

Caldwell (61)

A

DISCOURSE

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF A

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY,

ESPECIALLY IN ITS INFLUENCE ON THE

UNION OF THE STATES;

DELIVERED, BY REQUEST, TO THE

ERODELPHIAN SOCIETY

OF

MIAMI UNIVERSITY,

ON THE SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THAT INSTITUTION,

SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1832.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

A FEW years ago there appeared, in the *Western Monthly Review*, two or three papers on the subject of a National University. It is quite probable that between those articles and this discourse there exists a considerable similarity, as well in style and manner, as in sentiment. If so, the reason is, that they are all the product of the same pen. Yet, to avoid, as far as possible, any striking resemblance between them, the writer, while preparing the discourse, was careful never to look at the papers in the *Review*, nor even to think of them. It is deemed advisable to communicate this information to the reader, that he may not suspect the author of plagiarism. The communication will further apprize him, that the views contained in the discourse have not been hastily formed.

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DISCOURSE.

GENTLEMEN, MEMBERS OF THE ERODELPHIAN SOCIETY.

THE general benefits of education, as the parent of literature, science, and the arts, and an auxiliary in morals and good government, have furnished, for ages, a standing theme of academical discourses. Unwilling, therefore, to ask you to accompany me over a field, the full harvests of which have been gathered in by others, and where the gleanings might but ill reward our toil in collecting them, I shall offer no apology for declining to select the same topics, as the ground of the exercise I am about to engage in. Partly moreover from your daily studies, and in part from other incidental causes, it is scarcely probable that the subject is less familiar to you than to myself. Nor can it fail to possess for you, in the spring-time of your lives, when your sensibilities are vivid, and your fancies creative, a freshness and a charm, which must have rendered it an object of the liveliest attention. This being the case, you are already so fully apprized of its extent and value, that no effort of mine could add to the interest you naturally feel in it, or strengthen the impression your minds have received from the habitual contemplation of it.

History has already made known to you, that the different degrees of education which the nations of antiquity possessed, were the measures of the rank and splendour they enjoyed. Even their opulence and power conformed invariably to the same standard. You are not now to be informed that the astronomical and literary attainments of ancient Egypt, limited as they were, formed the brightest symbol on the escutcheon of that celebrated country, and will preserve her name from oblivion, and confer on her reputation, when, like the site of Troy, the "city of the gods," the spot where her pyramids stood shall be disputed, and the Nile alone will indicate to the traveller the domain of the Pharaohs. That the imperishable glories of Greece were the product, not of the sword or the truncheon, but of the pen and the chissel. And, that had not Rome cultivated letters, philosophy, and the arts, she would have continued, as she began, a nation of barbarians, and her renown in arms would be slumbering in endless oblivion, beneath the ruins of the power that achieved it. With these things you are already familiar. It is also known to you, that when the fruits of education had perished, in the downfall of the Roman empire, and even the hope of their reproduction was nearly extinguished, the world became, for centuries, as the result of that catastrophe, a waste of ignorance, licentiousness, and blood. That that period of desolation and dismay was called the "Dark Ages," not more from its want of knowledge, than from its destitution of virtue, and its pollution by crime. That the commencement of the return of happier times received the name of the "Revival of Letters," because it was the issue of mental cultiva-

tion. That the event was hailed as the day-spring of a renewed civilization of the human race, and their emancipation from the tyranny of brutal domination, where strength had trampled with impunity on weakness, and vice had triumphed over virtue and honour. That modern nations rose in their moral and political standing, and improved in their general condition, in proportion as they welcomed and encouraged education, and partook of its benefits. And that, at the present time, education is the acknowledged source of their prosperity, power, and glory, and, as such, is embraced and cultivated by them, with an eagerness and energy corresponding to its importance. Even under the blighting shadow of despotism, where the mass of the people are merged in ignorance and wedded to slavery, the higher orders eagerly avail themselves of that great fountain of knowledge and influence.

These truths, I say, have been abundantly disclosed to you, in the course of your studies. And you have further learnt, that of all existing governments, that of our own country is most vitally dependent on the general diffusion of the fruits of sound education, for the continued purity of its principles, the stability of its general organization and subordinate institutions, the success of its measures, the prosperity of the nation, and the happiness of the people. That if intelligence and virtue, wisdom and patriotism, the fruits alone of mental culture, are *valuable* under other forms of government, they are *indispensable* under ours. And that, while by the possession and proper use of them, we may attain, as a people, an unparalleled degree of social felicity, and rise to the loftiest

point of political greatness, we must sink, without them, through corruption and misrule, to the deepest abyss of degradation and misery. Such is the nature of our government, that we cannot hold a midway course. To one extreme or the other we as necessarily tend, as the needle does to the pole, or the plummet to the centre.*

*It would be easy to show, that, under the government of the United States, a very limited amount of school-learning, diffused among the people, is calculated, politically speaking, to injure, rather than to benefit them. I allude to that degree of attainment, which qualifies them merely to read newspapers, and understand the meaning of what they contain, without enabling them to judge of its soundness. A people only thus far instructed, are in the fittest of all conditions to be imposed on and misled by artful demagogues and dishonest presses. When party spirit runs high, and the political passions become inflamed, they are induced, by intriguing men, to read papers only on one side of the question. The consequence is plain. Not being able to judge of the truth of the matter laid before them, as respects either the fitness of men, or the tendency of measures, they are liable to be seduced into the most ruinous courses. Were they unable to read at all, or did they never see a newspaper, their condition would be less dangerous. Demagogues would have less power to delude and injure them. In the present state of our country, it is emphatically true, as relates to the great body of the people, that

“A little learning is a dangerous thing.”

The only remedy for the evil consists in the *reformation of the public presses*, or the *diffusion of more learning, knowledge, and virtue among the people*. The former, it is to be apprehended, is not soon to be looked for. On the latter alone, therefore, rest the fate of our government, and the hope of our country. Let the community at large be taught to think correctly and feel soundly, and they will not only have a secure protection against the falsehood and corruption of the presses; those sources of mischief will cease to be encouraged. They must then choose between *reformation* and *extinction*. At the present moment, some of our public presses are the arch-engines of evil to our country, and a disgrace to the human character.

Such you already know to be the difference between the conditions of educated and uneducated nations. Nor have you now to learn, that between the standing and enjoyments of different classes and individuals of the same nation, a like difference is produced, by different kinds and degrees of intellectual training. Hence the inference, alike true and momentous, which can neither be too earnestly inculcated on youth, nor too extensively promulgated to the world, that to education, in the true meaning of the term, is man indebted for all he possesses calculated to sweeten, dignify, and embellish life, and render it an object of desire to a being endowed with intelligence and taste. In an uncultivated condition, man is the most abundant source of evil and misery to his fellow-man, as well as to himself. These considerations enforce, as a paramount duty, on pupils, diligence and ardour in the prosecution of their studies; on teachers, zeal and faithfulness in the high trust committed to them, and on all, the encouragement and promotion of the great work of instruction;—that work, which is to direct the movements and settle the destinies, not alone of our own country, but of the human family; and not alone of the present inhabitants of the globe, but of all future generations. But, waving any further reference to the general influence of education, I shall offer to you a few remarks on some of its more particular bearings.

It has long been inculcated, as a political maxim, that, in every country, the education of youth should conform to the character of the existing government. In the enforcement of this, the nations of antiquity, especially the Romans, Greeks, and Persians, were

inflexible. A deviation from the custom, if stubbornly persisted in, would have subjected the offender to banishment or death. Nor are modern nations indifferent to the policy, although they do not enforce it by so severe a penalty.* The object of it is, to cultivate in the minds of the people a spirit of loyalty, and a sentiment of patriotic attachment to their political institutions. These feelings, united to a well regulated pride of country, may be made to minister, in a high degree, to the strength of a nation, and the welfare of its inhabitants. Is the form of government monarchical? According to the views I am considering, principles and opinions favourable to that form should be inculcated in seats of learning of every grade, but especially in those erected for children. First impressions on this subject are not easily eradicated. On the contrary, if they are judiciously and forcibly made, they become a portion of the individual, and are as lasting as life. It is all important, therefore, that they be correct. Is the government aristocratical, democratical, or mixed? Policy requires that the same rule be observed in the business

*Within the last few years, the despotisms of Europe are becoming much more strict, on the subject of education. The Universities of Germany, Prussia, and Russia and her dependencies, are compelled, under heavy penalties, to conform, in their social and political doctrines, to those of the governments, within whose jurisdiction they stand. The principle there is deeply abused, because it is perverted to the support of injustice and tyranny. The subversion of the University of Wilna is an instance of this, which will not be forgotten. Future times will class it with the destruction of the Alexandrian Library. Still the lesson taught by these practices is the same—that the permanence of a government depends, in a high degree, on the education of those, who are citizens or subjects of it.

of instruction. From their earliest years, pupils should be accustomed to such views, and imbued with such sentiments, as may render them friendly to the institutions which protect them.

As relates to this subject, it is worthy of serious inquiry, what course may be most advantageously pursued, in our own country? Our government is peculiar; in several important particulars, materially different from all others. It is, in a special manner, much more purely *federative* than any other that has been heretofore framed. And this not only ranks with its strongest features; as a fundamental principle, it is second only to one other. Next to the Freedom and Independence of the States, their UNION ON FEDERATIVE GROUND is the most vital provision of the government, and should be held the most inviolable. It is that which our purest patriots and wisest statesman have most highly prized, and the possible subversion of which they have contemplated with the deepest solicitude. The reason is obvious. Every consideration bearing on the subject proclaims it the most essential to our security, peace, and power, as a nation, and to our welfare, as a people. And now that there hangs over it a storm-cloud of portentous aspect, ready to discharge on it its accumulated thunders, it has become the duty, not only of every reasonable and virtuous American, but of every one not maddened by passion, or hardened by crime, to inquire anxiously how the impending desolation may be averted? Be it our business, then, on the present occasion, to endeavour to answer the question, "Can any scheme of education be projected, calculated to STRENGTHEN THE UNION OF THE STATES?" My

reply is affirmative; and I give it confidently. That such a scheme can be devised, it is impossible for me to doubt; nor am I without hope that it may also be executed. The nation possesses ample power, as well as the necessary means for carrying into effect the measures contemplated. I trust, therefore, that it will not be wanting in the disposition to use them, as all that is most important to it, both now and *in future*, may depend on the issue. For, should **DIS-UNION** take place, it will not be an evil of inconsiderable magnitude, or brief duration. The breach will be as wide as pole from pole, and as lasting as the elements of the human mind—unless it should give place to a *forced consolidation*, under a military despotism. Edifices overthrown, cities laid in ashes, fortresses erased, and navies destroyed may all be rebuilt, and appear again in renovated freshness and beauty; and fields wasted by the hand of the spoiler may be restored by industry and the bounties of nature. But, once demolish the fair fabric of the federal government, and no earthly power can reconstruct it. The mutual repulsiveness of its parts will render their disseverance eternal; and its mighty fragments, spread over the surface of a dilapidated empire, while they constitute the most mournful and magnificent ruin that time has witnessed, will present an everlasting monument of the madness of those, whose hands disunited them.

Were the question proposed to me, “In what are the citizens of the United States, as a people, most dangerously deficient?” I would answer decisively, in a **SPIRIT OF NATIONALITY**—in that expanded and practical loyalty and devotedness, which identify

mankind with their native land. That Americans love their country, I do not deny. But they love it only in *subdivisions*. Their patriotism, as individuals, does not cordially embrace the whole of it. From living under state governments, and feeling their influence first and most immediately, especially in personal and social interests, they are rendered so sectional in their sentiments and sympathies, as to be much more of state than national patriots. I regret to add, that, in some sections of the country, strong and illiberal antipathies are fostered against others. This unfortunate defect of national patriotism was strikingly exemplified in several occurrences, during the late war with Great Britain. Did the enemy invade any one of the States? The inhabitants of it, indignant at the insult, and deeming his footsteps a blot in their heraldry, and a dishonour to their soil, were ready to rise in mass to repel or destroy him. But the citizens of one State felt much less solicitude to expel the foe from the territory of another, more especially a remote one. When the West and the North were the seat of war, the East and the South seemed scarcely sensible that the enemy was in their country. And the same was true of the other sections of the Union, when the conflict was at a distance. Many other alarming examples of a want of national patriotism might be easily cited. In the present condition of the Republic, it is scarcely possible for the case to be otherwise. Sectional and selfish feelings and attachments are the natural growth of sectional divisions and governments. The States are not sufficiently sensible of their dependence on each other for the prosperity they enjoy. They do

not seem to know (or knowing, they forget,) that they resemble a pyramid formed of columns, where each one contributes to the strength of the structure, and where the removal of one endangers the fall of those that remain. In their pride and self-confidence, they do not bear in mind that each one of them is necessary to the protection and welfare of every other, and that the nation, which is the political offspring of their union, gives protection to the whole. Nor is it easy, in a period of peace and safety, to teach them this important truth. They would learn it much more readily under the pressure of adversity, especially under that of a foreign war, (could such a one arise) which would be dangerous to their Independence. The late war, already referred to, was not of that description. No power of the enemy, either in the field or on the ocean, nor any he was able to bring to the contest, could have endangered, in the slightest degree, the freedom of the States.

That my subsequent remarks, on the influence of the scheme of education I purpose to recommend, may be the more easily understood, and the more correctly appreciated, it is requisite that I premise a few further propositions. In the system of our federal government, as in every other system, where action is maintained, there are two powers in constant operation. And they are necessarily antagonists. In the present case, they are the *centripetal* and the *centrifugal*; and, although in direct opposition to each other, they are alike indispensable to the existence and perfection of the machinery they keep in motion. But a fair equilibrium between them must be maintained. Destroy, or too far enfeeble

either, and the other, taking the ascendancy, and acting without control, will produce confusion, if not ruin. The solar system furnishes the best illustration of this. Its principles and movements constitute the most perfect exemplar on the subject. The centripetal power there is lodged in the sun, and holds the planets and their satellites to that body, while the centrifugal attaches to the planets, and tends to throw them from him. Let the former prevail, and all the subordinate members of the system will tumble headlong into the central orb. This would be *consolidation*. Let the latter predominate, and, in the words of the poet, the same members will “fly lawless through the void,” to the annoyance, if not the overthrow of other systems. This would be *anarchy*. To apply my illustration.

In the federal system, the national government represents the sun, and the States and Territories the planets that revolve around him. The federal Constitution is the centripetal power, intended to retain the States in their orbits; and, through the medium of their own constitutions, and the sentiments in favour of their sovereignty and rights possessed and warmly cherished by their citizens, the States have the centrifugal power in themselves. While these two forces balance each other, the movements they maintain and control will be regular, the harmony of the system will continue, the union will be stable, and the country prosperous. In strict obedience to constitutional law, the States will perform their duties to their own citizens, to each other, and to the whole Republic; and the national government will commit no usurpation of state privileges. Free from the

danger of disturbing influences, the great federative machine of state, complete and in good condition in all its parts, will move magnificently onward, midway between the calm of consolidation, and the convulsions of disunion. And it will present, in its course, an unrivalled spectacle of moral grandeur and national glory. Some view of the opposite state of things, proceeding from conflicting causes, will be given hereafter.

Here a question of infinite moment presents itself to our consideration: "Which of the two powers of the federal system, the centripetal or the centrifugal, gives the fairest promise to gain strength with years, and ultimately predominate?" To this an answer may be easily given. I regret to add, that events have occurred to answer it already, in a way that portends calamity to our country. The federal constitution, as heretofore mentioned, forms the centripetal power; and every thing that bears on the subject shows, that it derives no additional strength from time. It has not yet received, nor, from present appearances, does it seem likely to receive from the people or the States, that sentiment of veneration and regard, to which it is entitled, both on account of the wisdom which marks it, and the pure and august source from which it emanated. On the contrary, there is too much reason to believe, that, as it increases in age, it decreases in strength; that many politicians are much more anxious to find blemishes than excellencies in it; or if they can not find them, to imagine them, or make them by false constructions; that it has therefore become an instrument of much less authority with the States and the citizens,

than it was in former years; and that there is a growing disposition in the country to weaken it still further, if not to treat it with entire disregard. In fine, instead of being venerated, as it once was, as the record of a *voluntary* and solemn compact between the States, reminding them of their early alliance and plighted faith, admonishing them of their highest interests, and binding them on principles of justice to their duties to each other, and to the nation, it is looked on, by too many, with jealousy and dislike, as if it were a system of fetters, framed *without authority*, and *arbitrarily* fastened on the members of the Union, to clog their movements, and deprive them of full scope and freedom of action.

Such, I say, is the case with the centripetal power of the federal system. In strength and influence it is palpably on the decline. But the condition of the centrifugal power is widely different. That its strength is increasing with an alarming rapidity, cannot be denied, and ought not to be concealed. The danger it portends should be boldly confronted, and unyieldingly counteracted, by every means that can be brought into the contest. Although the constitutions of the States, in which the centrifugal power is partly lodged, remain unchanged, it is far otherwise with the spirit of state sovereignty, and the opinion of state rights among the people. Within the last ten years, or even a shorter period, they have been more than quadrupled in strength. As relates to the subject of them, sentiments are now openly avowed, not only in the current discourse of certain political circles, but in public meetings and the capitol of the nation, which, twenty years ago, would have been

reprobated as seditious, if not punished as treasonable. Persons uttering them would not only have forfeited public confidence; they would have lost their standing in social life, and been stigmatized, as disturbers of good order, corrupters of the community, and enemies of the country. Those who were once treated as conspirators against the Union, under a celebrated character still living, never, in their most secret communications, used language half so threatening, nor a fiftieth part as baleful in its effects, as certain *honourable legislators*, and other men of distinction do now, in the face of the nation. But words are only the heralds of deeds. In such cases, the usual course of human conduct is, to *speak* first—in the commencement perhaps cautiously and in whispers, then more boldly and audibly—and ultimately to *act*. Men rarely plunge at once into consummate guilt. Cataline had been a deep gambler, a practised seducer, and a contemner of the gods, before he became the chief of traitors. And Arnold had projected various other fraudulent schemes to possess himself of wealth, before he attempted to sell his country. Thus, the meditated crime being gradually approached, and rendered familiar by conversation and reflection, its commission follows as a matter of course. So true is it, that

“Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,
 “As to be hated, needs but to be seen;
 “But, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
 “We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

Such will be the issue of the audacious and unprincipled conduct of some of those, who speak so lightly of the federal constitution, and so boldly of severing

the Union. They will pass from words to acts, and attempt treason. So dangerous are deviations from virtue, even in thought!

But the circumstance, which, beyond all others, will strengthen the centrifugal tendency of the States, and thus derange the balance of the system, is their growth in population, wealth, and power. In plainer terms, their increase in magnitude and weight, as political bodies. That this will add to their disposition to recede from their federal centre, is as certain, as that the momentum of a large moving body is greater than that of a small one, when the velocity of each is the same.* Were the planets, which belong to the solar system, daily increasing in size and weight, without a corresponding increase in the sun,

* Admitting that the centripetal and centrifugal powers of the system were in equilibrium, when the federal government was established, it is impossible for them to remain so, unless the federative ties be strengthened. From the rapidity of their growth, in population and wealth, the individual States feel their strength and consequence increasing, in a corresponding ratio. From this cause they are less sensible of their dependence on each other and on the nation. They resemble the high spirited minor, advancing to maturity, who feels every day less dependent on his parents and family. Nor is this all. Fresh sectional interests are opening and strengthening, which the States believe they could manage best themselves, were they uncontrolled by national influence. By these several causes their centrifugal power, and their disposition to exercise it, are necessarily augmented. The balance between the two controlling powers of the system, therefore, is not as perfect now, as it was at the beginning. And, unless prevented by suitable measures tending to strengthen the centripetal bands, it will become every day less so, until *DISUNION* must ensue. Thus are the elements of dissolution incorporated in the very nature of the federal system, and nothing but wisdom, virtue, and energy can counteract their tendency. I regret the gloominess of this representation. But my regret is deepened, in a tenfold degree, from a conviction that it is true.

they would ultimately escape from his control, and fly from their orbits into the wilds of space. And such, it is to be apprehended, will be the fate of the States of the Union, unless the centripetal power be strengthened. But no modification of the constitution of the United States to that effect can be made, without the calling of a general convention. And even then, under the influence of the popular views and feelings, which now pervade the country, there is reason to believe that that instrument would be made weaker, rather than stronger. By far the *most effectual way* then, if not the only way, to attain the desired end, is to enlighten and *nationalize the people*—to augment their intelligence and virtue, and infuse into them a fuller measure of the *federal spirit*, to the exclusion of a portion of that which *attaches them inordinately to the States, and to what are erroneously considered their rights.*

Am I asked how this purpose is to be effected? I answer, chiefly in two modes. The general diffusion of sound education, in whatever way it might be done, would greatly contribute to it. By enlightening the minds of the multitude, and enlarging their views, it would fit them the better to embrace and comprehend federal measures, and set a proper estimate on national concerns. They would then be convinced, by the exercise of their intellects, that both their interest and their duty bind them to the Union; and the moral influence of suitable training would complete the work. But such training would be indispensable. All experience testifies, that it is not wise in us to trust our conduct, in matters of intense excitement, to the government of reason alone,

We are too much swayed by feeling to be secure under such direction. All our faculties, then, moral and social, as well as intellectual, should be so disciplined, as to harmonize with each other, and be rendered subservient to the same end. Then would intelligence and virtue become the sponsors and foster parents of nationality, and do their part in counterbalancing the growing centrifugal tendency of the States.

Another measure calculated to promote the same object is, to accustom the people, as much as possible, to contemplate national objects, and weigh national interests; to approach them familiarly, make them topics of family and fire-side consideration and discourse, experience constantly more or less of their influence, and thus become identified with them in their feelings. To effect this, every thing that will admit of it, ought to be federalized—instituted I mean on federative principles, and arranged on a federate plan. Like the general government, it should embrace the States, and have a national centre. Thus we have a national Judiciary, Treasury, and Post-office establishment, whose influence in strengthening the Union might be made immense. A national Bank and Mint, more especially the former, contribute not a little to the same end, by interweaving and identifying remote interests, supplying the people with a national and uniform currency, and facilitating, beyond any other means, the intercourse of the States with each other, through the channels of commerce and trade. I doubt whether this effect of a national Bank has ever been considered and appreciated as it deserves. To me it appears important. Yet I do not know that it was even alluded to, in the debates

of Congress respecting that institution. Did time and the occasion permit me to dwell on the subject, the nationalizing influence of the United States Bank might be clearly demonstrated. Nor am I sure that a national debt, to a reasonable amount, is a national evil. On the contrary, I verily believe, that it has been to us a national blessing, and would so continue, under suitable management. A general scheme of national roads and canals, especially rail-roads, by facilitating travelling and other modes of intercourse, and thus virtually contracting the boundaries of the empire, would minister incalculably to the strength of the Union. A few millions of dollars appropriated annually in this way, for a short term of years, would tend to save us from disunion, anarchy, and blood, and might avert from us the necessity of expending hereafter tenfold as much in destructive wars. Nor should the scheme to produce nationality terminate here. Let the professions of Theology and Medicine be also nationalized. Let them, I mean, be so organized, and their members so formed into societies, as to have currents of influence setting from each of the States, and from different sections of the same State, to be concentrated in a great federal reservoir; and let the issues from that reservoir be diffused, in return, throughout the Union. And let Temperance, Peace, Colonization, Bible, and Tract societies, and other institutions founded for moral and benevolent purposes, be similarly organized and administered. Let them also have each a national centre, and become nurseries of federal feeling throughout the States. Add to these a society, nationalized in the same way, whose sole object shall be the PRESERVATION OF THE UNION;

and the joint influence and benefits of the whole may be made incalculable—I trust irresistible. By communicating to the people proper views, and cultivating and maturing in them correct feelings, with regard to the rights, powers, and beneficial effects of the general government, they will operate with a force altogether unknown to mere statute laws.

As time does not permit me to detail these schemes, and exhibit them in all their elements and bearings, I must be content with the brief reference to them already made, and shall only add, that no difficulty need attend the establishment or administration of them. Should the experiment ever be fairly made, our country will have reason to rejoice in the issue.

But above all, let there be established a national scheme of early education. If wisely planned and organized, and ably conducted, that will become paramount, in its influence, to all the others. It may be rendered in time so powerful an engine, in reviving the faded nationality of the people, as to save the Republic from the dangers which threaten it.

Youth is the period for the formation of habits. The entire being of man is then flexible, and may be moulded at pleasure.

“’Tis education forms the common mind,
“Just as the twig is bent, the tree’s inclined.”

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Let the education of youth then be sufficiently federalized, and the Union is secure. The discontent of baffled ambition, backed by a spirit of faction and conspiracy, may occasionally assail it; but its discomfiture will be as that of the billows, which break against the cliff,

and fall in defeated fragments at its base. Let each American youth feel that he is educated for the Republic, and under its parental wing, and his being will become national. He will have incorporated with his nature the attachment of an ancient Persian to his country, and the firmness of a Roman in defending it. And that attachment will be strictly federal. He will not love any portion of his country less than he does under the present plans of education; but he will love his *whole* country much more.

The outline of a federalized scheme of education may be briefly sketched. It should embrace one university in each State, with as many colleges, academies, high-schools, and other subordinate seats of instruction, as may conform to the number, wants, and resources of the people. Add a National University,*

*I know it has been objected to a National University, that it will tend to produce a consolidation of the government. The apprehension is not only unfounded but ludicrous. Let young men be educated where they may, they will retain a sufficient amount of state and sectional feeling to induce them to oppose consolidation. So will the people at large. That event can never take place, except as a consequence of a dissolution of the Union. One of the necessary effects of DISUNION will be war between the States. Out of this may arise some great and successful military chieftian, who will conquer and subjugate the whole country. A belief that the government can be consolidated, on any other ground, is chimerical. The *natural* tendency of the Union is to dissolution. And, unless that issue be guarded against, by every possible expedient, it will inevitably occur. Consolidation, on the other hand, is, from the structure of the Union, *unnatural*, as must appear to every one, who has made himself acquainted with it, and who observes and thinks. I repeat, therefore, that nothing but military power can produce it. And no one can acquire a sufficiency of that power for such a purpose, while the Union shall endure.

as a federal centre, to which, in magnitude and means, the other universities and colleges shall stand related, somewhat as the state governments do the national, and the arrangement will be complete. Throughout this great confederation of schools, by far the most magnificent and powerful ever erected, whose accumulated light may be made to reach, in time, the remotest confines of civilization, and penetrate even the abodes of barbarism—in all these institutions, I say, let such uniformity of instruction and discipline prevail, that the lower may be suitable nurseries to the higher—schools, technically so called, to academies, academies to colleges, colleges to universities, and State universities to the National one, so that a family resemblance may mark, and a kindred spirit actuate the whole. In each one of this great nation of schools let the inestimable value of the federal union, and the paramount duty of preserving it, be thoroughly inculcated by text-books and lectures—on the minds of children incapable of comprehending the reason of it, as a matter of faith, and on those of pupils more mature, as a political truth, founded in the philosophy of human nature, and amply sustained by history and experience. Let a course like this be steadily pursued, and I repeat, that the union of the States, cemented originally by the blood of our fathers, and further confirmed by the sentiments of our posterity, will be indissoluble. So hopeless will be any attempt at disunion, that it will turn to quixotism; and faction and intrigue will ultimately cease to dream of the project. But, as has been already done, with regard to several other topics, which have been only referred to, I must again plead a want of time to analyze fully a federa-

tive scheme of education, and discuss it in all its points and relations. I shall therefore confine such further remarks, as I may have to offer, to a single but leading feature of it, a National University.

In commendation of such an institution, we have as high authority as the world can furnish, in favour of any untried experiment. Washington, the father of his country, and one of the most unerring judges of men and human affairs, earnestly urged its establishment on the legislature of the nation. Adams the elder, and Jefferson, two of the most distinguished statesmen and sages that time has produced, did the same. So did Madison, who, in depth of research, and solidity of judgment is inferior to none of his predecessors in the Presidency. So did Monroe, than whom a purer minded statesman, or a more honourable man, never graced the annals of patriotism. And so did Adams the younger, who, for brilliancy of genius, philosophical acuteness, and variety and extent of attainment, has no superior among his contemporaries. Why the present chief magistrate has declined to recommend the establishment of a National University, it does not fall within my province to inquire. I shall not however disguise my regret for his failure; the more especially, as the present would be a most opportune period for the enterprise, the treasury being full, the revenue abundant, and the national debt nearly extinguished. Nor do I hesitate to add, that the establishment of the institution would be infinitely more useful to the nation, and would therefore, in an equal degree, confer more renown on the chief magistrate, than the extinction of the debt.

But, in favour of the erection of a National University, there may be adduced other and weightier reasons, than the mere opinions of illustrious men. The institution would raise to an unprecedented height in our country, the tone of education, the standard of literature and science, and the rank and influence of their successful cultivators. Thus would it not only prove to the nation a source of additional power and splendour at home; it would increase, in an equal degree, its foreign renown, and consequently its weight in inter-national concerns. Am I asked in what way it would produce effects so extensive and beneficial? I answer, through sundry channels, a few of which shall be briefly considered.

In grandeur, and all other imposing and useful qualities, the University would correspond with the resources of the nation, and the high character of the people for intellect and energy. The buildings would be spacious, splendid, and commodious; the libraries extensive and judiciously selected, and the suits of apparatus complete—well fitted for the purposes of science, and prepared in the highest and costliest style. To these fundamental requisites, all the other provisions of the institution would conform. The funds would be ample, the professorships sufficiently numerous to embrace every requisite point of knowledge whether practical or ornamental, and filled by the ablest and best qualified teachers; in the arrangements for exercise, amusement, and manly accomplishments, convenience and elegance would be skilfully united, and the whole would be organized on the most approved plan and principles of instruction.

It would be an institution of modern times, suited to a liberal and enlightened period, not a servile copy of originals that have descended to us from ages of ignorance and superstition. The site would be some convenient spot in the District of Columbia, open to the eye of the nation and the world, and subject to the exciting and elevating influences of proximity to the seat of the most august government that man has established. In fine; the institution, when complete, would be a great national monument of elegance and sublimity for taste to admire, and of usefulness for judgment to approve and imitate.

Thus provided with all that literature and science require for their advancement, and suitably administered by faculties worthy of it, the institution would operate powerfully and beneficially in a threefold way; on other seats of learning; on its own pupils; and on the country at large. I shall offer a few remarks, by way of illustration, under each of these heads.

Inspired by the example of the **CENTRAL UNIVERSITY**, and resolved on being as slightly eclipsed by it as possible, and of rendering themselves, if not successful competitors of it, at least worthy collaborators in the same great cause, State universities and colleges would imitate it in their provisions, and exertions to excel. They would, in a particular manner, add to their libraries and suits of apparatus, increase the number of their professorships, select teachers of higher qualifications to fill them, so modify some of their usages, as to fit them better to modern times, and thus amend their style of instruction. The examples of the higher state institutions would be fol-

lowed by the lower* ones, and an ambition to improve would every where prevail, until the general condition of education would be greatly enhanced, and ultimately perfected.

This picture is no creation of the fancy. In neither the drawing nor the colouring of it has the imagination been concerned. Reason and experience have been alone consulted in the work. It is a representation founded in nature, and conformable to two of the strongest and most active faculties of the

*One of the greatest evils of our country, as respects education, is the low character and general incompetency of the teachers of *common schools*. The leading object of the inhabitants of most neighborhoods is to procure a "*cheap school master,*" not a *qualified one*. In this they rarely succeed; for though they may employ a thing called a teacher, to whom they pay but little, the sum they give him is *thrown away*—often much worse. It is a price paid for initiating their children in bad habits—if not bad moral habits, miserable ones as relates to spelling, reading, writing, ciphering, manners, and every thing else connected with education. Most country school masters are as unfit for their occupation as ignorance, illiterate, and bad breeding can render them. Those who employ them to educate their children, would scarcely confide to them the care of their cattle. Some of them, I have seen, have reminded me of the school master met with, by an English traveller, in one of the interior Provinces of France. "Pray sir," said the traveller, "what do you teach these children?" "Nothing," replied the master. "Nothing! why so?" "Because I know nothing myself." "How long have you been a school master?" "Three years." "What did you do, before you became one?" "I took care of the chickens of the village." "Why did you follow such a humble employment?" "Because I was fit for nothing better." It would be well for many parents, in the United States, did they commit to their school masters the care of their poultry yards, instead of that of their children. Until this radical and crying evil of incompetent teachers of common schools shall be removed, it is folly to look for an improved education. And nothing but higher salaries to teachers can remove it.

human mind—the *propensities to imitate and to rival*. Man is essentially an imitative being; and the uniform direction of imitation is *upward*. The high never follow the example of the low; the rich and powerful of the feeble and destitute. The reverse is the practice of the whole human family. I repeat therefore, that such will be the case with the literary institutions of our country. The lower will, as far as possible, adopt the arrangements and rules, and aspire to the amended teaching of the higher, until the whole shall become instinct with the lofty spirit of the National University, and shall vie with it in practice. Thus will the latter seat of learning be not only a great centre-light, to diffuse its radiance *directly* throughout the Union, but a source of *power* to promote knowledge *indirectly*, by exciting other institutions to laudable competition. Like the sun to the planets, whose destiny he controls, it will give light, and animation, and productiveness to the entire federative system of schools.

It has been alleged that the National University will also operate powerfully, and to great advantage on its own pupils. Nor is it conceivable how the case can be otherwise. It is a law of nature, that all things produce in their own likeness. Great things are the parents of great things, and small things of small. And this law prevails as certainly in the moral and intellectual world, as in the physical and organic. The human intellect then is no less subject to it than the human body. Wars, revolutions in nations, and other momentous occasions develop minds calculated to act a suitable part in them. History abounds in facts confirmatory of this. The revolution in Eng-

land produced a Cromwell, our own revolution a Washington, the French a Napoleon, and the South American a Bolivar. Great deliberative assemblies are the nurseries of great orators and debaters; and Greece and Rome were indebted for their illustrious men, to the grand events in the midst of which they grew.

Such will be the issue of the National University. Great in all its attributes, it will produce, on that ground alone, corresponding effects in the formation of scholars. The intellects of those educated in it, will receive the highest degree of development and polish, of which they are susceptible. Most of its pupils moreover, especially that portion of them that shall come from remote parts of the country, will be youth of lofty promise—the *elite* of the nation. Few of any other description will resort to it from a distance. They will be peculiarly susceptible, therefore, of high excitement and honourable effort, in relation to their scholarship and intellectual standing. Nor is it easy to imagine a combination of circumstances, better fitted to produce such effects, than that under the influence of which they will be placed. In whatever is substantial and useful, as well as in what is calculated to excite admiration and produce effect, the institution itself, as already mentioned, will be grand and impressive. The very fact, therefore, of being a pupil of it, and a candidate for its honours, and of having access to all its sources of improvement, will be an incentive to ambitious aims and strenuous efforts, in every mind of an elevated order. Nor will proximity to the seat of the national government, the arena of great intellectual struggle and achievement,

and the theatre of vast and imposing events, fail to contribute to the same end. No youth of a common spirit, much less of an aspiring one, can remain unambitious and inactive, in such a situation. Nothing can prevent him from resolving and endeavouring to prepare himself to act, at a future period, a distinguished part in the councils of his country—to become a representative, a senator, a minister abroad, one of the heads of department at home, a judge of the supreme court, or chief magistrate of the nation.

Another circumstance which will operate on the youth of the University, as a powerful incentive to attain distinction, will be, that their studies will be prosecuted and the result of them exhibited under the eye of the nation; and not of this nation alone, but also of foreign ones. The former of these effects will take place through members of Congress and other functionaries of the general government, who assemble at Washington from all parts of the United States, and the latter through public ministers from abroad. All striking occurrences in the University will become known to these personages, who will rarely fail to give them publicity. In examinations and other modes of trial, therefore, the standing and performances of the pupils will be subject to a much wider inspection, than those of the pupils of any other seat of learning. Corresponding to this will be the extent of the sphere, through which currency will be given to official reports, and other forms of intelligence respecting merit or the reverse—success or defeat, in contests for prizes—honours conferred, or disgrace incurred. Nor is this all. The youth of the University will be assembled not only from the several sections of the United

States; the high reputation of the institution, united to the spirit of liberty it will foster, and the full development that will be given, by its professors, to the engrossing doctrine of human rights, will draw many to it from foreign countries. Some will repair to it from Spanish America and the West India islands, and some from Greece, Spain, Poland, and other parts of Europe, where personal and political freedom is prized. A portion of the intellectual chivalry even of Great Britain, France, and Germany will be found within its walls. This will become another ground of intense devotion to study. It will produce the most ardent and unremitting competition. Among the natives of the United States, the North will endeavour to wrest the palm of scholarship from the South, the East from the West, and each section of the country from every other; and between Americans and foreigners a similar struggle for pre-eminence will be maintained. In the latter case, the question, whether the American mind be, in any respect, inferior to the European? will be finally put to rest, even in the opinion of uninformed skeptics and prejudiced enemies; and our country will not suffer in the comparison. The issue will silence forever the impudent prating, and cover with odium the false statements of the Halls and Trollopes, and other unprincipled British scribblers, respecting the degeneracy of man in America. No scene of competition equally animated will be exhibited in any other seat of the Muses. The necessary result will be, pre-eminent excellence in intellectual cultivation. What youth of a lofty spirit and an ardent temperament, feeling that he has intrusted to him a deep stake in the reputation of his

country, in a contest with a foreign one, or of the spot where he was born, in a competition with another portion of the same country, and apprized that the result would be made extensively known to his own honour or discredit—what high-minded young man, engaged in such a trial, with the eyes of those most dear to him, rivetted on him, and their hopes and fears alive to the issue, would fail to struggle for success, virtually under the motto of “victory or death?” What youth, I repeat, worthy of a place in the first literary institution on earth, would not rather sink under the toils of intense and unabated study, than fail in such a contest? My appeal is to yourselves, as a body of young men, familiar with ambition and the pride that becomes you. And I feel confident, that, were you now to reply to it, your answer would be NONE. Under these circumstances, the graduates of the University would be among the foremost scholars of the age, and must attain a similar rank as philosophers and statesmen, civilians and members of the other learned professions. The influence of this state of things, with some of its accompaniments, on the destinies of the Union, will be adverted to hereafter. In the mean time, its beneficial effects on the prosperity of the country, and its standing with other nations, must be obvious to every one.

The maxim, that knowledge is power, is as true of communities as of individuals. Other things being equal, the most enlightened people prove always victorious, in every contest, whether civil or military. Is there a struggle for superiority in agriculture, commerce, or the arts? knowledge decides it. And, in war, ignorance and barbarism readily yield to civili-

zation and science: The conquest of Mexico and Peru, by the Spaniards, and of numerous and powerful tribes of Indians, by the cavaliers of Jamestown and the pilgrims of Plymouth, are in proof of this. Nor, when all the circumstances of the case are taken into view, is the subversion of the Roman empire, by the hordes of the north, in contradiction of it. The knowledge elicited and diffused through our country, then, by the National University, will give us strength and splendour at home, and that will give us standing and influence abroad. Deference will be always paid to us, our rights will be respected, and our friendship courted by other nations, precisely in proportion to our power to protect our rights, command respect, and confer favours. And that power will be in the ratio of the knowledge we possess, and our wisdom and energy in bringing it into action.

Am I asked, how the operations of a literary institution, erected merely for the instruction of youth, can produce such effects in strengthening the Republic? I answer, by enlightening the Republic, and diffusing through it sound and patriotic dispositions, and thus making it ONE. It will be understood that the UNITY to which I allude is not a consolidation of the States, but a strict compliance, by them, with the duties enjoined on them by the federal constitution. And this end will be greatly promoted, by the knowledge communicated to youth, and the national spirit cultivated and confirmed in them, by the education received in the National University. That education will be so far federal,* as to represent federal princi-

* Education rarely does more than it is intended to do. The same form of education, therefore, is not equally *suitable* for every

ples and measures in their true character and relations, show them to be indispensable to the welfare of the country, and in this way implant securely a due regard for them in the juvenile mind. The youth thus instructed will ripen into men, and conduct, at a future period, the affairs of the commonwealth. They will become members of the state and general governments, and may acquire, in time, an influence not to be resisted, in maintaining harmony between them. Perfectly master of the principles of both, as well as of their delicate and important relations, and having no preponderating biases on the subject, they will be the most competent judges and the safest arbiters, in all cases of difficulty between them. While they will prevent usurpation, on the part of the national government, they will so far moderate the claims of the States, as to keep them in obedience to the federal constitution.

But this is not the only channel, through which the National University will benefit us, as a people. It will form not only great statesmen and legislators, but philosophers, historians, poets, and other men of letters, of similar standing. And each of these classes contributes its part to the power and prosperity of a nation. Whatever develops the natural resources of a country adds to its strength. But an enlightened philosophy alone can do this. It alone can unlock

purpose. That man may be well fitted to his destiny, he must be carefully *trained to it*. To imbue Americans, then, with true federal and national feelings, they must be federally and nationally educated. In no other way is it possible to foster and confirm in them that attachment to the Union and the nation *as a whole*, which is essential to the preservation of the former and the due strength and aggrandizement of the latter.

the rich stores of mineralogy, geology, botany, and natural history, and give free access to them. And they are abundant sources of power as well as of wealth. The same is true of chemistry, mechanical philosophy, and the different branches of mathematics, more especially astronomy, navigation, and engineering. They also are sinews of national strength. And all these will be greatly advanced among us, by philosophers and mathematicians formed by the system of instruction, to which I have referred; and of which a central University is to be the chief organ. Great divines, physicians, and lawyers are likewise substantial and effective elements of the power of States. These also will be the natural growth of a well conducted system of federal education.

National renown of every description is national strength. To this, mere literary renown forms no exception. It is not only an element of power, but the most pure and lasting that belongs to the aggregate. It endures long after the dissolution of all the others, and sheds a glory on their ruins. By erecting a high literary standard, therefore, which the writers and orators of the country shall emulate, a central University will add indirectly to the strength of the nation. The warrior will wield his sword and direct his thunders with the more spirit and effect, from a knowledge that his story will be told and his deeds celebrated by historians and poets of distinction; and he will yield up his life more gallantly, and with the greater alacrity, from a confidence that scholars will erect to him a monument which will be unimpaired, when mausoleums and pyramids shall be but fragments and dust. Of statesmen, philosophers, and

men of profession, the same is true. They also are cheered in their labours, and strengthened in their efforts to benefit their country, by the hope that their names will survive, through some form of literary composition. So are all men of high standing and public usefulness—all, whose individual reputation may contribute to the renown of their native land. Nature has implanted in them a love of fame, as a part of their constitution; and they do their duty more earnestly, and to better effect, from a secret trust that some memorial of them will descend to posterity, in the pages of the scholar. Such are a few of the channels, through which literature adds to the strength of a nation.

The condition of our native tongue, in the United States, is far from being creditable to us. It is nearly as colonial now, as it was when we submitted to the British yoke. We have no American standard of taste in it, to which, as a people, we are willing to conform. True, we have the productions of Webster; and they are works of great labour, erudition, and value. But they are far from being generally received by us, as authority in letters. In a spirit highly discreditable to us, as an independent people, we look too much to Great Britain for instruction in lexicography, philology, and the entire range of polite literature. This is a species of dependence and acknowledged inferiority, not only humiliating to ourselves, but which detracts from our standing, in the view of foreign nations, and so far tends to limit our influence with them. In stronger language, it diminishes our power. A dependent condition, as respects any thing essential to existence, influence, or fame, is

incompatible with the possession of full power, either national or individual. Great Britain, France, and Germany owe much of their strength to their *entire independence*—their possessing within themselves all that is necessary to scientific and literary existence and rank, as well as to national glory. Of ancient Greece and Rome the same was true. I allude especially to pacific and social power—strength at home and an ability to exercise a weighty influence over foreign nations, by peaceful measures and a high example. This is the power of knowledge and wisdom; a possession much more honourable than a mere capability to enforce submission by arms; and an enlightened independence, on the score of vernacular language, forms a part of it. To our attainment of this point of independence, nothing else would contribute so essentially, as a National University. By either producing within itself the requisite elementary works, or sanctioning officially those produced by American learning and talents elsewhere, that institution would soon establish a standard of literary taste and authority, which would be adopted by scholars, as well as by the public. Such an establishment would be not only convenient and reputable to us, but highly beneficial. Being itself national, it would contribute in an eminent degree, both directly and indirectly, to the formation of a national literature, and would have much influence in nationalizing the people. While, by aiding to confer on us a name in letters, it would enhance our standing abroad, it would also become a ground of national pride to us, and bear its part in binding us to a common centre at home. Great Britain owes much of the pride and

firmness that sustain her in all her trials, and no little of the influence she exercises in Europe, to her pre-eminence in letters. Sir Walter Scott has added more to the solid and permanent strength of that empire, by his writings, than Lord Wellington did, by the overthrow of Napoleon. Germany also is rapidly strengthening herself on similar ground. And we shall do the same, as soon as our federal system of education shall be completed.

Some branches of science would be advanced in this country in a higher degree than others, by the establishment of a National University. This would be the case, in a special manner, with astronomy, in which, from a want of suitable apparatus and encouragement, we are extremely deficient. The United States does not contain a single observatory that can be called respectable, much less complete. Every establishment of the kind we possess, is restricted in its means. Hence, we are compelled to look abroad for all improvements in that department of knowledge, which is so surpassing in sublimity, as well as so useful, and therefore so peculiarly fitted to give distinction to a community that successfully cultivates it. But a National University would remedy this defect. Corresponding in excellence with its other provisions, its observatory would be furnished with every thing necessary to explore the heavens, and make further discoveries in them, and to acquire a full and practical knowledge of those already made. Other high institutions, following the example set by the central one, would make suitable improvements in *their* observatories, until our country would be as abundant, as it is now deficient, in the means of pros-

ecuting astronomical science. We should then be prepared, not only to vie with the nations of Europe, in our acquaintance with the heavens, but to discharge in time our long standing debt of knowledge to them, as relates to that subject. The advantages which this condition of things would confer on us, as a nation, both at home and abroad, are too obvious to need a recital. They may be summed up in the single remark, that it would give us a standing and an influence in the empire of mind, not surpassed by those of any other people.

One object of the University would be, to prepare such pupils as might be destined for public, rather than professional or literary life, to become accomplished statesmen, financiers, and diplomatists. The science of political economy, therefore, and of natural and international law would be extensively cultivated in it. So would physical geography and the science of mind, branches indispensable in the direction of the affairs of an empire. Without a competent knowledge of mental philosophy, and the physical character of the various sections and localities of the globe, it is impossible to become an accomplished statesman. The truth of this might be easily made appear, by an analysis of the duties of such a personage.

There is reason to believe that the globe we inhabit, especially in its polar regions, and in the great western and southern oceans, is far from being fully explored. To complete its geography, as well as for the promotion of commerce and the arts, many discoveries are yet to be made; some of them no doubt highly important. And they must be made by mari-

time nations, of which the United States must become ultimately the greatest. In the way of discovery, Great Britain, France and Holland, Portugal and Spain, have already done much; our own country very little. Hitherto our youthfulness, as a nation, has excused us; but it cannot, in justice, excuse us any longer. If our fleets and navies can visit every ocean and sea, in the concerns of commerce and war, they can also contribute, under proper management, to the further exploration of the globe. Let them be engaged, then, to a reasonable extent, in that business. One successful enterprise of this kind, might do more for the glory of our country, and the benefit of our race, than scores of naval victories. But the faculties of the National University, familiar with the wants of science, as well as with the best means of supplying them, and being in habits of constant intercourse and intimacy with the executive department of the government, and acting virtually as a scientific council to it, might do much in the suggestion, encouragement, and direction of voyages of discovery.

By many other channels, which time does not permit me to enumerate, might this great institution diffuse its influence throughout the nation. Even members of congress, and other high functionaries of the government, might be enlightened and liberalized by it, and rendered more competent to the duties of their stations. Ignorance and illiteracy, coming within its sphere, would be instructed, or put to shame and banished by it; and, in either case, we should be less annoyed and dishonoured by them, in the high places of the nation. The government would be more under the guidance of cultivated minds. Legislators would

endite their own speeches, and public men of every description their official communications. No officer of the nation would render himself an object of pity or derision, by being compelled either to think or write by proxy.

Am I asked what influence all this would have in strengthening the union of the states? I answer, a vital one. Sound knowledge and correct feeling, under the common appellation of intelligence and virtue, are the only powers that can perpetuate the Union. Other things may act as auxiliaries, but they alone are the rock of our safety. Compared to them, laws to suppress sedition and punish treason, and all other legislative enactments, even though enforced at the point of the bayonet, are but threads to cables. An enlightened and truly virtuous people will cling to the Union, with a resolution that no artifice or temptation can shake, and a grasp which nothing but death can relax. But it has been already shown, I trust satisfactorily, that education is the only source of intelligence and virtue, and that the best scheme of education for the United States, is that of which a National University shall be the centre. By such a scheme alone, as I verily believe, can the youth of our country be so trained, as to be rendered truly national in their character. And if they be not thus nationalized, the Union must dissolve. It will return to its original elements, as our bodies do to dust, long before the middle of the present century, unless the growing sentiments of *state rights*, *state sovereignty*, and other popular prejudices of the kind, be kept within the limits of the federal constitution.

But this is not all. The power and splendour, which the scheme of education I am considering, must confer on the nation, would further add to the strength of the Union. Whatever may augment our national glory must have this effect. Man is instinctively attached to what is great and illustrious. He especially delights in forming, in his own person, a part of it, because the relation is flattering to his vanity and pride. Great Britain and France may be safely cited in confirmation of this. In science, literature, arts, and their accompaniments, those empires are great and glorious. Hence their subjects are inordinately wedded to them. Nothing can induce them to efface or forget their national birthright. They may deeply complain of the abuses of government, and oppose them even in arms. But no matter. In all that constitutes patriots, or gives character to men, they are Frenchmen and Englishmen still. Let the empires be reduced to the standing of petty powers, and the attachment of the subjects will be also reduced. Of the ancient Greeks and Romans the same might be affirmed. Their countries were the most powerful and illustrious on earth; and hence their patriotic devotedness was the most intense. They would have preferred death, in any form, to the extinction of their nationality. Nor, as respects the United States and their inhabitants, will the case be otherwise. Give to the nation the power and splendour, which a federal scheme of education would bestow, and, by that consideration alone, the attachment of the people to it will be greatly strengthened. That bodies attract in proportion to their magnitude,

is as true in ethics, as it is in physics. By a wise and vigorous administration of our affairs, the American nation is destined to be, in a short time, pre-eminent in power and lustre over all others. And that circumstance will tend to the preservation of the Union. The several States will glory in being parts of so splendid an empire; and their disposition to recede from it will be extinguished. They will be convinced that the weight and respectability which each of them possesses, as well as the safety and prosperity it enjoys, when they are united and moving in mass, would be lost to them, should they separate and act in fragments. They will be sensible of their resemblance, in this respect, to an army, which, when advancing in column, is irresistible, but is easily vanquished, when its array is broken.

Two further grounds, on which a National University would minister to the strength of the Union, and I am done. Nor can I doubt that you will concur with me, in considering them powerful; because you have yourselves experienced their force.

Young men, especially those of warm temperaments and generous dispositions, are strongly attached to the place of their education. Their devotedness to it rises at times almost to idolatry. Nothing is to them so lovely and sacred, as the venerated walls of their *Alma Mater*; while her embowering groves, assimilated in their fancy, to that of Egeria in the retirement of which they have pursued their studies, and her classical walks, where they have often strayed in lonely contemplation, or in fellowship with friends, possess for them the enchantment of consecrated ground. No other spot of earth, save that which

enshrines the relics of their forefathers, is so holy in their sight. From any hostile violation or unhallowed touch they would protect it with their lives, or rejoice to wash out the stain with their blood. To your own emotions, at the present moment, I dare appeal for the truth of this statement.

But, as already represented, the capital of the nation, or some other spot in the District of Columbia, would be the seat of the National University. To that spot would cling, with the unyielding force of filial attachment, the affections of the pupils educated there, in whatever section of the country they might reside. This circumstance, as far as the early and cherished prepossessions of distinguished men might avail, would bind the members of the Republic to its centre, with cords formed of some of the choicest materials of our nature. Should danger, from without or within, threaten the capital, identified with the University in the minds of the alumni, they would hasten to its defence, from every point of the Union, with resolutions and means which it would be impossible to resist. Under such circumstances, Washington would be to them what Paris is to Frenchmen, and what Rome was to her sons who had been trained within her walls. Every thing would be done that wisdom could devise or gallantry dare, to protect her from dishonour, and preserve her inviolate, as the heart of the nation. Nor would the sons of the institution come alone. From their standing and influence, they would be able to bring along with them a sufficient force of the chivalry of the country, to insure success. Thus would filial reverence and love co-operate in strengthening the union of the States.

But this is not all. Youth is the period for the formation of friendships. The mind at that season, when nature is in blossom, being neither callous from care, nor flinty from selfishness, is alive to all that is generous and attractive. Nor are any friendships stronger or more lasting, productive of higher gratification to the parties, or of greater benefits to others, than those which are contracted in colleges and universities. The friendship of Damon and Pythias, so celebrated in story, commenced, as we are told, within academic walls. And many others, less romantic indeed, yet equally unchangeable, formed under the habitudes of college life, might be easily cited.

As already mentioned, many of the most high-gifted youth, from each state of the Union, will resort for their education to the National University. Here intimacies will be produced, and friendships to endure for life, contracted between young men from every section of the country, destined, at a future period, to become leaders in conducting the affairs of the Republic. Family alliances, in places remote from each other, will also grow out of the same influences. Hence will arise such an extensive personal intercourse and wide spread sympathy, and such a constant interchange of intelligence and kind offices, that the whole nation would seem connected as one great family. At least there will be no portion of it that will not have a knowledge of the local concerns of all the others, and feel an interest in them. Thus will spring up, out of the moral and social relations of the University, a sort of national friendship and good will, which must operate with no small power in preserving the Union. Statesmen, who have been intimate from

their boyhood, who confide implicitly in each others rectitude and honour, and are at the same time personal and long tried friends, will be much more likely to accommodate differences of opinion, conciliate animosities, reconcile jarring interests, and maintain the harmony and integrity of the commonwealth, than they would be, were they strangers. This is certain, if any thing be so in the philosophy of man or the history of governments.

But the hour admonishes me to close this discourse. Yet the subject of it, far from being fully discussed, has been but briefly noticed in a few of its points. It will belong to such of you, therefore, as may feel an interest in it, to follow out the consideration of it, at a more convenient time.

Those of you, gentlemen, who are about to take leave of this seat of learning, and embark on the turbulent ocean of affairs, will enter into life at a momentous crisis, in the concerns of the nation. Since the perilous times of our revolutionary struggle, the prospects of our country have never been so gloomy. The darkest hour of the late war, when the British bayonet, associated with the merciless hatchet and scalping knife, was busy on our borders, was sunshine to the present. The murmurs of discontent throughout our land, waxing louder and louder, and the spirit of dissatisfaction becoming more general and embittered, threaten us fearfully with civil commotions. In the eventful scenes likely to grow out of this condition of things, you will be called on to act your parts; and I do not permit myself to doubt that they will be, in all instances correct and honourable, and in many distinguished—such as may become high-minded pa-

trious and virtuous citizens. Though I cannot but feel assured that, in your political capacity, the UNION OF THE STATES will be the pole star of your movements, I notwithstanding take the liberty earnestly to implore you to that effect. Let the Republic, and the *whole* Republic, be the object of your most intense and devoted regard. Whatever may be his standing as a man, or his pretensions as a statesman, patriot, or moralist, distrust the motives and reject the counsels of him, whose language or measures lean toward DISUNION. Admit not the fellowship, nor breathe even the atmosphere of the modern Cataline. He is smitten with a moral leprosy, dangerous to youth, and no communion should be held with him by the healthy. No matter what may be the ground, real or pretended, of his dissatisfaction with the government; and no matter what his own condition, high or low, rich or poor, a private citizen or a public functionary; if he openly advise or secretly suggest a breach of the Union, or if his conduct tend to that effect, he is a traitor to his country, and should receive, in the abhorrence of the virtuous, if not from penal law, the reward of his crime.

To bring before us, in its true character, the enormity of those who would foster sedition, and separate the States, let us contemplate, for a moment, the nature and magnitude of the evil they meditate. This we may do, in a degree sufficient to consummate our detestation of those who would violate the integrity of the nation, by looking but for an instant on hasty sketches of UNION and DISUNION, and contrasting the bright felicities of the one, with the deep desolation and horrors of the other.

Let the Union be preserved, by a strict obser-

vance of the provisions of the constitution, and the government be faithfully administered under a code of salutary laws, and the issue of the great political experiment we are making, will be glorious, not only beyond example, but beyond the anticipations of the boldest calculator. Extravagant as this prediction may possibly be deemed, it is notwithstanding justified by the history of the past. Hitherto our progress in prosperity has outstript hope, and filled even the measure of imagination itself. Be the Union maintained then, I say, and, in the full enjoyment of their liberties and rights, the people of the United States will experience a degree of political and social happiness, known only to themselves. Content and abundance will every where prevail. Under the influence of institutions founded in wisdom, and constantly improving from experience and fresh developments of mind, and by the protected and productive industry of the citizens, the nation will advance in opulence and grandeur, until it shall leave far behind it, all that the rivalry of other nations can achieve. During the lifetime of some to whom I now address myself, the population of the States will surpass one hundred millions; and, from various moral considerations, their weight and power in the concerns of the world, will be far beyond their numbers. From causes already cited, they will be peaceful within; and no foe from without will court destruction, by troubling their repose. As soon would the mariner challenge to conflict the deep on which he floats. Humanly speaking, they will be at the defiance of fortune. No earthly power will be able to shake them in their purposes, or stay them in their march toward the object of their wishes. By

their own wisdom, aided by the strength of their navies, they will be the arbiters of maritime law; and through their fleets of merchantmen, they will receive into their ports an abundant supply of the riches of the world. In all things that may minister to the prosperity, strength, and splendour of the country, and the convenience, comfort, and happiness of the people, their INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS will correspond with their general condition. In a special manner, their agriculture and manufactures will be in a state of high perfection; flourishing towns and cities will spring up in numerous places which are now overshadowed by forests, or rich in the gorgeous growth of the prairie; hills and mountains will be levelled or tunnelled, and roads and canals, of the best construction, formed for the accommodation of the traveller and the man of business; and steam vessels, and others of the choicest workmanship, will cover, in numbers conforming to the wants of the nation, the broad surfaces of our lakes and rivers. Under the favouring auspices of peace, and through a federal scheme of education, suitably conducted, the intellect of the country will be developed in an unprecedented degree, and all the products of mind correspondingly improved. In fine: the Republic, I repeat, will present a spectacle of moral and political grandeur and glory, new to the world, and which no effort of mine can pourtray. And our unrivalled prosperity, under free institutions, will insure, in the end, the overthrow of despotism, and the freedom of our race.

Do you doubt the accuracy of this picture, and suspect it of exaggeration? Let me invite you to take a calm retrospect of the last half century. Examine

with care and inform yourselves correctly what the United States were fifty years ago, compared with what they are now. Having done this, calculate reasonably their future progress, under the same form of government, wisely administered, and say, on your best judgment, whether I have either drawn or coloured extravagantly, in the representation just submitted to you. Nor do I fear the issue. You will promptly acquit me of all exaggeration. Such then will be the condition of our country, in less than three fourths of a century, if the Union be preserved. The contrast, could it be suitably drawn, would furnish the more striking and impressive picture.

Let the Union be severed, by groundless discontent, or the projects of ambition, and all these prospects will vanish like a vision, and a scene of realities, the perfect reverse of them, arise in their stead. A great and powerful nation, liberal and magnanimous in its views, and peaceful in its temper, will be broken up, not into two or three large communities, but into a number of feeble, jealous, and fretful ones. For but few of the States will coalesce with each other. From pride and ambition inducing each of the larger States to aim at supremacy, *they* will inevitably separate; and should they consent to unite with any of the smaller ones, it will be on such terms as will deprive the latter of independent sovereignty—a condition which will be submitted to only as the issue of compulsion. These petty powers instead of viewing each other as ancient friends and neighbours, that had fought, and bled, and triumphed in a common cause, will burn with the mutual animosity of rivals and foes. Their feuds, moreover, will have the rancour and

bitterness of family hatred. Hence, domestic concord will soon give place to civil commotion; the olive will wither throughout the land, and the laurel spring from the blood-stained soil. The industry and arts of peace will fail, and many of the fairest productions perish, under the unsparing operation of war. The plough being exchanged for the sword, by the youthful and vigorous, agriculture will be abandoned, or practised only by the feeble and incompetent. Instead of fresh towns and cities rising in their pride and beauty, to embellish the country, and give comfort to the people, many of those already erected will be converted into scenes of desolation and mourning. The brightness of day will be obscured by their smoke and ashes, and the darkness of night dispelled by their burning. Of ravages like these, united to a general abandonment of productive labour, extensive poverty and wretchedness, with their usual concomitants of profligacy and crime, will be the fatal issue. Peaceful enterprise of every description being thus paralyzed, all that belongs to the permanent greatness and power of nations will necessarily retrograde. If the communities become comparatively strong and terrible in battle, it will be but for a season. Their strength will be the offspring of unnatural excitement, and therefore evanescent. It will be but the furious vigour of the bacchanal or the maniac, destined to fade with the fervour which produced it. Their power and influence abroad, in common with their real strength at home, will be now but matter of history. Not a remnant of either will survive, except in mouldering ruins and saddened remembrance. No foreign nation will respect or consult them, or have any other connection with them,

than that of turning them to its own interest. Their naval force being also enfeebled, the petty remains of their fleets will be liable to insult and aggression which they dare not resent, and their sea-coast to invasion which they will be unable to repel. As education cannot flourish amidst the strife of arms, more especially intestine strife, mental cultivation will degenerate, and ignorance and comparative barbarism usurp the places of civilization and knowledge. This disastrous condition of things will be aggravated, in all its appalling qualities, by the ferocious border warfare that must extensively prevail. From our national temperament we are prone to extremes. The French and Irish perhaps excepted, we are more so than any other enlightened people. From being now uncommonly peaceful in our dispositions, we shall then become, in an equal degree, belligerent. The business of war will make a part of the stated occupation of each community. Instead of peaceful and smiling villages, garrisoned fortresses and frowning batteries will mark the division lines between the different States. In such a condition of things, bodies of militia-men will be insufficient for the war-like purposes of the country. "Citizen soldiers," as they are fancifully termed, dressed in gaudy attire, and marshalled on a green-sward lawn, or strutting to music, through the streets of a city, may gratify the gaze of the million, on a parade day, when all is peace. But experience, as well as history assures us, that it is unsafe to confide in them on the day of battle. Besides; the people will become dissatisfied with sleeping on their arms, and being constantly on the alert to repel aggression. They will prefer the existence of

a regular soldiery among them to a life of such disquietude and ruinous interruption. Standing armies, therefore, with all the expenses and other mischiefs they involve, will form another feature of the time I am pointing to. And these, being themselves the product of war, will necessarily tend to the promotion of that evil. The "pomp and circumstance" attending them, will develop a martial spirit among the youthful, which nothing can restrain. Nor do men bred to arms and prepared for battle, submit with patience to the repose and *ennui* of a peaceful life, especially if they be loitering in the neighbourhood of a foe. Like other men enamoured of their profession, they delight in the practice of it. Should no opportunity therefore to unsheath their swords be presented to them, they will seek one. But this is not all. The weaker States will contract alliances (most probably foreign ones) as a protection against the stronger. Thus will they virtually sink into colonies again, proving themselves, by the act, alike regardless and unworthy of the independence and freedom which their heroic sires bequeathed, as an inheritance, to degenerate sons. And England and France may meet again in arms, on fields that were once the abode of freemen, to contend for the mastery over subjugated Americans. The worst perhaps is to come. After a long course of the most embittered and sanguinary wars, a few rival chieftains, at the head of powerful armies, will agree to partition the nation between themselves, erect separate empires, assume the diadem, and subject the country of Franklin and Washington to military despotism. Or a modern Philip may arise, and lord it over the whole. And thus will

sink in hopeless darkness, the watch-fires of liberty, which our glorious ancestors had kindled on our hills. Thus will fail, for ages, if not forever, the most sublime and momentous experiment the world has witnessed, to determine the self-governing capacity of man—to solve the great question, whether we are the heirs of reason and virtue, or the minions of passion and the instruments of misrule? For the issue of this experiment, be it successful or adverse, will not be confined in its influence to ourselves. It will thrill, like the lightning from Heaven, to the centre of every nation that is panting for freedom. If fortunate, it will be to it the messenger of joy, and will brighten its prospects with the day-spring of hope. If the reverse, it will proclaim to it a continuance of its chains, and be the herald of despair. And while Freedom shall mourn over the fallen and hopeless fortunes of our race, Despotism, surrounded by the trophies of his recent victory, will sit more securely on his throne, and survey with a sterner and less dubious delight, the desolation around him.

To the blood-stained history of the States of Greece, the annals of the fierce Italian Republics, and the records of wars between petty sovereignties in other parts of Europe, I refer you for matter to sustain the views I have here submitted to you. Tell not me that we are a more discreet and reasonable people, and will not run into such wild extremes, or madly court such fatal catastrophes. To Heaven I appeal, for my sincerity in declaring, that, all things considered, I think we are less so. We are much more awfully stricken with political insanity, than either of the early and less enlightened people, to whom

I have alluded. They never had a form of government like ours, nor enjoyed the blessings we are about to forfeit. They could not, therefore, be sensible of their value. They were but unfortunate in never possessing what we shall be criminal in trampling under foot. And for what?—A mere mess of pottage—in the shape of a few bales of cotton and tierces of rice! For this—a thing so unspeakably paltry, compared to the effects it threatens to produce—our birth-right as freemen is to be bartered, a nation is to be laid in blood, the happiness of innumerable and unborn millions blighted, the light and glory of the most prosperous and promising empire forever extinguished, and the spirit of Freedom, like Hope, by the ills of the fated box, exiled from earth, to find a resting place in some more congenial and fortunate sphere! Was ever delusion so fatal before, or madness so triumphant? But I forbear to pursue the subject any farther. It is as much too weighty for words, as it is too painful to be dwelt on.

Such, gentlemen, is the contrast, imperfectly drawn, between the consequences of the UNION and DIS-UNION of the States. The work is in progress, and you, I repeat, will be summoned to bear your part in it. And, might my aspirations avail, they would be earnest and incessant, that your labours in the mighty cause may redound alike to your own honour and the welfare of your country; and that, by the means just indicated and such others as may be necessary, the fabric of the FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, the most glorious product of human wisdom, may be so strengthened and confirmed as to prove as STEADFAST AS NATURE AND AS LASTING AS TIME.





