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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Philanthropic and Dialectic Societies

OF THE

University of North-Carolina,

June 8, 1857.

BY

HENRY W. MILLER, ESQ.

RALEIGH:

HOLDEN & WILSON, "STANDARD" OFFICE.

1857.

DIALECTIC HALL, *June 4, 1857.*

SIR:

In behalf of the body we represent, we beg leave to tender our thanks for your very instructive, interesting and able Address before the two Literary Societies; and we respectfully request a copy of the same for publication.

* * * * *

Very respectfully,

JAMES P. COFFIN, }
WM. C. DOWD, } *Committee.*
OSCAR F. HADLY, }

HENRY W. MILLER, Esq.

RALEIGH, *June 6, 1857.*

GENTLEMEN:

In compliance with the request you make, in behalf of the Dialectic Society, I send a copy of the Address.

With sentiments of high regard,

I am your friend and obedient servant,

H. W. MILLER.

To Messrs. COFFIN, }
DOWD, } *Committee.*
HADLY, }

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A D D R E S S .

Gentlemen of the Philanthropic and Dialectic Societies :

IN the beautiful story of Rasselas, Imlac, who rehearses the history of his pilgrimage and adventures, for the amusement and instruction of the Prince of Abasynia, is represented as longing, after an absence of twenty years, to return to his native country, that he might repose, after his travels and fatigues, amongst those “with whom he had sported away the gay hours of dawning life.” But how sad were his emotions on thus returning! What changes had been wrought in every thing that met his eye! Most of the companions of his youth had departed; and the few who were left retained but a faint remembrance of him, or met him with cold indifference! Yet, even with that sadness were associated joys that brought gladness to his heart.

So, he who has been absent for a score of years, from the scenes of his youth—from this “benign mother” that nursed his dawning intellect, and watched over the wayward emotions of his youthful heart, cannot expect to revisit them, without having a cloud of momentary sadness pass across his feelings. He listens, in vain, for those voices by which he was once welcomed, and looks around, in disappointment, for those familiar faces, by whose smiles he was greeted! Those, by whose side he sat for years, and with whom he vied, in honorable rivalry, in the race of intellectual improvement, have gone. Where death has withheld his fatal dart, the rude hand of adversity, or the alluring smiles of fortune, have carried them far away on the ocean of life!

But, still, in the midst of the changes which appear—despite the new garb in which nearly every thing around is decorated, there is much that remains unaltered,—the sight of which revives the remembrance of pleasures that are

gone, and paints in vivid colors on the canvass of memory, the life-like forms—the smiling faces and bright eyes of those companions who are absent! The ancient buildings,—“wearing the mossy vest of time”—the venerable oaks,—the play ground, “where sleights of art and feats of strength went round,”—the consecrated spot in which were deposited the remains of the youthful martyrs in the cause of science,—and that too from which “is breathed the memory of a good man’s tomb”—come before him with all their varied and sad associations! But how it gladdens his heart to know, that there are still spared some of those honored patriarchs of learning*—who are links between so many collegiate generations,—rich in the blessings of hundreds, who are fighting the battles of science, virtue and patriotism, in the armor which *they* buckled around them within these walls! Long may they live, to witness the annual return of this gladsome festival, bespeaking the prosperity of an Institution, which, whilst honoring them, is also a source of so much just pride to every patriotic citizen of the State. And may that Institution herself,—so dear to her far-scattered children,—ever prove,—

“Of all that’s good and great,
Of all that’s fair; the guardian and the seat,—
Nurse of each brave pursuit, each generous aim,—
By truth exalted to the throne of fame!”—

I am well aware, my friends, how difficult it is, on an occasion like this, to present for consideration a subject which will suit the varied tastes and gratify the active curiosity of an enlightened audience. But to a citizen,—and especially an educated citizen,—of this great Republic, who contemplates, with patriotic pride, the full development of all the

* Professors *Mitchell* and *Phillips*, who have been long connected with the University, and to whose valuable services it is indebted for much of its prosperity. Since this address was delivered, the former has been snatched, by the hand of death, from his earthly labors. The circumstances connected with this melancholy event, are well known to the public. Truly, was he a martyr to the cause of science! A Christian scholar,—ardently devoted to the duties of his high position, and to the interests and character of the University, to which he was so great an ornament,—his death will be universally lamented, and his memory ever dear to the friends of education and science!

resources—moral, intellectual and physical—of his country, no subject can bring more of interest and importance than one, which presents to his view the prospects of that country's success and glory, and which warns him, in season, of those dangers that threaten its ruin or disgrace.

It is good, at all times, if we desire to learn our duty to the generation in which we live, to recur to the teachings of history. No people cease to provide for the prosperity of their offspring, so long as they look back with proud interest to the achievements of their ancestors. And it certainly is peculiarly befitting this occasion, in view of the moral and political degeneracy now prevailing, and the ultimate national disasters with which we are threatened, to institute a rigid and fearless enquiry into the character and strength of those tenures by which we hold our social blessings and political rights. He who aims only at pleasing the fancy or gratifying a taste for novelty, when every energy should be directed to the safety of those most substantial of all blessings and valuable of all rights, which society and government are formed to secure and perpetuate, would not be acting less foolish than the architect who proceeds to add rare and costly decorations to a temple, whose foundations are at the very moment being undermined by causes, which if not counteracted, must ensure its swift demolition!

We cannot disguise the fact—it stands out in bold relief before us, and is presented in a variety of forms well calculated to arouse the apprehensions of the most careless—that to rescue those great blessings which we enjoy as a people, from the perils that environ them, there must be called into action the most sleepless vigilance, unceasing energy, and indomitable courage of the wise, the good and patriotic of the land!

To the consideration of this great subject, so important to us and these who are to come after us, I ask your attention; and I trust we shall all approach it with no partizan feelings or improper sectional prejudices, but under the influence of those high and sacred obligations that rest on us as Christians and patriots.

The progress of the United States from the period when the great men of the Revolution declared their independence to the present time, in population, in commerce, in agriculture, in the arts and sciences, in every thing that advances the power and adds to the renown of a nation, has no parallel in the history of the world. At the close of the Revolution their population numbered something over three millions. In 1855 it had increased to upwards of twenty-five millions. In the year 1790, their imports amounted in value to fifty-two millions of dollars. At the close of the year 1855—a period of sixty-five years—they had increased to the sum of two hundred and sixty millions. During the same period the exports increased from nineteen millions to two hundred and eighty millions. Their tonnage during the same years rose from five hundred thousand to five millions of dollars in value. In the year 1791, the exportation of cotton from this country was unknown. In the year 1855, the exports alone of that staple amounted to upwards of one thousand and eight millions of pounds—the value of which was estimated at about ninety millions of dollars. The exports of this staple for the last year were valued at one hundred and twenty-five millions.

In the eloquent speech delivered by that great man, Edmund Burke, in the British Parliament, on the 22d of March, 1775, in favor of conciliation with the American colonies, may be found this language: “I pass, therefore, to the value of the colonies in another point of view—*their agriculture*. This they have prosecuted with such a spirit, that besides feeding plentifully their own growing multitude, their annual export of grain, comprehending rice, had some years ago *exceeded a million of dollars in value*. Of their last harvest, I am persuaded they will export much more. At the beginning of the century some of these colonies imported corn from the mother country. For some time past the old world has been fed from the new. The scarcity which you have felt would have been a desolating famine, if this child of your old age, with a true filial piety, with a

Roman charity, had not put the full breast of its youthful exuberance to the mouth of its exhausted parent!"

Exceeded *a million* in value! Wonderful may have been the fact at *that* period, but how would the bright and lofty imagination, even of Burke, pale at the sight of the riches which are *now* poured from the lap of that "child" of the new world, into the granaries and storehouses of the old! How much more earnestly would he have pleaded with a stubborn and truculent ministry—and how much more boldly would even *he*—bold and fearless as he was in defence of her rights—have hurled in the teeth of that ministry, the defiance of that oppressed "child of England's old age," could he have foreseen what three-quarters of a century has brought forth! In 1854 upwards of fifty millions of dollars in value of vegetable food alone, was sent by that "child" to feed the other nations of the earth!

Two years ago the United States stood *second* in commercial importance to Great Britain alone. Assuming the past rate of the progress of these two powers, as indicating their future relative commercial advancement, they will become equal in this respect, in the year 1863—from which period, should her glorious Constitution and Union be preserved, this country will stand, amongst the nations of the earth, *first* in commercial prosperity and power!

When the Convention, to form the Federal Constitution, assembled in 1787, there were not twenty colleges in the Union. At the close of the last year they had increased to upwards of one hundred and fifty—most of them well endowed, and liberally patronized, and having an aggregate of fifteen thousand students. In 1791 the only theological school in the Union was the seminary of St. Mary's, in Baltimore. Since that time the number of such schools has increased to upwards of fifty. There are sixteen law and about forty medical schools in the Union—all founded since the year 1800. In this enumeration are not included those thousands of smaller seminaries of education which appear in the intellectual firmament of our country like so many stars sparkling in the heavens! At the beginning of

our career as an independent nation, there was not a dollar of public funds dedicated to the support of free schools—to the education of the poor. Now, there is an aggregate fund of forty millions of dollars, set apart by the several States, for that benevolent—that noble object!

A commerce, which at the gloomy period preceding the adoption of the federal constitution, hardly had courage and enterprize sufficient to creep along the Atlantic coast, is now penetrating every land, entering every harbor, and whitening every sea. A nation which at the dark period of its struggle for independence, against the greatest military power of the age, could scarcely command the means of clothing the handful of gallant men, upon whom its defence and salvation depended, has now a credit unbounded—a revenue too large for wise and economical expenditure, and sources of national wealth of which no other people on earth can boast!

At the time the federal constitution—that master-piece of political wisdom and sagacity—was formed, the territory of the United States was contained within the boundaries of the Atlantic on the east, the lakes on the north, the Mississippi on the west, and the thirty-first degree of latitude to the mouth of the St. Mary's, on the south. Since that period the acquisitions from Spain, France and Mexico, have enlarged our territory to its present almost boundless extent. Where but thirteen States, exhausted in resources by a long and bloody war for independence, proclaimed our weight in the scale of nations, we now behold thirty-one States, increasing rapidly in population, and advancing with astonishing strides to wealth, power and influence. The territory of the United States contains upwards of two million nine hundred thousand square miles—capable of sustaining a population, proportionate to that of France, of *six hundred millions!* If divided into States of equal size, nearly *sixty* as large as New York could be carved out of that territory, or upwards of *three hundred and eighty* States of the area of Massachusetts!

Such are some of the evidences of our national progress

and power. I have not the time, were it necessary to the purpose I have in view, to array with particularity many others, equally as striking and important—how that nation has knit together her various parts by iron bands of intercourse—how section converses with section on the wings of the lightning—how her majestic rivers have been made to bear on their bosoms an internal commerce, the extent and value of which are contemplated with astonishment—how she has shot across the two oceans in whose arms she is clasped, the beams of liberty and civilization—what she has done towards pouring the glad tidings of Revelation into the benighted regions of the earth, and lifting up the mind of the heathen from the degrading worship of his brutish idol to the sublime contemplation of the true God! Nor need I enumerate to you her intellectual triumphs, or repeat the illustrious names she has given to every branch of literature, science and the arts!

All this, gentlemen, is the fruit of our glorious Constitution—securing peace and union, and protecting the rights of all sections! It is the work too of but a life-time! Many yet live whose memories touch the two extremes of the period. And though so much has been accomplished, what an immense field is still open for patriotic exertion! And what a heavy responsibility is resting on those whose duty it is to labor in that field—a responsibility from which no earthly power can absolve them—a responsibility to conscience and to glory—a responsibility to posterity and the world—a responsibility to that High and Omnipotent Tribunal, at the bar of which, even nations will be called to answer!

It is hardly reasonable to suppose that those who laid the foundation of our government, with all their far-reaching sagacity, looked forward, at the time, with any degree of confidence, to the successful extension of the limits of the Union beyond the Mississippi. If any such thought entered their minds, it was but a dim shadow of the future reality, as evanescent as it was undefined. In truth there were many, whose wisdom and forecast entitled their opinions to great weight, that deprecated any such enlargement of our

domain, as the foreshadowing of early dissolution and ruin. But to the extent of our experience, so far, it is evident that all such apprehensions were not only visionary, but entertained under a mistaken view of that constitution of government which they were forming. The opinion had taken strong hold on the minds of some of the ablest statesmen of the day, that none but a strong central power or government, approaching, in its composition, a monarchy, could keep together the various interests and conflicting views, prejudices and pursuits of so large an extent of country. They were ignorant—great and wise as they were—of the beauty and perfection of their own mechanism: for, if administered according to its true spirit and intent,—the federal government exercising no powers but such as are expressly granted, or which are necessary to execute such granted powers,—and each State scrupulously refraining from all interference in the domestic, civil and political affairs of her sister States, there is no constitution—no form of government, that the wit of man ever devised or is capable of devising, better calculated to keep together and harmonize conflicting interests and pursuits, and better adapted to the expansion of the territory, and the enlargement of the population, over which it is to extend its control!

If that constitution be properly administered by the several departments of the federal government, it is impossible that any State, or portion of the people, can suffer wrong or oppression from those sources. Such evils cannot arise and work out their disastrous consequences, *under the sanction of the Constitution!* They cannot be its legitimate offspring. Sophistry,—sectional prejudices,—the lust of power,—the dictates of an unholy ambition—may pervert its meaning or enlarge its grants, for wicked and selfish purposes and ends, but the consequences which must inevitably follow, will not be the fruit of the tree which our fathers planted. They will be the bitter fruit of a poisonous graft. Most truly and eloquently has it been said by a great statesman of the South, who was hardly canonized by death before the fatal experience of the country proved his enlarged wisdom

and great sagacity—"That Constitution presents in the whole, a political system as remarkable for its grandeur as for its novelty and refinement of organization. For the structure of such a system,—*so wise, just and beneficent*, we are far more indebted to a superintending Providence, that so disposed events as to lead as if by an inevitable hand, to its formation, than to those who erected it. Intelligent, experienced and patriotic as they were, they were yet but builders, *under that great superintending direction!*"

But the insatiable lust of domination can mar and ultimately destroy the fairest fabric which the skill and industry of man can erect. It is beyond the reach of human ingenuity to provide by written constitutions and laws against the deceptive forms it assumes, and the varied means it adopts, to do its work of ruin and disaster. The same spirit by which the fallen angel was actuated—"better rule in Hell than serve in Heaven"—seems to have been, in all ages and countries, the rallying cry of those artificers of mischief who respect no law, and submit to no rule but their own inordinate lust for personal aggrandizement. And how often has religious fanaticism been enlisted to aid the machinations and serve the purposes of such men! Unfortunate is it for the peace and happiness of this great country,—unfortunate it may be for the success and permanence of that beautiful and wise system of government which the great men of the Revolution established and transmitted to us, that they could not exclude from the structure every material through which fanaticism would attempt a breach. But this was beyond the power of human wisdom.

No usurper, gentlemen, ever attained the bloody purpose of his ambition—no traitor ever betrayed his country or her cause—no reckless agitator ever destroyed the peace of a happy and contented people or community, without presenting an excuse sufficiently plausible to justify his conduct, in the estimation, at least of his wicked and unscrupulous adherents. Cromwell, with his eye fixed on the imperial purple, claimed to be the chosen of God to rid his country of the tyranny of the Stuarts. Napoleon grasped and exer-

cised all the powers of a Dictator, in the name and under the garb of devotion to the liberties of the people. Arnold, whilst stars and garters and titles of nobility in the service of the enemies of his country, were fitting before his fiery imagination, pleaded the neglect of that country in justification of his treason. It cannot be expected that the enemies of our Constitution and Union—the fanatical disturbers of our national peace—should do otherwise than assume the robes of virtue and justice, proclaim themselves the friends of liberty and the enemies of oppression, to justify or palliate their nefarious warfare against that constitution and the rights which it recognizes and was intended to secure! They are but following the example of those who have preceded them in works of wickedness and ruin. TRUTH, however candid the air, or fascinating the garb, in which she presented herself, has always been rudely rejected as hypocritical and libelous, by the tyrant, the traitor, and the factious demagogue!

It is a lamentable, but stern fact, which all history attests, that republics are prone to indulge that indolence and indifference, under the influence of which they are often unable to anticipate and provide against dangers. How long was the almost heaven-inspired eloquence of the great Grecian orator heard, in thunder tones, before the Athenians realized the startling fact that Philip was at their gates! Nor are they less liable to close their eyes to those internal foes, which have proved more fatal to well-regulated liberty than the most powerful of external enemies. The patriotic appeals and prophetic warnings of the immortal Tully, “with all the State-wielding magic of his tongue,” could not arouse his countrymen to the fact, that corruption, treason and ambition were undermining the foundations of Roman liberty and paving the way to a gigantic despotism!

What folly is it to rely merely on the *forms* of a constitution for protection and safety, forgetting that sleepless vigilance is the only safeguard against the encroachments of tyranny, as well as the withering, fatal effects of corruption! No one was more firmly impressed with this great truth than

the illustrious Hampden, who saw most clearly that submission to the exactions of the Crown, even in the most trifling particular, would render the forms and provisions of those great charters by which the rights of Englishmen were intended to be defined and secured, more worthless even than the parchment on which they were written. He boldly cast his life into the scale against the odious ship money—"not because twenty shillings would have ruined his fortune, but because the payment of half twenty shillings on the principle upon which it was demanded, would have made him a slave!"

Gentlemen, it would be criminal in us,—in *any* citizen who values the great blessings we enjoy,—to remain heedless of those dangers that are undermining the very foundations of our republican institutions, and propelling us onward to national ruin. In this connection, the truth should be boldly and fearlessly spoken. It is *demandèd* by every consideration of duty and patriotism!

The licentiousness of the public press,—the prevalence and increasing influence of a corrupting literature,—the decay of political virtue,—the progress of social debasement,—the prostitution of the pulpit to the fiendish purposes of faction and sedition,—the rank growth of a fierce and brazen infidelity,—the reckless appeals and lawless threats of sectionalism, have been for years past infusing their poison into the minds and hearts of a vast portion of our people!

We have these evils, these dangers, these enemies of our domestic peace and political prosperity to meet,—to grapple with,—to drive back—to vanquish, or disastrous, desolating in its effects will be that storm which must ere long pass, with all its fury, over our national hopes and prospects!

The freedom of the press is, indeed, one of the bulwarks of civil and religious liberty. This has been recognized as a fundamental principle in all our bills of rights and constitutions of government. And well may it be so regarded, when directed by truth and virtue, and influenced by devotion to the public weal. But when swayed by licentiousness—when discarding truth and caressing falsehood,—when

subsidized by political agitators, and pandering to the base passions and prejudices of the unscrupulous and the lawless,—there could not be invented—there never entered into the conception of the spirits of Pandemonium itself,—with all their brazen zeal and wicked ingenuity,—a more fiery and potent engine of evil. Then, most truly, is it a faithful representation of the “snaky sorceress” of Milton—with her brood of odious offspring—which,

“Never ceasing bark’d
With wide Cerberian mouths, full loud, and rang
A hideous peal!”—

To illustrate the truth of this, it is only necessary to direct your attention to a portion of the northern press, especially many of the public journals in those large cities, in which “flow the dregs and feculence of every land.” Since the time John Coster made known, by his rude characters and images, the art of printing, has there ever been seen in the history of the press—even in the most corrupt periods of political convulsions—anything surpassing these, in scandal, in vituperation, in coarseness, in falsehood and wickedness? There is no taste, however vulgar, to which they are not the ready and willing caterers—no character is too elevated for the assaults of their malicious slanders—no public institution is too valuable and sacred for their scurrility and defamation—no rights, social, civil or religious—whether they be personal or relative—so valuable as to be shielded from their iniquitous eagerness to effect the social degradation and political ruin of those who enjoy them! The most minute details of the most horrible crimes—however revolting to the moral sense—are seized on with avidity, and sent forth with a thrill of ecstasy, to their hundreds of thousands of readers, either to gratify an already vitiated taste, or to infuse their poison into thousands of families, which before were unaccustomed to the language of vice or the scenes of profligacy! It is impossible for such evils to continue, without corrupting all the fountains of social virtue—all the avenues of domestic peace, and demolishing all the safeguards to public morals!

Newspapers have been entitled "the swift-winged heralds of an improved and progressive age." This may be true, but how many of these "swift-winged heralds" are but fair types of the flock of foul and noisome birds that hovered over the luckless mariners in the "Fairie Queene" of Spencer! Each has its appropriate representative—

"The ill-faste owle—death's dreadful messengere,—
The hoars-night-raven, trump of doleful dreere,—
The leather-winged batt, daye's enemy,—
The rueful screech,—still waiting on the bere,—
The whistler shrill,—that whoso hears doth die,—
The hellish harpies,—prophets of sad destiny!"

A loathsome flock indeed!—distilling from their "shaggy wings and horrid beaks" poison, pestilence and death! Nor have we any "palmer's magic wand" by which they can be dispersed, and their ill-omened influence checked and counteracted, unless it be the *moral* power of an enlightened and virtuous public opinion!

Nor is less evil to be apprehended from the spread of that corrupt literature which for years has been thrown off from the diseased brain of its profligate authors, with a fertility with which the press, even with its steam-propelled energies, has hardly been able to keep pace. No work of fiction, whatever may be the moral of its story, is considered too coarse or vicious to command a publisher,—nothing which is published is too worthless or corrupt to rally its host of readers—nothing that is thus read, fails to enlist scores of admiring *puffers*! It is thus that principles, ruinous to domestic peace and destructive of public virtue, are disseminated with a stealthiness which enables them in most instances to elude the observation, and thereby to escape the efforts of the virtuous to counteract them. Lamentable indeed must be the moral condition of a people who discard the productions of the great masters of a Christian literature for the effusions of the propagandists of German materialism and French infidelity. Degraded must be the taste of those who reject the invigorating, life-giving nourishment which is imparted to the intellect by the rich pages of Milton, Addison,

Scott, Burke, Prescott, and their great compeers,—and are content to draw their mental aliment from the feted storehouse of Sue and his pestiferous imitators,—whose productions creep through the social circle, leaving the track of their moral slime,—like that of “snaky reptiles amidst the yielding flowrets!”

Another and equally as dangerous a characteristic of much of the periodical literature which is issued in such profusion from the Northern press, is its tendency to engender sectional strife, and infuse sectional prejudices into the minds of its readers. How often is it made the channel of the most violent abuse,—the vehicle of the foulest slanders and most vindictive assaults on the institutions of our own section! Indeed, judging from the tone and spirit of many of these productions—the avidity with which they are read, and the industry with which they are circulated,—one would readily conclude, that there are no consequences to which they may lead, however disastrous to *our* peace and security, that would not be hailed by their authors and propagators with rapture. Not even their school-books are free from this venom. The young are thus taught to inhale, with the first breath of knowledge, the noxious effluvia of sectional hatred. And strange—humiliating is the fact, that such publications receive patronage from that very people whose ruin they seek! Will not timely warning against these evils be needed? Will those who are so deeply interested, *sleep on*, in the face of such facts? The glare of the incendiary’s torch could not more speedily arouse from their slumbers the inmates of the dwelling whose destruction is sought, than should such fanatical firebrands wake to vigilance and action, that people whose hearths and altars they menace!

Pardon me, gentlemen, for directing your attention, at this point, to the glaring, the gross, the inexcusable injustice, which has been done your own State, by authors who aspire to the honor of being regarded “*national* historians!”

On the 20th of May, 1775, more than a year before the congress at Philadelphia proclaimed the American colonies free and independent States, a gallant band in North-Car-

olina, led by those stout-hearted patriots, the Brevards, the Polks, the Alexanders, pledged their "lives, their fortunes and most sacred honor" in defence of the independence of their country. I care not what phrases they used—what language they adopted. I look at the great and immortal DEED which they did! *That* is a fixed fact in the history of the State.

On the 27th of February, 1776, the victory of Moore's Creek was achieved. That was, beyond question, one of the most important battles fought during the Revolution. It broke the power and organization of the royalists at the South. It expelled the regal governor from the State. It frustrated the plans of invasion by Sir Henry Clinton—drove the British fleet from our coast, and inspired the friends of independence, in every part of the country, with confidence and patriotic ardor!

Yet strange to say, the "historian of Washington," whose work promised to be a faithful record of our glorious struggle for national existence—in which the gallant deeds of *each* were the property of *all*—does not pay those great events—those daring blows struck for independence—even the cold respect of a passing notice.* The history of the struggle of Greece against her Persian invaders, without the devotion of Leonidas or the glory of Thermopylae!

In giving to the world, and securing to posterity, a faithful history of the great deeds of the men of other States—the Adamses, the Hancocks, the Henrys, the Warrens, the Schuylers, and Putnams, of other sections—incomprehensible is it, that one professing to write the great epic of the American Revolution, the biography of Washington, the

* Since this Address was delivered, the fourth volume of "Irving's Life of Washington" has come to hand. In giving an account of the operations of Cornwallis at the South, in 1780, the following allusion is made to the Mecklenburg Declaration: "It should never be forgotten, that at Mecklenburg, in the heart of North-Carolina, was fulminated the first declaration of independence of the British crown, upwards of a year before a like declaration by Congress." No particulars of the event—no names of the brave men who participated in it—are given! Being thus noticed *five years after its chronological order*, we may reasonably indulge the hope, that when the historian resumes his labors, and records "the Presidential career of Washington," he may remember the battle of Moore's Creek!

Christian hero of our race—should find naught in the exploits and characters, in the inflexible patriotism and sterling virtues of Caswell, Ashe, Moore, Lillington, Howe and Brevard, to command the *justice*, if not to call forth the admiration and gratitude of history! Even the gallant Nash—that heroic Bayard in the cause of independence, who enriched the soil of a distant State with his blood—falls in the great conflict, without eliciting a passing comment on his bright and glorious career.

Such injustice cannot always triumph. The memory of the illustrious deeds of those great men cannot sleep forever! There are indications of an awakening to a just sense of the obligations we are under to them, and the honor which is due their achievements; and every citizen of our State must be cheered by the assurance, that one of her own sons, of whose genius as an orator and fame as a writer, we are all proud, has undertaken this labor of love—this task of historic justice! With a theme worthy of his eloquent pen and patriotic heart, may he reap a rich reward for his labors, in the gratitude of that people, the deeds of whose ancestors he seeks to rescue from oblivion and enshrine in the recollection and veneration of the good!

But let us recur again to the dangers which threaten us. It cannot be successfully controverted, in the face of the proofs which are constantly arising, that some sections of our country—I speak not in unkindness—are becoming the nurseries of many of the most dangerous and disorganizing doctrines, moral, social and political, with which virtue and truth have ever yet been challenged to contend. And who has not been struck with the power of reproduction—the inexhaustible fruitfulness, which in many instances, marks the progress of these doctrines—the readiness and facility with which they assume a position in the social and political organization, and the irresistible sway which they speedily acquire not only over the ignorant, but over many of the best cultivated minds! *Fourierism*, with its train of levelling precepts and degrading purposes; *Freeloveism*, that moral leper, striking with fiendish delight, at the very foundations

of domestic virtue, and aiming its deadly blows at the delicate yet sacred pulsations of the social heart; *Mormonism*, that hyena of modern debasement, the consequences of whose ravages no man can contemplate without horror, who values those most inestimable of all jewels, domestic peace and social happiness, and who reverences that great law, that sacred command of nature and nature's God, upon which all good government is based, and without which society itself would be a curse; *Spiritualism*, that newly discovered link, that electric wire between the fell spirits of darkness in the *lower* world, and their most apt pupils and faithful agents and representatives in *this*: *Abolitionism*, that modern moloch of political and religious fanaticism, whose insatiable wrath is sought to be appeased by the sacrifice of *our* rights, *our* happiness, and *our* honor, and the destruction of the national peace; these are but samples of that brood of harpies which are preying on the very vitals of the social and political organization of some sections of our country, and which, unless promptly checked in their career of mischief, must hasten that desolation, moral, social and political, which they are seeking with so much persevering eagerness and such envenomed rapacity!

Nor is the downward tendency of social and civil organization in some sections of our country less strikingly illustrated in the decay of *public* virtue. When before did your national legislature, to which, in times past, every American citizen turned with pride and confidence, present such a humiliating spectacle as it did but a few months since? The house of representatives, besieged for years by a swarm of speculators, stockjobbers and intriguers, with their debased and cunning agents, eager for public plunder—the scene closed with the virtual conviction of three of its members of corruption and bribery! The national senate too—that citadel of the rights of the States, and the freedom of the people—that body once honored by the genius and patriotism of Clay, Calhoun, Webster, Wright and other noble spirits, now, alas! gathered forever to their fathers—that body, subjected to the mortifying alternative of considering

a memorial from upwards of forty members of a State legislature charging one of its own members with having attained his high position by bribery!

“Every man has his price,” exclaimed Walpole; and where men sink their country’s good in the success of party—where the emoluments of office become the rewards of partizan services alone, and every higher aspiration and nobler emotion is swallowed up in the struggle for riches,—where the *auri sacra fames* directs every impulse and controls every action, that maxim of the shrewd English statesman will hold a prominent and ruling place in political ethics, and the corruption fund of politicians will seldom remain idle for the want of men—*men!*—*creatures* rather, bearing the *forms* of men, on whose brows is stamped the self-debasing, self-damning advertisement of their own political venality!

What a fatal degeneracy from that stern and inflexible virtue—that lofty independence and noble patriotism which illustrated the principles and conduct of legislators, during the early days of the republic!

Bolingbroke, living in an age when political corruption was rife, remarked “He who undertakes to govern a free people by corruption, cannot boast the honor of the invention. The experiment is as old as the world, and he can pretend to no other honor than that of being an humble imitator of the Devil!”

Whatever may be properly deducible from the condition of things during the age of Bolingbroke, it is not unreasonable to suppose that even the Prince of Darkness himself would hardly regard it a compliment to be held responsible for the innumerable low, cunning, debasing schemes of corruption which are fashionable amongst so many politicians in this age of progress—an age “well schooled in crooked policy and quirks of State!”

But, gentlemen, if there is any one cause, which more than others is calculated to arouse the apprehensions of every patriot, it is that sectional animosity—that bitter fraternal strife, which has prevailed for years past, increasing to a degree of intensity which threatens to make implacable

enemies of those, who, looking to the same government for protection, should regard the prosperity and honor of that government, their noblest pride, as it assuredly is their highest interest. It is folly—it is madness to suppose that our present system of government can be preserved and perpetuated on the principle *that this Union is to be kept together by force!* Those who framed it foresaw, most clearly, that a resort to force *between* the States, or the application of force on the part of the federal government *against* the States, would produce a revolution which must sweep away the system itself. It was not the purpose of our fathers to establish a government which was to be dependent on the strong arm of military power to sustain itself in the varied conflicts between the different States and sections. Seeking to establish it on well-defined principles of civil policy—on Constitutions and laws—the will of a majority clearly and fairly expressed—they relied on the virtue, the patriotism, the affection of the people to preserve that system, by a faithful adherence to those Constitutions and a strict observance of those laws in their true spirit. They intended that reason and affection should be the corner-stone of the edifice. They looked to the mild and peaceful operations of the principles of Christianity, and not the wild and spasmodic action of heathen or infidel precepts—to the law of LOVE and not the law of FORCE,—to shield it from the evils and protect it from the ruin which has befallen every other system of government from the factious democracies of Greece to the fiery despotism of Napoleon. When that great principle, lying at the very foundation of our Union is lost sight of—discarded—repudiated—and the lust of sectional domination, the law of force, is substituted in its stead, and made the main-spring, the motive power of social and political action, the fate of our national constitution is sealed, and the downfall of the republic is inevitable! It may maintain the *forms* of what our forefathers intended it to be, but it will have lost its *reality*. The shadow of a federal representative republic may still linger, but it will soon pass away, to give place to an inexorable, overshadowing, consolidated des-

potism! During the Revolutionary war, one of the most sagacious statesmen of England, whilst contemplating the probability of a final severance of the colonies from the mother country, exclaimed—" *The cement of reciprocal esteem and regard can alone bind together the parts of this great fabric!*" How much more necessary is the "cement of reciprocal esteem and regard" to preserve *our* Union—to keep together *this* great fabric of government! Destroy that cement—that esteem and regard between the different sections—and the fabric crumbles,—or, if kept together by the iron bands of military force, it can no longer be the abode, the citadel of freedom, but becomes, at once, the fortress of tyranny—the prison house of despotism!

Washington, in that most invaluable legacy of patriotic advice, which he left his countrymen, was not content with warning them against "the frightful despotism of party spirit *generally*"—that "alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities,"—but most pointedly and earnestly did he entreat them to beware of "parties founded upon *geographical discriminations*." He looked forward to that condition of things with deep and fearful apprehension, and his great—his magnanimous soul swelled with patriotic zeal and earnestness when appealing to his countrymen "to frown indignantly upon the first dawnings of such a spirit." Hardly sixty years elapsed from the period when such warnings were uttered before that fearful crisis came! In the full blaze of those bright hopes which arose from all nations, for the success of our experiment of free government, that cloud, charged with every element of disaster, overhung the horizon! Its fury has not yet been spent. Its final, fatal consequences are yet hidden from our view! *When* its pent up wrath is to be discharged—scattering its fiery desolation and blasting all that is lovely and valuable in the rich inheritance bequeathed us by the immortal Washington and his compatriots, no human foresight can tell!

And this party of "geographical discrimination"—this

array of organized sectionalism, is based solely on hostility to *our* institutions—*our* peace—*our* rights, as a component part of this great nation, and aims at *our* disgrace and ruin! It seeks, by a sectional triumph, to convert the national government into an engine for the political subjugation and social dishonor of one-half the States of this Union. Nor has it left untried any means by which its designs may be accomplished and its ends secured. The press, the hustings, the halls of Congress, even the pulpit—all have been converted into so many batteries of fiery assault! Yes, that sacred place, from which should ever issue words of peace and good will to man, consecrated as it should be, to the precepts of universal love, has been prostituted to the wicked purposes of faction, and to the inculcation of sectional bitterness and social strife! Abandoning their sacred calling—ceasing “to spread the treasured stores of truth divine”—men professing to be ministers of the gospel of peace, have converted their holy offices into instruments to arouse the most lawless passions, and to instil into the minds and hearts of their disciples, the most fanatical rancor, the most deadly hatred towards their own countrymen and kindred—countrymen *still*, thank God! at least in all the proud recollections of the *past*—kindred in blood, as they should be, kindred in affections!

That was, beyond doubt, the severest blow which has yet been inflicted on the cause of social peace, good government, and sound religion! Are the men who instigated, directed, dealt it, mad? Do they presume that the position they occupy consecrates the crime, the treason, into which they are rushing? Have they calculated the consequences into which they are hurrying their infatuated followers? Have they contemplated the blackness of that gulf into which they would plunge the country? The blasting curse of millions should fall on the heads of men, who thus assume “the livery of heaven” to serve the purposes of hell—who wrap themselves in the garments of religion to propagate and give force and effect to doctrines, and to disseminate prejudices, which must lead to civil war, to fraternal bloodshed, to the dissolu-

tion of this Union, to the ruin of the republic, to the extinguishment of the last hope of free institutions!

Rely upon it—rely upon it, gentlemen, as a fixed, immutable, never-dying, all-pervading TRUTH, this Union, this government, and the great blessings they were intended to secure, cannot last, cannot be perpetuated, if our religion is to be debased and corrupted—if Christianity is to be superseded or its divine influence destroyed! Let the pulpit but cease to be

“The most important and effectual guard
Support and ornament of *virtue's* cause.”

Let it be diverted from the defence and maintenance of Christianity and made subservient to the propagation of partizan animosity and sectional rancor—let its occupants dash away their commissions as “heralds of the cross,” and put on the insignia of noisy, factious, intriguing demagogues, and the door to the most brazen, the blackest infidelity will be thrown wide open! From *that* position there will be but one step to the awful excesses and horrors that marked the career of the French Revolution!

There is, unquestionably, gentlemen, a point of endurance beyond which forbearance becomes cowardice and submission crime. With nations, as it is in social intercourse, a tame submission to wrong not only results in dishonor to the oppressed, but imparts boldness to the spirit of tyranny in the oppressor. When a people have forfeited their own self-respect—their *honor*—they become fit subjects to gratify the lust of domination in others. The fact of being united under the same government, for general purposes, does not alter or annul this great rule of social organization. Self-preservation should be the first law of civil government, as it is of our social nature. Aggressions which would be just causes of war between independent nations, cannot be expected to result in *less* than alienation and distrust under a system like ours. Are we expected to submit with blind pusillanimity to the assaults which are incessantly made on our social peace and civil rights? Is not the cup of forbearance already *brim*

full? Can we be true to others—to the government under which we live—*if we are false to ourselves?*

In view of the dangers threatened—in the face of the wrongs in store—what do the sacred obligations of duty to ourselves and our posterity demand at our hands? UNION—the union of her whole people, for the full development of all her resources—moral, intellectual and physical—can alone save the South from the dangers which are impending. To each and all alike there is one danger and one safety! However conflicting our opinions may be on questions of mere expediency or policy, on those involving her rights, her honor, her safety, her very existence as a people,—there should be no difference, no conflict, no wrangling, no wavering! Union in hand and heart—union in will and desire—union in purpose and action, is the only bulwark of her strength—the only citadel of her safety! To waste her energies in idle and angry discussion with her adversaries on those great issues, would be playing a part more foolish than did the monkeys in Sinbad, in dashing the cocoanuts at their enemies!

“*Divide and conquer,*” has been the stern maxim of northern aggressiveness from the days of Alaric and Attila to the present period. The destruction of Carthage was not more inflexibly resolved on by Roman cupidity and ambition, than is our social and political degradation desired and sought by the lawless spirit of northern fanaticism! We should be false to ourselves—false to the cause of free government and human civilization—recreant to the memory of our fathers—aye, *traitors to our own households*, were we to neglect to prepare for that struggle which is foreshadowed by events that are passing around us. Were we to act thus, well might the humblest of our people exclaim, in the language of the Thane of Scotland, as the effects of the tyranny of Macbeth rose to his view,

“Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to *know itself*. It cannot
Be called our *mother*, but our *grave!*”

Let me not be misunderstood. I urge the union of the people of the South, not for the purpose of aggression and wrong to others, but for protection and safety to themselves; not to engender sectional prejudices and encourage fraternal strife, but to ensure peace and harmony; not to *weaken* the bonds of our national Union, but to *strengthen* them, by staying the march of fanaticism; not in the spirit of empty bravado, but under the influence of that calm resolution and indomitable courage which in all ages has ever been able to set at defiance and drive back the power of wrong and injustice! "By an eternal law," says a great man, "Providence has decreed vexation to violence and poverty to rapine!" The spirit which is now threatening our rights, our peace, our safety, the security of our very hearths, is worse than that of violence and rapine combined! It adds to those crimes others of far blacker malignity, treachery to friends, a repudiation of solemn compacts, a determination to *stab* whilst professing to *embrace*!

And what stronger inducements, gentlemen, could operate on the human heart, than those which appeal to every citizen of the South? No country on earth possesses in a higher degree all the elements of wealth, power and greatness. With a soil of inexhaustible fertility, yielding every variety of production, intersected at all points by navigable streams, with immense water power, with some of the best harbors in the world, with mineral resources unsurpassed, with territory adequate to a population of more than two hundred millions of souls; blessed in fine with everything that a bounteous nature can bestow, nothing is needed to make her pre-eminently a prosperous, powerful people, but union, industry, energy, enterprize, and that high, indomitable, self-sustaining, self-reliant patriotism, which will press her onward to a *full* development of *all* her resources! With a population of ten millions only, on an area of nearly a million of square miles, what a vast space exists between what she *is* and what she *is capable of becoming*! With half the industry which has covered "as with a velvet carpet the slopes of the Alps," with a tithe of the energy which bridled the stormy waters of the German

Ocean, and rescued from the waves one of the most fertile countries of the globe, and studded it with cities, the imagination staggers under the assurance of what she may become as a people!

A distinguished European statesman remarks: "If we imagine an universal confederacy of nations, we shall no longer find sufficient motive for exertion to promote the prosperity, independence and power of *each*."

Here lies the danger to the individual States of this confederacy! The glory of each in its appropriate sphere, lost sight of, eclipsed, obscured, under the more dazzling brightness of the glory of the whole! The result follows, the progress of the nation is impaired by the want of devotion to the interest and honor of the State in which we live. The smallest planet, "wheeling unshaken through the void immense," is no less a part of the great system of the universe, because the gorgeous king of day sends forth his rays in all their splendor. It is the beauty and fitness of each, revolving in its appointed orbit, as well as the harmony of the whole, which proclaims, not only the wisdom of the design, but the power of its Great Architect!

It is by cultivating the social affections—by observing, respecting and strengthening the ties of kindred and of friendship, that we learn with clearness and fulfil with alacrity, our duties to the State. Devotion to the former is not more consistent with the prosperity of the latter, than neglect of our duties and obligations to the State is incompatible with the safety and glory of the Union! CURRAN, in his eloquent appeal to Ireland, *to be true to herself*, exclaimed, "It is in vain to say you will protect the freedom of Britain, *if you abandon your own*. The pillar, whose base has no foundation, can give no support to the dome under which its head is placed."

Forgetting, then, and casting to the winds, in view of the momentous issue presented, all minor differences of opinion, let us, I entreat you, unite,—*unite as countrymen*, in improving the vast advantages with which we have been blessed—in educating our youth—in cultivating a pure and

high-toned literature—in encouraging the arts and sciences—in nurturing the precepts of Christian love—in inspiring the hearts of our people with an elevated patriotism, a bold spirit of independence and self-reliance—in building up and sustaining institutions of learning and benevolence—in developing our agricultural and manufacturing resources—in breaking the chains of that commercial thralldom which have so long bound us! Then, indeed, whilst true to ourselves—whilst erecting around our rights a wall far stronger than adamant against the inroads of fanaticism, we shall become the vanguard of safety—the right arm of strength to the Union of the States, and to the great cause of constitutional, representative government!

Gentlemen, we cannot evade the high—the weighty responsibility imposed on us, by the age in which we live, by the events that are passing around us, by the recollection of the past, by the prospects of the future! The very blessings we enjoy—the dangers that threaten them,—every thing that can enliven our hopes or arouse our fears,—all that can ennoble by a fearless performance, or degrade by a cowardly abandonment of duty—all we hear, and see and feel in the midst of that storm of difficulties and trials which encompass us,—invoke us to vigilance and incite us to action!

There is much that is truly and most strikingly sublime surrounding the history of that country in which our lot has been cast. Who can contemplate it without seeing the guidance—the working of an Almighty arm? Whilst the empires of the old world were rising in grandeur and power, and successively fading away under the grasp of corruption and ambition; whilst the whole Christian world was rocked to and fro by the mighty conflict it waged for centuries with the Moslem power of the East; whilst Europe was slowly emerging from the cloud of ignorance and barbarism, in which it had been so long enveloped, this vast country, now smiling with the fruits of industry, and rejoicing in the rich trophies of civilization, lay embosomed in the sublime repose—the undisturbed solitude of nature! The genius of one man threw open the door to its approach, and it sprang

into view like a new creation. Its rude tenants, as wild and uncultivated as the vast forests and lofty mountains over which they had so long roamed, unrestrained by government and untrammelled by laws, gave way on the advance of science—religion and civilization. Those who took their places were a hardy, stern, energetic race, of resolute purpose and indomitable will. Their history had been one of trials, difficulties and dangers. They had been educated in the school of a harsh and severe experience. They had fled from civil and religious persecution. The wilderness, with freedom of thought and unmolested worship of God, had higher charms for them than all the refinements and glitter of European society, with the weight of civil and religious tyranny pressing their energies to the earth, and enslaving their consciences. When they came hither, they brought with them, retained and cultivated those principles of free government, in defence of which so many noble spirits had fallen martyrs in the countries from which they fled. The names of Russell, of Sidney, of Hampden, inspired their hearts with confidence and boldness. The doctrines for which *they* had so fearlessly contended took deep root and spread. The great and final conflict at last came. It brought with it trials and sufferings well calculated to appal the stoutest heart. They equalled any that marked the struggles, which, in former ages, had been waged by right and justice against oppression and wrong. To all but a handful of gallant, unconquerable spirits, the issue was one full of doubt and uncertainty. The despondency which fell on many, only aroused new energy and enkindled more indomitable resolution in the hearts of those who saw, afar off through the smoke and carnage of battle, the light of victory. The same spirit that enabled them to triumph over a foreign foe, secured them another triumph, yet more glorious, because the more difficult—*a triumph over themselves*, a triumph over passion and prejudice—over selfishness and ambition—over anarchy and licentiousness! From confusion, sprang order; from sectional animosity and dissention, concord and union; from weakness, strength; from prostrate credit and shattered

finances, national wealth, and inexhaustible sources of revenue! The nations of the earth gazed in astonishment as upon a new sun "risen on midnight." To the political system of the world, it was the fixing in its orbit a new planet, producing alarm and confusion at first, but destined in the end to secure more perfect harmony and greater security. New ideas were spread abroad,—new principles asserted their right to supremacy,—new theories of government were proclaimed, in the very heart of the monarchies and despotisms of Europe! Old political systems were shaken,—old institutions crumbled away. There stood out in imposing prominence before the civilized world, a practical, living, speaking refutation of the doctrine of the divine right of Kings. Few were found bold enough to re-assert the prerogative claimed by Louis XIV of France—"I am the State!" Every struggle for free government—every uprising of the people against tyranny—every movement towards popular institutions—every check given to oppression and wrong, since that period were but emanations—waves, from that Revolution which resulted in the achievement of our independence and the establishment of our government! It is the height of folly to attempt to measure the cycle of the immense, ever-spreading, never-ceasing influence of that Revolution, by a meter that would hardly encircle a single human passion or emotion! Who can estimate—who can measure—who can limit that influence? It has infused itself into the whole social, moral and political element of the world! In humble submission to the Divine Will, we can but hope that it may secure to our land—

"A thousand thousand blessings,
Which time shall bring to ripeness :—
Till our children's children
Shall see them, and bless Heaven!"

"The time will come," exclaims De Toqueville, with prophetic rapture, "when one hundred and fifty millions of men will be living in America, equal in condition, the progeny of one race, owing their origin to the same cause, preserving

the same civilization, the same language, the same literature, the same religion, the same habits, the same manners and imbued with the same opinions, propagated under the same forms! The rest is uncertain, but this is certain; and it is a fact new to the world, a fact fraught with such portentous consequences as to baffle the efforts even of the imagination!"

What a picture for the contemplation of the American scholar, statesman and patriot? And who does not desire—earnestly, ardently desire its full, ample, complete realization? Who amongst us is unwilling to labor for its accomplishment? Who would extinguish those high hopes that are rousing man in every quarter of the globe from the sleep of ages? Who wishes to see that bright star, which is guiding the empire of freedom, of science and civilization to the west, shoot from its position and go down in darkness?

If we hope to realize those high anticipations; if we wish our descendants to enjoy the blessings which we now enjoy; if we desire the fulfilment of the high destiny that is promised us, we must defend, preserve, perpetuate, *unimpaired*, that constitution which has been transmitted to us. *That only, under the blessing of God, can save us!* That foundation is of *rock*—all else is but *drifting sand*, to be swept away by the first storm of agitation! When Roman liberty had been cloven down, and those who had defended it to the last were commanded to declare their adhesion to the tyrant who dealt the fatal blow, then it was that her immortal orator exclaimed: "I will not give to Caesar what belongs to my country!"

We cannot—we *dare* not surrender one jot or tittle of that constitution to the demands of sectional ambition or the mad behests of fanaticism! It is *that* which has made us what we are—a prosperous, happy, powerful people. *Under* that, and *by* that we are content to live. It will guide us to a still higher degree of national prosperity and glory. It will prove an impenetrable shield to our rights, our honor, our safety. But if—which heaven forbid!—the dread conflict with faction and fanaticism *must* come, let us appeal to the example of the immortal Washington, to inspire our hearts with pa-

triotism to meet the crisis, and to the just God of our fathers, to lead us through that conflict, and give us courage to face, and fortitude to bear, the direful consequences which may follow!



