who, without birth or fortune, became the great teacher of

science and letters to the age, in which he lived. Such, still more eminently, was his illustrious pupil Alcuin, who by the simple force of mental energy, employed in intellectual pursuits, raised himself from the cloister to be the teacher, companion, and friend of Charlemagne; and to whom it has been said, that France is indebted, for all the polite literature of his own and the succeeding ages.* Such, at a later period, was another poor monk, Roger Bacon, the precursor, and, for the state of the times in which he lived, scarcely the inferior, of his namesake, the immortal Chancellor.

But a few brilliant exceptions do not affect the general character of the education of former ages. It was a thing apart from the condition, the calling, the service, and the participation of the great mass of men. It was the training of a privileged class; and was far too exclusively the instrument, by which one of the favored orders of society was enabled to exercise a tyrannical and exclusive control over the millions, which lay wrapt in ignorance and superstition. It is the great glory of the happy age, in which we live, that learning, once the instrument of this bondage, has become the instrument of reform; that instead of an educated class, we have made some good approach to an educated community. That intellectual culture, which gave to a few the means of maintaining an ascendancy over the fears and weaknesses of their age, has now become the medium of a grand and universal mental equality, and, humanly speaking, the great concern of man. It has become the school of all the arts, the preparation for all the pursuits, the favorite occupation of leisure, the ornament of every age, office, vocation, and sex. In a word education is now the preparation of a very considerable portion of the mass of mankind for the duties, which in the present state of the world devolve upon them.

This single reflection shews, that education, in this country particularly, is a word of more comprehensive and deeper import than in any other. The mass of the people here perform a different office from that, which they have ever performed before. Whether this be for good or for evil is a question which may be harmlessly debated,

* "*Ei quicquid politoris literaturæ isto et sequentibus sæculis Gallia ostentat totum acceptum referri debet. Ei Academiæ Parisiensis, Turonensis, Fuldensis, Suessionensis, aliæque plures originem et incrementa debent, quibus ille, si non præsens præfuit, aut fundamenta posuit, saltem doctrina præluxit, exemplo præivit, et beneficiis a Carolo impretratis adauxit.*"—*Cave, Hist. Lit. Sæc. vii. An. 780, cited in the life of Alcuin, in the Biographia Britannica.*

between the friends and vilifiers of the country ; but the fact, I suppose will not be disputed. It would be foreign from the purposes of this address, and superfluous in the presence of this audience, to enumerate the duties to be performed by the people, under a political constitution like ours. This topic is familiar to us all. I now only allude to it, as suggesting the corresponding scope of education, as it must be understood and applied.

Let us then dwell for a moment, on what is to be effected by education, considered in its ultimate objects and most comprehensive sense, in which, of course, is included, as the most important element, the sound and enlightened influence of deep religious principle, to be cherished and applied, through the institutions existing for that sacred purpose.

A great work is to be done. What is it, in its general outline and first principles?

To answer this question, we must remember, that of the generation now on the stage, by which the business of the country, public and private, is carried on, not an individual, speaking in general terms, will be in a state of efficient activity, and very few in existence, thirty years hence. Not merely those, by whom the government is administered and the public service performed, in its various civil and military departments, will have passed away ; but all who are doing the great, multifarious, never-ending work of social life, from the highest teacher of spiritual wisdom and the profoundest expositor of the law, to the humblest artisan, will have ceased to exist. The work is to go on ; the government is to be administered, laws are to be enacted and executed, peace preserved or war levied, the will of the people to be expressed by their suffrages, and the vast system of the industrious action of a great people, in all their thousand occupations, by sea and land, to be kept up and extended ; but those now employed in all this great work are to cease from it and others are to take their places.

Like most of the great phenomena of life ;—miracles, if I may so say, of daily occurrence ;—this vast change, this surcease of a whole generation, with the duties that flow from it, loses, from its familiarity, almost all power of affecting the imagination. The political revolution, which subverts one crowned family, which prostrates a king to elevate an emperor, and cements his throne with the blood of some hundreds, perhaps thousands, of the wretched victims of his ambition, is the wonder of the age ; the perpetual theme of discourse ;

the standing topic of admiration. But this great revolution, which prostrates not one man, nor one family, in a single nation ; but every man, in every family, throughout the world ; which bids an entire new congregation of men to start into existence and action ; which fills with new incumbents, not one blood-stained seat of royalty, but every post of active duty, and every retreat of private life ; this new creation steals on us silently and gradually, like all the primordial operations of Providence, and must be made the topic of express disquisition, before its extent and magnitude are estimated, and the practical duties to be deduced from it are understood.

Such a revolution, however, is impending,—as decisive, as comprehensive, as real, as if, instead of being the gradual work of thirty years, it were to be accomplished in a day or an hour : and so much the more momentous, for the gradual nature of the process. Were the change to be effected at once, were this generation swept off and another brought forward, by one great act of creative energy, it would concern us only as speculative philanthropists, what might be the character of our successors. Whether we transmitted them a heritage honored or impaired ; or whether they succeeded to it well trained to preserve and increase, or ready to waste it, would import nothing to our interests or feelings. But by the law of our nature, the generations of men are most closely interlaced with each other, and the decline of one and the accession of the other are gradual. One survives and the other anticipates its activity. Thus while, in the decline of life we are permitted to reap on the one hand, while we live, a rich reward for all that we have attempted patriotically and honestly, in public or private, for the good of our fellow men ; on the other hand, retribution rarely fails to overtake us, as individuals or communities, for the neglect of public duties, or the violation of the social trust.

We still have judgment here ; that we but teach
 Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
 To plague the inventor : this even handed justice
 Commends the ingredients of the poisoned chalice
 To our own lips.

By this law of our natures, the places which we fill in the world are to be taken from us ; we are to be dispossessed of our share in the honors and emoluments of life ; driven from our resorts of business and pleasure ; ousted from our tenements ; ejected from our estates ; banished from the soil we called our own, and interdicted

fire and water in our native land ; and those, who ward off this destiny the longest, after holding on a little while with a convulsive grasp, making a few more efforts, exposing their thin grey hairs in another campaign or two, will gladly, of their own accord, before a great while, claim to be exempts in the service.

But this revolution connects itself with the constitution of our nature, and suggests the great principles of education, as the duty and calling of man ; and why ? *Because* it is *not* the work of violent hands ; because it *is* the law of our being. It is not an outraged populace, rising in their wrath and fury to throw off the burden of centuries of oppression. Nor is it an inundation of strange barbarians, issuing nation after nation, from some remote and inexhaustible *officina gentium*, lashed forward to the work of destruction, by the chosen scourges of God ; although these *are* the means, by which, when corruption has attained a height, beyond the reach of ordinary influences, a preparation for a great and radical revolution is made. But the revolution of which I speak, and which furnishes the principles of the great duty of education,—all comprehensive and unsparing as it is,—is to be effected, by a gentle race of beings, just stepping over the threshold of childhood ; many of them hardly crept into existence. They are to be found within the limits of our own country, of our own community, beneath our own roofs, clinging about our necks. Father, he whom you folded in your arms and carried in your bosom, whom, with unutterable anxiety, you watched through the perilous years of childhood, whom you have brought down to college, this very commencement, and are dismissing from beneath your paternal guard, with tearful eyes and an aching heart, it is he, who is destined, (if your ardent prayers are heard), to outthunder you at the forum and in the Senate House. Fond mother, the future rival of your not yet fading charms, the *matre pulcrâ filia pulcrrior*, is the rose bud, which is beginning to open and blush by your side. Destined to supersede us in all we hold dear, they are the objects of our tenderest cares. Soon to outnumber us, we spare no pains to protect and rear them ; and the strongest instinct of our hearts urges us, by every device and appliance, to bring forward those, who are to fill our places, possess our fortunes, wear our honors, snatch the laurel from our heads, the words from our lips, the truncheon of command from our hands, and at last gently crowd us, worn out and useless, from the scene.

I have dwelt on this connection of nature and affection between the generations of men, because it is the foundation of the high Philosophy of education. It places the duty of imparting it upon the broad eternal basis of natural love. It is manifest that, in the provident constitution of an intellectual order of beings, the trust of preparing each generation of which it was to consist, for the performance of its part on the great stage of life, was all-important, all-essential: too vitally so to be put in charge, with any but the most intimate principles of our being. It has accordingly been interwoven with the strongest and purest passions of the heart. Maternal fondness; a father's thoughtful care; the unreasoning instincts of the family circle; the partialities, the prejudices of blood are all made to operate as efficient principles, by which the risen generation is urged to take care of its successor: and when the subject is pursued to its last analysis, we find that education in its most comprehensive form, the general training and preparation of our successors, is the great errand, which we have to execute in the world. We either assume it as our primary business, or depute it to others, because we think they will better perform it, while we are engaged in occupations subsidiary to this. Much of the practical and professional part we direct ourselves. We come back to it as a relaxation or a solace. We labor to provide the means of supplying it to those we love. We retrench in our pleasures, that we may abound in this duty. It animates our toils, dignifies our selfishness, makes our parsimony generous, furnishes the theme for the efforts of the greatest minds; and directly or indirectly fills up our lives.

In a word then, we have before us, as the work to be done by this generation, to train up that which is to succeed us.

This is a work of boundless compass, difficulty, and interest. Considered as brethren of the human family, it looks, of course, to the education of all mankind. If we confine ourselves to our duty, as American citizens, the task is momentous, almost beyond the power of description. Though the view, which I would at this time take of the subject, does not confine itself to the fortunes of a single nation, I will dwell upon it, for a moment, exclusively in relation to this country. I will suppose, that our union is to remain unbroken for another generation; a supposition, which I trust I may safely make; and if this should be the case, it is no violent presumption to suppose, that, in all respects, the country will continue to advance, with a rapidity, equal to that, which has marked its progress, for the

last thirty years. On this supposition, the close of another generation, will see our population swelled to above thirty millions; all our public establishments increased, in the same ratio; four or five new states added to the union; towns and villages scattered over regions, now lying in the unbroken solitude of nature; roads cut across pathless mountains; rivers, now unexplored, alive with steamboats; and all those parts of the country, which at this time are partially settled, crowded with a much denser population, with all its attendant structures, establishments, and institutions. In other words, besides replacing the present numbers, a new nation, more than fifteen millions strong, will exist within the United States. The wealth of the country will increase still more rapidly; and all the springs of social life, which capital moves, will of course increase in power; and a much more intense condition of existence will be the result.

It is for this state of things, that the present generation is to educate and train its successors; and on the care and skill, with which their education is conducted, on the liberality, magnanimity, and single-heartedness, with which we go about this great work,—each in his proper sphere and according to his opportunities and vocation,—will, of course, depend the honor and success, with which those who come after us, will perform their parts, on the great stage of life.

This reflection of itself would produce a deep impression of the importance of the great work of education, to be performed by the present generation of men. But we must farther take into consideration, in order to the perfect understanding of the subject, the quality of that principle, which is to receive, and of that which is to impart, the education; that is, of the *mind of this age* acting upon the *mind of the next*; both Natures indefinitely expansive, in their capacities of action and apprehension; natures, whose powers have never been defined; whose depths have never been sounded; whose orbit can be measured alone, by that superior intelligence, which has assigned its limits, if limits it have. When we consider this, we gain a vastly extended and elevated notion of the duty, which is to be performed. It is nothing less than to put in action the entire mental power of the present day, in its utmost stretch, consistent with happiness and virtue, and so as to develope and form the utmost amount of capacity, intelligence, and usefulness, of intellectual and moral power and happiness, in that which is to follow. We are not merely to transmit the world as we receive it; to teach, in a stationary repetition, the arts which we have received; as the dove

builds this year just such a nest, as was built by the dove, that went out from the ark, when the waters had abated ; but we are to apply the innumerable discoveries, inventions, and improvements, which have been successively made in the world, and never more than of late years, and combine, and elaborate them into one grand system of increased instrumentality, condensed energy, invigorated agency, and quickened vitality, in forming and bringing forward our successors.

These considerations naturally suggest the enquiry, how much can be done, by a proper exertion of our powers and capacities, to improve the condition of our successors? Is there reason to hope, that any great advances can be made ; that any considerable stride can be taken, by the moral and intellectual agency of this age, as exerted in influencing the character of the next?

I know of no way to deal practically with this great problem, but to ask more particularly what is effected, in the *ordinary* course of intellectual action and reaction. What is the average amount of the phenomena of education, in their final result, which the inspection of society presents to us? How much is effected so frequently and certainly, as to authorize a safe inference, as what may be done, in the ordinary progress of the mind, and conjectures as to its possible strides, bounds, and flights?

We can make this enquiry on no other assumed basis, but that of the natural average equality of all men, as rational and improvable beings. I do not mean that every individual is created, with a physical and intellectual constitution capable of attaining, with the same opportunities, the same degree of improvement. I cannot assert that, nor would I willingly undertake to disprove it. I leave it aside ; and suppose that, on an average, men are born with equal capacities. What then do we behold, as regards the difference resulting from education and training? Let us take examples, in the two extremes. On the one hand, we have the New Zealand savage ; but little better, in appearance, than the Ourang Outang, his fellow tenant of the woods, which afford much the same shelter to both ; almost destitute of arts, except that of horribly disfiguring the features, by the painful and disgusting process of tatooing, and that of preparing a rude war club, with which he destroys his fellow savage of the neighboring tribe ; his natural enemy while he lives ; his food, if he can conquer or kidnap him ; laying up no store of provision, but one, which I scarce dare describe,—which consists in plunging a stick into the

water, where it is soon eaten to honey comb by the worms, which abound in tropical climates, and which then taken out furnishes in these worms a supply of their most favorite food to these forlorn children of nature.—Such is this creature from youth to age, from father to son,—a savage, a cannibal, a brute ;—a human being, a fellow-man, a rational and immortal soul ; carrying about under that squalid loathsome exterior,—hidden under those brutal manners, and vices disgusting at once and abominable, a portion of the intellectual principle, which likens man to his maker.—This is one specimen of humanity ; how shall we bring another into immediate contrast with it? How better, than by contemplating what may be witnessed on board the vessel, which carries the enlightened European or American to these dark and dreary corners of the Earth? You there behold a majestic vessel, bounding over the billows from the other side of the globe ; easily fashioned to float, in safety, over the bottomless sea ; to spread out her broad wings, and catch the midnight breeze, guided by a single drowsy sailor at the helm, with two or three companions reclining listlessly on the deck, gazing into the depths of the starry heavens. The commander of this vessel, not surpassing thousands of his brethren in intelligence and skill, knows how, by pointing his glass at the heavens, and taking an observation of the stars, and turning over the leaves of his “Practical Navigator,” and making a few figures on his slate, to tell the spot, which his vessel has reached on the trackless sea :—and he can also tell it, by means of a steel spring and a few brass wheels, put together in the shape of a chronometer. The glass with which he brings the heavens down to the earth, and by which he measures the twenty one thousand six hundredth part of their circuit, is made of a quantity of flint, sand, and alkali,—coarse opaque substances, which he has melted together into the beautiful medium, which excludes the air and the rain and admits the light,—by means of which he can count the orders of animated nature in a dew-drop, and measure the depth of the vallies in the moon. He has, running up and down his mainmast, an iron chain, fabricated at home, by a wonderful succession of mechanical contrivances, out of a rock brought from deep caverns in the earth, and which has the power of conducting the lightning, harmlessly down the sides of the vessel, into the deep. He does not creep timidly along from headland to headland, nor guide his course across a narrow sea, by the north star ; but he launches bravely on the pathless and bottomless deep, and carries about with him in a box a faith-

ful little pilot, who watches when the eye of man droops with fatigue, a small and patient steersman, whom darkness does not blind, nor the storm drive from his post, and who points from the other side of the globe,—through the convex earth,—to the steady pole. If he falls in with a pirate, he does not wait to repel him, hand to hand; but he puts into a mighty engine a handful of dark powder, into which he has condensed an immense quantity of elastic air, and which, when it is touched by a spark of fire, will instantly expand into its original volume, and drive an artificial thunderbolt before it, against the distant enemy. When he meets another similar vessel on the sea, homeward bound from a like excursion to his own, he makes a few black marks, on a piece of paper, and sends it home, a distance of ten thousand miles; and thereby speaks to his employer, to his family, and his friends,—as distinctly and significantly, as if they were seated by his side. At the cost of half the labor, with which the savage procures himself the skin of a wild beast, to cover his nakedness, this child of civilized life has provided himself with the most substantial, curious, and convenient clothing,—textures and tissues of wool, cotton, linen, and silk,—the contributions of the four quarters of the globe, and of every kingdom of nature.—To fill a vacant hour, or dispel a gathering cloud from his spirits, he has curious instruments of music, which speak another language of new and strange significance to his heart;—which make his veins thrill and his eyes overflow with tears, without the utterance of a word,—and with one sweet succession of harmonious sounds, send his heart back, over the waste of waters, to the distant home, where his wife and his children are gathered around the fireside, trembling at the thought, that the storm, which beats upon the windows, may perhaps overtake their beloved voyager on the distant seas. And in his cabin, he has a library of volumes,—the strange production of a machine of almost magical powers,—which, as he turns over their leaves, enable him to converse with the great and good of every clime and age, and which, even repeat to him, in audible notes, the Laws of his God and the promises of his Savior, and point out to him that happy land, which he hopes to reach, when his flag is struck and his sails are furled, and the voyage of life is over.

The imaginations of those, whom I have the honor to address, will be able to heighten this contrast, by a hundred traits on either side, for which I have not time; but even as I have presented it, will it be deemed extravagant, if I say, that there is a greater difference

between the educated child of civilized life and the New Zealand savage, than between the New Zealand savage and the Ourang Outang?—And yet the New Zealander was born a rational being, like the civilized European and American; and the civilized European and American entered life, like the New Zealander, a helpless wailing babe.

This then is the difference made by Education;—made by Education. I do not mean that if a school were set up in New Zealand, you could convert the rising generation of savage children, in eight or ten years, into a civilized, well-educated, orderly society. I will not undertake to say, what could be done with an individual of that race, taken at birth and brought to a Christian country, and there reared, under the most favorable circumstances; nor do I know into what sort of a being one of our children would grow up,—supposing it could survive the experiment,—were it taken from the nurse's arms, and put in charge to a tribe of New Zealanders. But it is, upon the whole, Education, in the most comprehensive sense, which makes the vast difference, which I have endeavored to illustrate, and which actually, in the case of a civilized person, transforms his intellect from what it is at birth, into what it becomes in the mature, educated, consummate man.

These reflections teach us what education ordinarily accomplishes. They illustrate its power, as measured by its effects. Let us now make a single remark, on its prodigious efficacy, measured by the shortness of the time, within which it produces its wonders. When we contemplate the vast amount of the arts useful and mechanical, elegant and literary;—the sciences pure and mixed, and of the knowledge practical and speculative belonging to them;—a portion of which,—sometimes a very large portion,—is within the command of every well educated person, the wonder we should naturally feel may be a little abated by the consideration, that this is the accumulated product of several thousand years of study,—the fruits of which have been recorded, or transmitted by tradition, from age to age. But when we reflect again upon the subject, we find, that though this knowledge has been for four or five thousand years, in the process of accumulation, and consists of the condensed contributions of great and gifted minds, or of the mass of average intellect, transmitted from race to race, since the dawn of letters and arts in Phenicia and Egypt, it is nevertheless mastered by each individual, if at all, in the compass of a few years. It is in the world, but it is not inherited

by any one. Men are born rich, but not learned. The La Place of this generation did not come into life, with the knowledge possessed and recorded by the Newtons, the Keplers, and the Pythagorases of other days.—It is doubtful whether at three years old, he could count much beyond ten ;—and if at six, he was acquainted with any other cycloidal curves, than those generated by the trundling of his hoop, he was a prodigy indeed.—But by the time he was twenty one, he had mastered all the discoveries of all the philosophers who preceded him, and was prepared to build upon them the splendid superstructure of his own.—In like manner, the whole race of men, who thirty years hence are to be the active members of society, and some of them its guides and leaders, its Mansfields and Burkes, its Ellsworths, Marshalls, and Websters,—the entire educated and intelligent population, which will have prepared itself with the knowledge requisite for carrying on the business of life is, at this moment, enacting the part of

the whining school-boy with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school :—

our future Ciceros are mewling infants ; and our Arkwrights and Fultons, who are hereafter to unfold to our children new properties of matter ;—new forces of the elements ;—new applications of the mechanical powers, which may change the condition of things, are now, under the tuition of a careful nurse, with the safeguard of a pair of leading strings, attempting the perilous experiment of putting one foot before the other.—Yes, the ashes, that now moulder in yonder grave-yard, the sole remains on earth of what was Whitney,—are not more unconscious of the stretch of the mighty mind, which they once enclosed ;—than the infant understandings of those now springing into life, who are destined to follow in the luminous track of his genius, to new and still more brilliant results, in the service of man.

When we consider, in this way, how much is effected by education, in how short a time, for the individual and the community, and thence deduce some not inadequate conception of its prodigious efficiency and power, we are led irresistibly to another reflection, upon its true nature.—We feel that it cannot be so much an act of the teacher as an act of the pupil.—It is not that the master, possessing this knowledge, has poured it out of his own mind into that of the learner ;—but the learner, by the native power of apprehension, judi-

ciously trained and wisely disciplined, beholds, comprehends, and appropriates, what is set before him, in form and order; and not only so, but with the first quickenings of the intellect, commences himself the creative and inventive processes. There is not the least doubt, that the active mind, judiciously trained, in reality sometimes invents for itself, not a little of that, which,—being already previously known and recorded,—is regarded as a part of the existing stock of knowledge.—From this principle also, we are led to an easy explanation of those curious appearances of simultaneous discoveries, in art and science, of which literary history records many examples;—such as the rival pretensions of Newton and Leibnitz,—of Arkwright and Hargraves,—of Priestley and Lavoisier,—of Bell and Lancaster,—of Young and Champollion, which shew, that at any given period, especially in a state of society, favorable to the rapid diffusion of knowledge, the laws of the human mind are so sure and regular, that it is not an uncommon thing for different persons, in different countries, to fall into the same train of reflection and thought, and to come to results and discoveries which,—injuriously limiting the creative powers of the intellect,—we are ready to ascribe to imitation or plagiarism.

It is indeed true, that one of the great secrets of the power of Education, in its application to large numbers, is that it is a mutual work. Man has three teachers,—the school-master,—himself,—his neighbor. The instructions of the two first commence together; and long after the functions of the school-master have been discharged, the duties of the two last go on together; and what they effect is vastly more important than the work of the teacher, if estimated by the amount of knowledge self-acquired or caught by the collision or sympathy of other minds, compared with that which is directly imparted by the schoolmaster, in the morning of life. In fact what we learn at school and in college is but the foundation of the great work of self instruction and mutual instruction, with which the real education of life begins, when what is commonly called the Education is finished. The daily intercourse of cultivated minds,—the emulous exertions of the fellow votaries of knowledge,—controversy,—the inspiring sympathy of a curious and intelligent public, are all powerful in putting each individual intellect to the stretch of its capacity. A hint,—a proposition,—an enquiry, proceeding from one mind, awakens new trains of thought, in a kindred mind, surveying the subject from other points of view, and with other habits and resources

of illustration ;—and thus truth is constantly multiplied and propagated, by the mutual action and reaction of the thousands engaged in its pursuit. Hence the phenomena of Periclæan, Augustan, and Medicean ages, and golden eras of improvement ;—and hence the education of each individual mind instead of being merely the addition of one, to the well instructed and well informed members of the community, is the introduction of another member into the great family of intellects, each of which is a point not merely bright but radiant, and competent to throw off the beams of light and truth in every direction. Mechanical forces, from the moment they are put in action, by the laws of matter, grow fainter and fainter, till they are exhausted.—With each new application, something of their intensity is consumed. It can only be kept up by a continued or repeated resort to the source of power. Could Archimedes have found his place to stand upon, and a lever with which he could heave the earth from its orbit, the utmost he could have effected would have been to make it fall a dead weight into the sun. Not so the intellectual energy. If wisely exerted, its exercise instead of exhausting increases its strength ; and not only this, but as it moves onward from mind to mind, it awakens each to the same sympathetic self-propagating action. The circle spreads in every direction. Diversity of language does not check the progress of the great instructor, for he speaks in other tongues, and gathers new powers from the response of other schools of civilization. The pathless ocean does not impede, it accelerates his progress. Space imposes no barrier, time no period to his efforts ; and ages on ages, after the poor clay, in which the creative intellect was enshrined, has mouldered back to its kindred dust, the truths, which it has unfolded,—moral or intellectual,—are holding on their pathway of light and glory, awakening other minds to the same heavenly career.

But it is more than time to apply these principles to the condition of the world, as it now exists, and to enquire what hope there is,—in the operation of this mighty engine,—of a great and beneficial progress in the work of civilization.

We certainly live in an enlightened age ; one in which civilization has reached a high point of advancement and extension, in this and several other countries. There are several nations, besides our own, where the Christian religion, civil government, the usual branches of industry, the diffusion of knowledge, useful and ornamental, and of the fine arts, have done and are doing great things for the happiness

of man. But when we look a little more nearly, it must be confessed that with all that has been done in this cause, the work, which still remains to be accomplished, is very great. The population of the globe is assumed,—in the more moderate estimates, to be seven hundred millions. Of these, two hundred and fifty millions are set down for America and Europe, and the residue for Asia and Africa. Two hundred and fifty millions again are assumed to be Christians;—and of the residue three fourths are pagans. There is certainly a considerable diversity of condition among the various Asiatic and African,—who are also the unchristianized races,—as there is also among the European and American, who belong to the family of civilization and Christianity. But upon the whole, it must be admitted, that about two thirds of mankind are without the pale of civilization, as we understand it; and of these a large majority are pagan savages or the slaves of the most odious and oppressive despotisms. The Chinese and the Hindoos,—who make up two thirds of this division of mankind,—contain, within their vast masses, perhaps the most favorable specimens of this portion of the human family;—and if we turn from them to the Turks, the Tartars, the Persians,—the native races of the interior of Africa,—the wretched tribes on the Coast, or the degraded population of Australia or Polynesia, we shall find but little, (except in the recent successful attempts at civilization), on which the eye of the Philanthropist can rest with satisfaction. Almost all is dark, cheerless, and wretched.

Nor when we look into what is called the civilized portion of the globe, is the prospect as much improved, as we could wish. The broad mantle of civilization, like that of charity, covers a great deal, which, separately viewed, could claim no title to the name. Not to speak of the native tribes of America, or the nomadic races of the Russian empire, how vast and perilous is the inequality of mental condition among the members of the civilized States of the earth. Contemplate the peasantry of the greater part of the North of Europe, attached as property to the soil on which they were born. The same class in the Austrian dominions, in Spain, in Portugal, in Italy,—if not held in precisely the same state of political disability,—are probably, to a very slight degree, more improved in their mental condition. In the middle and western States of Europe,—France, Holland, Germany, and Great Britain, although the laboring population is certainly in a more elevated and happier state, than in the countries just named; yet how little opportunity for mental improve-

ment do even they possess ! We know that they pass their lives in labors of the most unremitted character, from which they derive nothing but the means of a most scanty support ; constantly relapsing into want, at the slightest reverse of fortune, or on the occurrence of the first severe casualty.

Then consider the character of a large portion of the population of the great cities of all countries,—London, St. Petersburg, Vienna ; where the extremes of human condition stand in painful juxtaposition ;—and by the side of some specimens of all that adorns and exalts humanity,—the glory of our species,—we find a large mass of the population profoundly ignorant and miserably poor, and no small part of it sunk to the depths of want and vice. It is painful to reflect, in this age of refinement, how near the two opposite conditions of our nature may be brought, without the least communication of a direct genial influence, from one to the other. If any thing were necessary, beyond the slightest inspection of obvious facts, to shew the artificial structure of the society in which we live, and the need of some great and generous process of renovation, it would be the reflection, that, if a man wished to explore the very abyss of human degradation,—to find how low one could get in the scale of nature, without going beneath the human race,—if he wished to find every want, every pang, every vice, which can unite to convert a human being into a suffering loathsome brute,—he would not have to wander to the cannibal tribes of Australia already described, or to the dens of the bushmen of the Cape of Good Hope. He would need only to take a ten steps' walk from Westminster Abbey, or strike off a half a quarter of a mile, in almost any direction, from the very focus of all that is elegant and refined,—the pride and happiness of life,—in London or Paris.

The painful impressions produced by these melancholy truths, are increased by the consideration, that in some parts of the region of civilization, the cause of the mind has seemed to go backward. Who can think of the former condition of the coasts of the Mediterranean, and not feel a momentary anxiety for the fortunes of the race ? In ancient times, the shores of the Mediterranean, all around, were civilized after the type of that day, flourishing, and happy. In this favored region, the human mind was developed, in many of its faculties, to an extent, and with a beauty, never surpassed, and scarcely ever equalled. Greece was the metropolis of this great intellectual republic ; and through her letters and her arts, extended the domain

of civilization to Asia Minor and Syria, to Egypt and Africa, to Italy and Sicily, and even to Gallia and Iberia. What a state of the world it was, when all around this wide circuit, whithersoever the traveller directed his steps, he found cities filled with the beautiful creations of the architect and the sculptor; marble temples in the grandest dimensions and finest proportions; statues whose miserable and mutilated fragments are the models of modern art. Where-soever he sojourned, he found the schools of philosophy crowded with disciples, and heard the theatres ringing with the inspirations of the Attic muse, and the forum thronged by orators of consummate skill and classic renown. We are too apt, in forming our notions of the extent of Grecian civilization, to confine our thoughts to one or two renowned cities,—to Athens alone. But not only all Greece, but all the islands, Sicily and Magna Græcia, round all their coasts, the Ionian shore, the remote interior of Asia Minor and Syria even to the Euphrates, the entire course of the Nile up to its cataracts, and Libya far into the desert, were filled with populous and cultivated cities. Places, whose names can scarcely be traced, but in an index of ancient geography, abounded in all the stores of art, and all the resources of instruction, in the time of Cicero. He makes one of the chief speakers in *the Orator* say, “At the present day, all Asia imitates Meneclæ of Alabanda and his brother.” Who was Meneclæ, and where was Alabanda? Cicero himself studied not only under Philo the Athenian, but Milo the Rhodian, Menippus of Stratonice, Dionysius of Magnesia, Æschylus of Cnidus, and Xenocles of Adramyttium. These were the masters,—the schools of Cicero! Forgotten names, perished cities, abodes of art and eloquence, of which the memory is scarcely preserved!*

What then is the hope, that much can be effected in the promotion of the great object of the improvement of man, by the instrumentality of Education, as we have described it. And here, I am willing to own myself an enthusiast, and all I ask is that men will have the courage to follow the light of general principles, and patience for great effects to flow from mighty causes. If, after establishing the great truths of the prodigious power of the principles, by which the Education of the world is to be achieved, men suffer themselves to be perplexed, by apparent exceptions;—and especially, if they will insist upon beginning, carrying on and completing themselves every

* North American Review, vol. xxxiv. page 13.

thing, which they propose or conceive for human improvement ;— forgetful that humanity, religion, national character, literature, and the influence of the arts ;—are great concerns,—spreading out over a lapse of ages, and infinite in their perfectibility ; then indeed the experience of one short life can teach nothing but despair.

But if we will do justice to the power of the great principles, which I have attempted to develope, that are at work for the Education of man,—if we will study the causes, which in other times have retarded his progress,—which seem in some large portions of the globe to doom him even now to hopeless barbarity,—and if we will duly reflect, that what seems to be a retrograde step in the march of civilization, is sometimes, (and most memorably in the downfall of the Roman Empire,) the peculiar instrumentality, with which a still more comprehensive work of Reform is carried on, we shall have ample reason to conceive the brightest hopes for the progress of our race ; for the introduction within the pale of civilization of its benighted regions and the effective regeneration of all. We have now in our possession, three instruments of civilization unknown to antiquity, of power separately to work almost any miracle of improvement, and the united force of which is adequate to the achievement of any thing not morally and physically impossible. These are the art of printing,—a sort of mechanical magic for the diffusion of knowledge ;—free representative Government,—a perpetual regulator and equalizer of human condition, the inequalities of which are the great scourge of society ;—and lastly a pure and spiritual religion,—the deep fountain of generous enthusiasm,—the mighty spring of bold and lofty designs,—the great sanctuary of moral power. The want of one or all of these satisfactorily explains the vicissitudes of the ancient civilization ; and the possession of them all as satisfactorily assures the permanence of that, which has been for some centuries and is now going on, and warrants the success of the great work of educating the world.—Does any one suppose, that if knowledge among the Greeks, instead of being confined to the large cities and in them to a few professional sophists and rich slaveholders, had pervaded the entire population in that and the neighboring countries, as it is made to do in modern times by the press ;—if instead of their anomalous, ill-balanced, tumultuary republics and petty military tyrannies, they had been united, in a well digested system of representative government or even constitutional monarchy,—they and the states around them, Persia, Macedonia, and Rome ;—

and if, to all these principles of political stability, they had, instead of their corrupting and degrading superstitions, been blessed with the light of a pure and spiritual faith;—does any one suppose that Greece and Ionia, under circumstances like these, would have relapsed into barbarism? Impossible.—The Phenicians invented letters, but what did they do with them? Apply them to the record, the diffusion, transmission, and preservation of knowledge?—Unhappily for them, that was the acquisition of a far subsequent period. The wonderful invention of alphabetical writing,—after all perhaps the most wonderful of human inventions,—was probably applied by its authors to no other purpose, than to carve the name of a king on his rude statue, or perhaps to record some simple catalogue of titles, on the walls of a temple. So it was with the Egyptians, whose hieroglyphics have recently been discovered to be an alphabetical character; but, which were far too cumbrous to be employed for an extensive and popular diffusion of knowledge, and which, with all the wisdom of their inventors, are not certainly known to have been applied to the composition of books. It was the freer use of this flexible instrument of knowledge, which gave to Greece her eminence,—which created so many of the objects of her national pride; and redeemed the memory of her distinguished sons from that forgetfulness, which has thrown its vast pall over the great and brave men and noble deeds of the mighty but unlettered states of antiquity. No one thinks that the powerful and prosperous nations, which flourished for two thousand years, on the Nile and the Euphrates, were destitute of heroes, patriots, and statesmen. But, for want of a popular literature, their merits and fame did not, at the time, incorporate themselves with the popular character; and now that they are no more, their memory lies crushed with their ashes beneath their mausoleums and pyramids. The mighty cities they built, the seats of their power, are as desolate as the cities they wasted. The races of men, whom they ruled and arrayed in battle, bound in an iron servitude,—degraded by mean superstitions,—sunk before the first invader,—and now the very languages, on whose breath their glory was wafted from the Atlas to the Indus, are lost and forgotten, because they were never impressed on the undying page of a written literature.

The more diffusive and popular nature of the Grecian literature, was evidently the cause of the preservation of the national spirit of the Greeks, and with it of their political existence. Greece, it is true, fell, and with it the civilization of the ancient world. In this,

it may seem to present us rather an illustration of the inefficiency than of the power of the preservative principle of letters. But let us bear in mind, in the first place, that greatly as the Greeks excelled the eastern nations in the diffusion of knowledge, they yet fell infinitely below the modern world, furnished as it is with the all-efficacious art of printing. Still more, let us recollect, that if Greece, in her fall, affords an example of the insufficiency of the ancient civilization, her long, glorious, and never wholly unsuccessful struggles, and her recent recovery from barbarism, furnish the most pleasing proof, that there is a life-spring of immortality in the combined influence of letters, freedom, and religion. Greece indeed fell. But how did she fall? Did she fall like Babylon? Did she fall "like Lucifer, never to hope again?" Or did she not rather go down, like that brighter luminary, of which Lucifer is but the herald?

So sinks the day star in the ocean's bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and, with new spangled ore,
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.

What, but the ever-living power of literature and religion, preserved the light of civilization and the intellectual stores of the past, unextinguished in Greece, during the long and dreary ages of the decline and downfall of the Roman empire? What preserved these sterile provinces and petty islets from sinking, beyond redemption, in the gulf of barbarity in which Cyrene, and Egypt, and Syria, were swallowed up? It was Christianity and letters, retreating to their fastnesses on mountain tops and in secluded vallies,—the heights of Athos, the peaks of Meteora, the caverns of Arcadia, the secluded cells of Patmos. Here, while all else in the world seemed swept away, by one general flood of barbarism, civil discord, and military oppression, the Greek monks of the dark ages preserved and transcribed their Homers, their Platos, and their Plutarchs. There never was, strictly speaking, a dark age in Greece. Eustathius wrote his admirable commentaries on Homer, in the middle of the twelfth century. That surely, if ever, was the midnight of the mind; but it was clear and serene day, in his learned cell; and Italy, proud already of her Dante, her Boccaccio, and Petrarch,—her Medicean patronage and her reviving arts,—did not think it beneath her to sit at the feet of the poor fugitives from the final downfall of Constantinople.

What, but the same causes, enforced by the power of the press, and by the sympathy with Greece which pervaded the educated

community of the modern world, has accomplished the political restoration of that country? Thirteen years ago, it lay under a hopeless despotism. Its native inhabitants, as such, was marked out for oppression and plunder,—tolerated in their religion for the sake of the exactions, of which it furnished the occasion,—shut out from the hopes and honors of social life,—agriculture, and all the visible and tangible means of acquisition, discountenanced,—commerce, instead of lifting her honored front, like an ocean queen, as she does here, creeping furtively from islet to islet and concealing her precarious gains,—the seas infested with pirates and the land with robbers,—the population exhibiting a strange mixture of the virtues of the bandit and the vices of the slave, but possessing, in generous transmission from better days, the elements of a free and enlightened community. Such was Greece thirteen years ago, and the prospect of throwing off the Turkish yoke, in every respect but this last, was as wild and chimerical, as the effort to throw off the Cordilleras from this continent. In all respects but one, it would have been as reasonable to expect to raise a harvest of grain from the barren rock of Hydra, as to found a free and prosperous state, in this abject Turkish province. But the standard of liberty was raised, on the soil of Greece, by the young men who returned from the universities of western Europe, and the civilized world was electrified at the tidings. It was the birth-place of the arts,—the cradle of letters. Reasons of state held back the governments of Europe and of America from an interference in their favor, but intellectual sympathy, religious and moral feeling, and the public opinion of the age, rose in their might, and swept all the barriers of state logic away. They were feeble, unarmed, without organization, distracted by feuds; an adamant wall of neutrality on the west; an incensed barbarian empire,—horde after horde,—from the confines of Anatolia to the cataracts of the Nile,—pouring down upon them, on the east. Their armies and their navies were a mockery of military power, their resources calculated to inspire rather commiseration than fear. But their spirits were sustained, and their wearied hands upheld, by the benedictions and the succors of the friends of freedom. The memory of their great men of old went before them to battle, and scattered dismay in the ranks of the barbarous foe, as he moved, like Satan in hell, with uneasy steps, over the burning soil of freedom. The sympathy of all considerate and humane persons was enlisted in behalf of the posterity, however degenerate, of those, who had taught let-

ters and humanity to the world. Men could not bear, with patience, that Christian people, striking for liberty, should be trampled down by barbarian infidels, on the soil of Attica and Sparta. The public opinion of the world was enlisted on their side,—and Liberty herself, personified, seemed touched with compassion, as she heard the cry of her venerated parent, the guardian genius of Greece. She hastened to realize the holy legend of the Roman daughter, and send back from her pure bosom the tide of life to the wasting form of her parent :—

The milk of his own gift;—it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood,
Born with her birth;—no, he shall not expire.

Greece did not expire. The sons of Greece caught new life from desperation; the plague of the Turkish arms was stayed; till the governments followed, where the people had led the way, and the war, which was sustained by the literary and religious sympathies of the friends of art and science, was brought to a triumphant close, by the armies and navies of Europe :—and there they now stand, the first great re-conquest of modern civilization.

Many, I doubt not, who hear me, have had the pleasure, within a few weeks, of receiving a Greek oration, pronounced in the temple of Theseus, on the reception at Athens of the first official act of the young Christian prince, under whom the government of this interesting country is organized. What contemplations does it not awaken, to behold a youthful Bavarian prince, deputed by the great powers of Europe, to go, with the guaranties of letters, religion, and the arts, to the city of Minerva, which had reached the summit of human civilization, ages before Bavaria had emerged from the depths of the Black Forest! One can almost imagine the shades of the great of other days, the patriots and warriors, the philosophers and poets, the historians and orators, rising from their renowned graves, to greet the herald of their country's restoration. One can almost fancy that the sacred dust of the Ceramicus must kindle into life as he draws near; that the sides of Delphi and Parnassus, and the banks of the Ilissus, must swarm with the returning spirits of ancient times. Yes! Marathon and Thermopylæ are moved to meet him at his coming.—Martyrs of liberty, names that shall never die,—Solon and Pericles, Socrates and Phocion, not now with their cups of hemlock in their hands, but with the deep lines of their living cares effaced from their serene brows,—at the head of that glorious company of poets, sages,

artists and heroes, which the world has never equalled, descend the famous road from the Acropolis to the sea, to bid the Deliverer welcome to the land of glory and the arts. "Remember," they cry, "Oh, Prince! the land thou art set to rule; it is the soil of freedom. Remember the great and wise of old, in whose place thou art called to stand,—the fathers of liberty; remember the precious blood which has wet these sacred fields; pity the bleeding remnants of what was once so grand and fair; respect these time-worn and venerable ruins; raise up the fallen columns of these beautiful fanes, and consecrate them to the Heavenly Wisdom; restore the banished muses to their native seat; be the happy instrument, in the hand of Heaven, of enthroning letters, and liberty, and religion, on the summits of our ancient hills; and pay back the debt of the civilized world, to reviving, regenerated Greece. So shall the blessing of those ready to perish come upon thee, and ages after the vulgar train of conquerors and princes is forgotten, thou shalt be remembered, as the youthful Restorer of Greece!"

This is a most important step in the extension of civilization; what is to hinder its farther rapid progress, I own, I do not perceive. On the contrary, it seems to me, that political causes are in operation, destined at no very distant period, to throw open the whole domain of ancient improvement to the great modern instruments of national education,—the press, free government, and the Christian faith. The Ottoman power, a government which till lately has shewn itself hostile to all improvement, is already dislodged from its main positions in Europe, and will no doubt before long be removed from that which it still retains. The Turk, who four centuries ago threatened Italy, and long since that period carried terror to the gates of Vienna, will soon find it no easy matter to sustain himself in Constantinople. His empire is already, as it were, encircled by that of Russia, a government despotic indeed, but belonging to the school of European civilization, acknowledging the same law of nations, connected with the intellectual family of western Europe and America, and making most rapid advances, in the education of the various races, which fill her vast domain. It is true, that some prejudices exist against that government, at the present time, in the minds of the friends of liberal institutions. But let it not be forgotten, that within the last century, as great a work of improvement has been carried on in the Russian empire, as was ever accomplished, in an equal period, in the history of man; and that it is doubtful whether, in any other way,

than through the medium of such a government, the light of the mind could penetrate to a tenth part of the heterogeneous materials, of which that empire is composed.

It is quite within the range of political probability, that the extended dominion of the czar will be the immediate agent of regenerating Western Asia. If so, I care not how soon the Russian banner is planted on the walls of Constantinople. No man can suppose that an instantaneous transition can be made in Asiatic Turkey, from the present condition of those regions to one of pure republican liberty. The process must be gradual and may be slow. If the Russian power be extended over them, it will be a civilized and a Christian sway. Letters, law, and religion will follow in the train; and the foundation will be laid for further progress,—in the advancing intelligence of the people.

On the African coast, the great centre of barbarism has fallen; and the opportunity seems to present itself of bringing much of that interesting region within the pale of civilization, under the auspices of the politest nation in Europe. The man who but fifteen years ago should have predicted that within so short a period of time, Greece would be united into an independent state under a European prince;—that a Russian alliance should be sought to sustain the tottering power of the Ottoman porte;—that Algiers, which had so long bid defiance to Christendom, would be subjected; that a flourishing colony of the descendants of Africa should be planted on its western coast; and that the mystery of the Niger would be solved and steamboats be found upon its waters, would have been deemed a wild enthusiast. And now when we reflect that, at so many different points, the whole power of modern civilization is turned upon western Asia and Africa;—that our printing presses, benevolent institutions, missionary associations, and governments, are exerting their energies, to push the empire of improvement into the waste places,—when we consider, that the generation coming forward, in these regions, will live under new influences, and instead of the Musulman barbarism, repressing every movement toward liberty and refinement, that the influence and interest of the leading powers of Europe will be exerted to promote the great end; is it too sanguine to think, that a grand and most extensive work of national Education is begun, not destined to stand still or go backward? Go backward did I say; what is to hinder its indefinite progress? Why should these regions be doomed to perpetuated barbarity? Hitherto they have been kept barba-

rous by the influence of an antichristian, despotic, illiterate government. At present, vast regions both of Eastern and Western Asia, and portions of Africa, on the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, are under the protection of enlightened, civilized, and christian governments, whose interest and genius are alike pledged to promote the improvement of their subjects. Why should they not improve, and improve with rapidity? They occupy a soil, which once bore an intelligent population.—They breathe a climate, beneath which the arts and letters once flourished. They inhabit the coasts of that renowned sea, whose opposite shores of old seemed to respond to each other, in grand intellectual concert, like the emulous choirs of some mighty cathedral, sending back to each other, from the resounding galleries, the alternate swell of triumph and praise. They are still inhabited by men,—rational, immortal men,—men of no mean descent,—whose progenitors enrolled their names high on the lists of renown.

For myself, I see nothing to prevent, and little finally to retard the work. The causes are adequate to its achievement,—the times are propitious,—the indications are significant,—and the work itself, though great indeed, is in no degree chimerical or extravagant. What is it?—To teach those, who have eyes to see; to pour instruction into ears open to receive it; to aid rational minds to think; to kindle immortal souls to a consciousness of their faculties;—to co-operate with the strong and irrepressible tendency of our natures; to raise, out of barbarity and stupidity, men, who belong to the same race of beings as Newton and Locke, as Shakespeare and Milton, as Franklin and Washington. Let others doubt the possibility of doing it; I cannot conceive the possibility of its remaining much longer undone. The difficulty of civilizing Asia and Africa?—I am more struck with the difficulty of keeping them barbarous. When I think what man is, in his powers and improveable capacities;—when I reflect on the principles of Education, as I have already attempted in this address to develope them, my wonder is at the condition to which man is sunk, and with which he is content, and not at any project or prophecy of his elevation. On the contrary, I see a thousand causes at work to hasten the civilization of the world. I see the interest of the commercial nations enlisted in the cause of humanity and religion. I see refinement, and the arts, and Christianity, borne on the white wings of trade, to the farthest shores, and penetrating by mysterious rivers the hidden recesses of mighty continents. I behold a private

company, beginning with commercial adventure, ending in a mighty association of merchant princes, and extending a government of Christian men over a hundred millions of benighted heathens, in the barbarous east; and thus opening a direct channel of communication between the very centre of European civilization and the heart of India. I see the ambition of extended sway carrying the eagles of a prosperous empire, and with them the fruitful rudiments of a civilized rule, over the feeble provinces of a neighboring despotism. I see the great work of African colonization auspiciously commenced, promising no scanty indemnity for the cruel wrongs, which that much injured continent has endured from the civilized world, and sending home to the shores of their fathers an intelligent well-educated colored population, going back with all the arts of life to this long oppressed land; and I can see the soldiers of the cross beneath the missionary banner, penetrating the most inaccessible regions, reaching the most distant islands, and achieving, in a few years, a creation of moral and spiritual Education, for which centuries might have seemed too short. When I behold all these active causes, backed by all the power of public sentiment, christian benevolence, the social principle, and the very spirit of the age, I can believe almost any thing of hope and promise. I can believe every thing, sooner, than that all this mighty moral enginery can remain powerless and ineffectual. It is against the law of our natures, fallen though they be, which tend not downwards but upwards. To those, who doubt the eventual regeneration of mankind, I would say in the language, which the wise and pious poet has put into the mouth of the fallen angel,

Let such bethink them—
 That in our proper motion we ascend
 Up to our native seat. Descent and fall
 To us are adverse.

Let him, who is inclined to distrust the efficiency of the social and moral causes, which are quietly at work for the improvement of the nations, reflect on the phenomena of the natural world. Whence come the waters, which swell the vast current of the great rivers, and fill up the gulfs of the bottomless deep?—Have they not all gone up to the clouds, in a most thin and unseen vapor, from the wide surface of land and sea?—Have not these future billows, on which navies are soon to be tost, in which the great monsters of the deep will disport themselves, been borne aloft on the bosom of a fleecy

cloud,—chased by a breeze,—with scarce enough of substance to catch the hues of a sunbeam ;—and have they not descended, sometimes indeed in drenching rains,—but far more diffusively in dew drops, and gentle showers, and feathery snows, over the expanse of a continent, and been gathered successively into the slender rill, the brook, the placid stream, till they grew at last into the mighty river, pouring down his tributary floods, into the unfathomed ocean ?

Yes ! let him who wishes to understand the power of the principles at work for the improvement of our race,—if he cannot comprehend their vigor in the schools of learning,—if he cannot see the promise of their efficiency in the very character of the human mind ;—if in the page of history, sacred and profane, chequered with vicissitude as it is,—he cannot, nevertheless, behold the clear indications of a progressive nature, let him accompany the missionary bark to the Sandwich islands. He will there behold a people, sunk till within fifteen years in the depths of savage and of heathen barbarity,—indebted to the intercourse of the civilized world for nothing but wasting diseases and degrading vices ; placed by Providence in a garden of fertility and plenty, but by revolting systems of tyranny and superstition, kept in a state of want, corruption, war, and misery. The Christian benevolence of a private American association casts its eyes upon them.—Three or four individuals without power, without arms, without funds, except such as the frugal resources of private benevolence could furnish them,—strong only in pious resolutions, and the strength of a righteous cause, land on these remote islands, and commence the task of moral and spiritual reform. If ever there was a chimerical project in the eyes of worldly wisdom, this was one. If this enterprise is feasible, tell me what is not !—Within less than half the time usually assigned to a generation of men, sixty thousands of individuals, in a population of one hundred and fifty thousands, have been taught the elements of human learning. Whole tribes of savages have demolished their idols, abandoned their ancient cruel superstitions and barbarous laws, and adopted some of the best institutions of civilization and Christianity. It would, I think, be difficult to find, in the pages of history, the record of a moral improvement of equal extent, effected in a space of time so inconsiderable, and furnishing so striking an exemplification of the power of the means at work at the present day, for the education and improvement of man.

If I mistake not, we behold in the British empire in the east, another most auspicious agent for the extension of moral influences over

that vast region. It is true that hitherto commercial profit and territorial aggrandizement have seemed to be the only objects, which have been pursued by the government. But when we look at home at the character of the British people, an enlightened, benevolent, and liberal community; when we consider the power of the press and the force of public sentiment in that country, and the disposition to grapple with the most arduous questions evinced by its rulers, we may hope, without extravagance, that a glorious day of improvement is destined to dawn on India, under the patronage and auspices of Great Britain. The thoughts of her public spirited and benevolent men have long been bent on this great object. Some of the finest minds, that have adorned our nature, have labored in this field. I need not recall to you the boundless learning, the taste, and the eloquence of Sir William Jones, nor the classical elegance, the ardent philanthropy, the religious self devotion of Heber, nor repeat a long list of distinguished names, who for fifty years have labored for the diffusion of knowledge in the east.—Nor labored in vain. Cheering indications are given in various quarters, of a great moral change in the condition of these vast and interesting regions, once the abode of philosophy and the arts. The bloodiest and most revolting of the superstitions of the Hindoo paganism has been suppressed, by the British government. The widow is no longer compelled, by the fanatical despotism of *caste*, to sacrifice herself on the funeral pile of her husband. The whole system of the castes enjoys only the toleration of the government; and being at war with the fundamental principles of the British law, as it is with the interest of the great part of the population, must, at no distant period, crumble away. The consolidation of the British empire in India promises a respite from the wars, hitherto perpetually raging among the native states of India, and forming of themselves an effectual barrier to every advance out of barbarism. The field seems now open to genial influences. It is impossible to repress the hope, that out of the deep and living fountains of benevolence, in the land of our fathers, a broad and fertilizing current will be poured over the thirsty plains of India;—the abodes of great geniuses in the morning of the world;—and that letters, arts, and Religion will be extended to a hundred millions of these mild and oppressed fellow beings.

But it is time to relieve your patience: I will do it, after a reflection on the relation, which this country bears to the work of general education; and all I wish to say will be comprised in one word of encouragement and one of warning.

The recent agitations of the Country have a bearing on the great moral questions we have been discussing, more important, as it seems to me, than their immediate political aspect. In its present united condition, that of a state already large and powerful, and rapidly increasing,—its population more generally well-educated than that of any other country, and imbued with an unusual spirit of personal, social, and moral enterprize, it presents in itself the most effective organization imaginable, for the extension of the domain of improvement, at home and abroad. The vital principle of this organization is the Union of its members. In this they enjoy an exemption from the heavy burden of great local establishments of government, and still more from the curse of neighboring states, eternal border war. In virtue of this principle, they are enabled to devote all their energies in peace and tranquillity, to the cultivation of the arts of private life, and the pursuit of every great work of public utility, benevolence, and improvement. To attack the principle of union is to attack the prosperity of the whole and of every part of the country; it is to check the outward developement of our national activity; to turn our resources and energies, now exerted in every conceivable manner for public and private benefit, into new channels of mutual injury and ruin. Instead of roads and canals to unite distant states, the hill tops of those, which adjoin each other, would be crowned with fortresses; and our means would be strained to the utmost, in the support of as many armies and navies, as there were rival sovereignties. Nor would the evil rest with the waste of treasure. The thoughts and feelings of men would assume a new direction; and military renown, and rank, plunder and revenge be the ruling principles of the day. Destroy the union of the States and you destroy their character; change their occupations; blast their prospects. You shut the annals of the republic, and open the book of kings. You shut the book of peace, and you open the book of war. You unbar the gates of hell on the legion of civil discord, ambition, havoc, bloodshed, and ruin.

Let these considerations never be absent from our minds. But if the question is asked, what encouragement is there that a vast deal can be done, in a short time, for the improvement of man, I would say to him who puts the question, look around you. In what country do you live? under what state of things has it grown up? Do you bear in mind, that in a space of time, one half of which has been covered by the lives of some yet in existence, in two hundred years,

these wide spread settlements, with so many millions of inhabitants,—abounding in all the blessings of life, more liberally and equally bestowed than in any other country, have been built up in a remote and savage wilderness? Do you recollect, that it is not half a century, since, with a population comparatively insignificant, she vindicated her independence in a war against the oldest and strongest government on earth? Do you consider that the foundations of these powerful and prosperous states were laid, by a few persecuted and aggrieved private citizens, of moderate fortune, unsupported, scarcely tolerated, by the government? If you will go back to the very origin, do you not perceive, that, as if to consecrate this country from the outset as a most illustrious example of what a Man can do, it was owing to the fixed impression on the heart of one friendless mariner, pursued through long years of fruitless solicitation and fainting hope, that these vast American continents are made a part of the heritage of civilized men? Look around you again at the institutions, which are the pride and blessing of the country. See our entire religious establishments,—unendowed by the state, supported by the united efforts of the individual citizens. See the great literary institutions of our country, especially those in New England,—Hanover, Williams, Bowdoin, Brown, Amherst, and others,—founded by the liberality of citizens of moderate fortune, or by the small combined contributions of public spirited benefactors, aided, at the most, by moderate endowments from the public treasury:—And “the two twins of learning,” if I may without arrogance, name them apart from the rest; this most efficient and respected Seminary, within whose walls we are now convened, and my own ancient and beloved Harvard; to whom and what do they trace their origin? Yale, to the ten worthy fathers, who assembled at Branford in 1700, and laying each a few volumes on the table, said, “I give these books for the founding of a college in this colony;” and Harvard, to the dying munificence of an humble minister of the Gospel, who landed on the shores of America but to lay his dust in its soil; but who did not finish his brief sojourn, till he had accomplished a work of usefulness, which, we trust, will never die. Whence originated the great reform in our prisons, which has accomplished its wonders of philanthropy and mercy, in the short space of eight years, and made the penitentiaries of America the model of the penal institutions of the world? It had its origin in the visit of a missionary, with his bible, to the convict’s cell.—Whence sprang up the mighty Temperance reform,

which has already done so much to wipe off a great blot from the character of the country? It was commenced on so small scale, that it is not easy to assign its effective origin to a precise source.—And counsels and efforts, as humble and inconsiderable at the outset, gave the impulse to the Missionary Cause of modern times, which, going forth, with its devoted champions, conquering and to conquer, beneath

the great ensign of Messiah—
Aloft by angels borne, their sign in Heaven,

has already gained a peaceful triumph over the farthest islands, and added a new kingdom to the realms of civilization and Christianity.

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