

LECTURE
ON
COLLEGE GOVERNMENT,

BY
REV. DR. A. WYLIE.

By a fundamental law, in the constitution of human nature, those faculties which are employed in investigating the laws of human nature itself cannot be brought into successful operation, till the laws of external nature, by the exercise of the perceptive and reasoning faculties, have been first examined and sufficiently understood. This holds, both as it respects the natural progress of the mind as it takes place in the individual, and in the advance and improvement of the race in general. Men must have discovered and reasoned much, and successfully, about the objects of sight in the world without, before they thought of examining the organ of vision, or the still more abstruse subject of the powers of the percipient mind.

Yet the knowledge of external nature is but of recent date.

The polarity of the needle, as applicable to surveying and navigation, was unknown six centuries ago. It is not four centuries since the arts of printing and engraving were invented. The circulation of the blood, though not unknown to the ancients, since we find a distinct notice of it in Plato ; yet it was not incorporated into medical science till within the last two hundred years. The entire science of chemistry is but sixty years old. Dr. Priestly discovered oxygen about fifty years ago. Hydrogen was discovered in 1766 : electricity in 1728 : galvanism in 1794 : steam and its applications to machinery are discoveries of the present century. Geology is yet in its infancy, and Phrenology can hardly yet be considered any thing more than a theory.

It is but about three centuries and an half, since, by applying the light of science to navigation, one half of this globe was shewn to the other.

Since, then, these arts and sciences which have their origin in our knowledge of external nature, have, some of them so recently been brought to perfection, while others remain still in their infancy ; it need not be deemed surprising, that the science of mind, with those of government, political economy, logic, morals and religion, all of which, in some degree, are dependent on it, should yet remain in a state of imperfection.

In this great department of moral science we descrie the dawn of a new era of improvement. I mean to say, that every thing in this department is undergoing a rigid examination on the principles of the Baconian philosophy, and that, in consequence, man's nature, in its moral, intellectual and animal functions, and in its social capacities and relations, is beginning to be better understood ; and that the institutions of society, and all the regulations pertaining to them, are beginning to be managed, more in conformity with man's entire nature than they formerly were.

I shall not attempt to prove and illustrate this remark at large, (for that would require a series of discourses), but only in reference to the single subject of education. Nor shall I spread my remarks over the whole even of this subject. Education—a college education, I mean—may be divided into two parts, instruction and government. I shall confine my remarks to the latter, taking no further notice of what I deem the proper mode of instruction, than as that may be considered a means in order to government.

That mode of government which I intend imperfectly to sketch in the sequel of this discourse, may be denominated the "paternal," as being analogous to that which every wise and affectionate father exercises over his children, and which is the nearest image of that moral and providential government, which the great God, our Heavenly Father, exercises over us his intelligent offspring. It seeks to establish its authority over the governed, not by a system of minute and paltry rules, which require the exercise of an espionage, as vexatious to the governors as it can be to the governed, but by addressing itself to the rational and moral faculties of the latter, and to their sense of honor, their interests, and their social affections and sympathies.

I am perfectly aware, that this mode of government is encumbered with difficulties, from which the old system of governing, by a multiplicity of rules, is exempted. Some of these difficulties arise from the great diversity of character among the students, of whom some, from bad habits, others, from the obtuseness of their sensibilities, others from frowardness of disposition, and others, from the want of good instruction at home, are not the fit subjects for a mode of government so intellectual ; and all of whom pass

through the course so rapidly, that the system has scarcely time to exert its full influence upon them before they are gone, leaving their places to be filled by novices who have never felt its power. Other, and no less, difficulties beset the system, from the side of the teachers, who, possibly, may not be adequate to the very delicate and difficult task of carrying out into practice, a mode of government which requires a rare combination of qualifications in those who exercise it. In proof of this I allege the well known fact, that a well regulated family is a much rarer spectacle than a well governed state, or army, or ship of war. And candor compels me to admit, that, though the success which has attended the experiments hitherto made among us, has been abundantly sufficient to justify a still further trial of the system, yet it has been by no means as great or as general as might have been expected. But this I must say, that the failures, so far as failures have occurred, have arisen from contingencies such as time will remove, while the success has arisen from the system itself. I have full faith in it. It will ultimately prevail in all colleges and schools, and the vital principle on which it is constructed, will ultimately be diffused, and is even now diffusing itself, through the government and policy of nations.

Ages may elapse before the process is complete ; for the progress of improvement has been but slow hitherto : yet it has been accelerated, and will continue so to be, still more and more. Accelerated, progressive improvement is the law which governs the destinies of our race. The fables of the poets must be reversed. The iron age, of stern authority and brute force, is past ; the silver age of intellect is begun ; the golden age of religion and morals, exalted and purified by philosophy, is in prospect.

Among the means of hastening the approach of this glorious epoch, I know of none which is likely to prove more effectual, than such a mode of education as adapts itself to the higher faculties of our nature, and seeks to accomplish its end by such a mode of government as is calculated to give to these faculties their appropriate exercise. Such a mode of government proceeds on the grand principle of treating the pupil as a rational and moral being ; by showing him the importance of making the best use of his time and the various advantages and opportunities with which, by the care of the State and of kind parents, he has been furnished ; pointing out to him the many and important benefits which may certainly be expected from a diligent and patient perseverance in a course of application to study, and the disgrace and misery which he must inevitably bring upon himself by an opposite course of conduct. And, as the young seldom go astray from any bad principle, but almost always err, when they do err, from want of experience, whereby they are exposed to a thousand temptations, the danger of which they do not fully understand, the greater expe-

rience of the teacher should here come in to supply the deficiency, and he should be ready to take every occasion to indicate by examples, and illustrate by philosophy, the evil tendency of those allurements to vice which the wicked employ as snares to entangle the feet of the unwary and unsuspecting. In a word, every teacher should act the part of a Mentor towards his pupils. By this means they will gradually acquire the habit of reflecting on the tendency of actions, as well as on their moral properties; so that, by the time they have completed their course they may become monitors to themselves, and for the future, as Horace has expressed it, "swim without the cork."

I would not be understood as supposing that a case can ever arise in the government of a college, wherein it would be proper for the teacher to *consult* his pupils, or seek their advice as to his measures: for this would be the utter subversion of his authority. What I mean is, that the course pursued should be so pursued and managed in all its details of operation, as to show plainly that it proceeds not from authority merely, but from reason and a sense of duty on the part of the teacher. And, when this is really the case, there will, in most instances, be, if not a cheerful compliance, at least a ready acquiescence on the part of the pupils. For a love of order is inherent in human nature: it is strong in cultivated minds; and few persons are to be found, even among the inconsiderate, so exceedingly light and frivolous, or so obstinately forward, as not to appreciate or feel the force of considerations addressed to the rational and moral faculties. On the contrary, enactments are never readily submitted to, which have no other foundation than the arbitrary will—the "*Sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas*," of the tyrant ruler. The yoke of authority is doubly galling when it is imposed by folly: and I have never yet known a fool, who was not also, to the extent of his power, a tyrant. In proof of this take the fact, that every stupid booby in the country, plays the despot in his family.

To illustrate, further, my meaning, allow me to narrate a fact taken from my own experience in early life, and which took place under the former system of school government, as administered—not by a fool, but by one of the wisest and most excellent of men, the late Judge Mills of Kentucky. I mention his name because the incident reflects no disgrace, but honor on his memory. The disgrace belongs to the system and the times which made the system necessary.

The academy in which Mills taught at the time to which my narrative refers, and which afterwards, in 1802, became a college, was situated in the town of Washington, the seat of justice for the county of the same name, in Western Pennsylvania. The school was composed of young men and boys, engaged in learning Latin and Greek; most of them from the town, a very few from the country adjacent. I was of the number of the latter. Our fel-

lows of the town, called us clodhoppers, and we, as may well be imagined, reciprocated the feeling, by which, we more than surmised, the epithet was suggested : and the mortification which we felt on account of this uncouth name, which we were often compelled to hear uttered, not in the most deferential tones, and, accompanied, sometimes, with smiles not complacential, and attended too, on some occasions, with gestures and words of contemptuous invitation, which, though strange language with us, we knew very well how to interpret—the mortification which we felt on those occasions was increased by observing that our rivals of the town were finer dressed, and more ready and sprightly—(perhaps we would have called it *saucy*)—in their manners than we, and that they themselves seemed to enjoy no little satisfaction in the consciousness of their superiority over us in these respects. Yet our sense of inferiority was rendered less painful, by the belief that, in scholarship, we were, at least, equal to our rivals, while we surpassed them in good behaviour. Of this, it is true, we were not the proper persons to judge. But Mills, in whose capability and impartiality, as a judge in such matters, we had the utmost confidence—Mills, whom we all revered, and some of us feared, and the most of us loved—Mills thought so : so, at least, we firmly believed. He had never said so, in our hearing, nor in the hearing of any one ; for he was a very prudent teacher : sparing in his commendations, and cautious on the matter of comparisons. But we *inferred* his opinion in the premises from the fact that he inflicted on them—some of them occasionally—a most tremendous flagellation with a cowhide. And as we, of the country party, witnessed such infliction, it is altogether probable that the unhappy sufferer and his trembling companion, if they cast a glance at the faces of the clodhoppers, might not have been able to discover there those expressions of sympathy which would, in us, have been fitting on the occasion. But alas for us, the clodhoppers, evil was brewing against us, as will soon appear by the sequel.

On each Saturday the custom with Mills was to appoint a monitor for the following week, whose duty it was to note down in a book, which he was to carry with him for the purpose, every instance of misconduct which he might observe in any of the students during the week, affixing to the insertion of the notice in his book the name of a witness to the crime, if any was present. Saturday was the day of doom, when this book was to be opened by the teacher. The culprit had no escape. If he absented himself, on the day of trial, he was punished to a certainty, and with double severity, on his first appearance afterwards. If he came fortified as to his back, by supernumerary garments, the precaution availed him not, for he was compelled to strip. There was no appeal : and the sentence was inflicted forthwith. Now, it so happened, that one day at noon, I lifted my eye from the page of

a book, in which I was reading at the window of the academy, and casting a glance over the campus, I saw a couple of students, one of them monitor for the week, playing some indecent pranks and gestures such as before described. For this I reproved and endeavored to shame them by portraying their conduct in such terms as disgust suggested. "Hah! my lad," said the monitor, jumping up in a rage and shaking his fist, "never mind! I'll fix you for this! look out for Saturday!" "Saturday," thought I, "the sound carries terror with it only to the guilty; and I am innocent;" and so I answered his threat with a sneer. At length Saturday came. The monitor's book was called for: and after examining into, and disposing of some cases, the teacher read, "Andrew Wylie for"—Here an alleged offence was marked against me, of which I knew nothing whatever, and the name of Armstrong, the same who had been acting with the monitor in the shameful scene that I had ridiculed, was set down as the witness. "Stand forward," said Mills to me in a voice that made me tremble. I stood forth—the cowhide, which he held in his hand, though not uplifted, first caught my eye—then *his eye*, which seemed at that moment to look me through. "Armstrong," said he, addressing the witness; "*how* was this?" Armstrong faltered—Mills cast a look at the monitor, who seemed to shrink—then at me, who, by this time, having recovered from the shock, was able to declare my innocence. His eye seemed to scan my inmost thoughts while I protested I knew nothing of the matter, and after asking a few more questions of my accusers, he dismissed the case, and ever after treated me as before. But had he acted otherwise—had he believed my accusers and inflicted the punishment, I know I should have been ruined.

Should the general judgment now burst upon me, in all its stupendous grandeur, I can scarcely conceive how it could strike me more forcibly than did, at that time, the scene I have just described. It left *upon*, or rather sunk *into* my soul, two impressions, as if they had been scorched into it by the lightning, or made by the immediate exertion of Almighty power. To these impressions I can distinctly trace my intense, unutterable, uncontrollable detestation of a false accuser, and my unconquerable opposition to a mechanical system of government for rational beings.

Another ill feature of this kind of government, which I had abundant opportunity to remark while placed under it at college, was, that no admonitions were ever given us as to any bad practices that we were liable to fall into, except such only as directly interfered with the regular performance of college duties. If these were discharged, all was well, the government cared for nothing further. Among these bad practices there was one which, it required nothing but the advice of the teachers, to have prevented from becoming so prevalent as it did. I refer to the practice of

using tobacco, which many young men adopted for no better reason than because it was the fashion, into which they were insensibly led, no warning voice being lifted against it.

There is an honest pride of character to be found in all generous natures, and which it should be the study of all who are concerned in the business of education to nourish and to cultivate in the young committed to their charge. This can never be effected by mere rules, however numerous and excellent they may be, or however rigidly enforced. The finer sensibilities of the soul languish and decline under such treatment. If you would render a boy trustworthy, you must show him that he is trusted. You must never question his veracity. You must not even demand of him an apology for any delinquency of which he may be guilty, till you have allowed him the opportunity of offering it of his own accord. You must teach him to regard the delinquency as affecting his own character, rather than your rights; and then he will look upon the apology as his privilege, (a privilege which he is to ask as a favor) not as an atonement to appease incensed authority. Unmerited censure should never be inflicted; nor undeserved praise bestowed. But when the one degenerates into angry vituperation, or the other into fawning and sycophancy, on the part of the teacher, his dignity is at once destroyed, and whatever influence he may retain will serve only to degrade and corrupt.

The greatest danger perhaps to be guarded against, is that of permitting the sentiment of self respect to be corrupted, by false views of things, into that false honor which exerts so deleterious an influence on the character, and which renders many people so miserable in themselves and such pests to society. In order to set the minds of the young right in this matter, let this first principle be incessantly inculcated—*that no one can be disgraced by any thing that can be done to him, or said of him by another.* In other words, that it is not he who suffers the wrong, but he who does the wrong, that brings disgrace upon himself: and that, consequently, the only way to wipe off the disgrace is by a candid confession, and prompt and ample reparation of it to the injured party. There is no surer sign of a truly great and magnanimous spirit than meekness and condescension; or of a base and ignoble one than arrogance. Vanity mistakes eclat for honor, and eminence of station for excellence of character. In private life it may be considered rather as a foible than a crime; but in public affairs nothing is apt to produce so much mischief. We laugh at the fop who displays his fine clothes and jewels as things for which he thinks he ought to be admired; but we are outraged and alarmed when we see him intruding himself into serious affairs of great public interest, in the hopes of rendering himself conspicuous, and setting things on fire all around, that he may be seen by the light of the conflagration. Under the old method of government in

colleges, this frivolous and contemptible spirit was wont to show itself in certain achievements, in which mischief and sport were strangely blended, though neither mischief nor sport was the object of those engaged in them. Despairing of celebrity in any way, their vanity prompted them to seek it in this.

That vanity and dullness *are* the ingredients, which, when united, (and when each is excessive they always are found in unison), constitute the disposition to engage in scenes of noisy tumult, annoying to the peace of neighborhoods and terrifying to the sick and infirm, is susceptible of the strongest proof that observation of facts can afford. My own observation has completely satisfied me of the truth of this account of it; the greatest dunces and blockheads decidedly, that ever were under my tuition, having evinced the most of this disposition, and their vanity, which was in exact proportion to their dullness, always prompted them to boast of their exploits. Dwight in his "Travels in Germany," gives us a most instructive picture of the manners of the students attending the universities in that country, particularly of their practice of "renowning," as it is very significantly called. According to the rules of this practice, if a student, by molesting or insulting any of the citizens or of his fellow students, can contrive to bring about a duel, in the issue of which he comes off with two or three respectable gashes in the cheek, he is envied as an illustrious man, and takes his rank among the "renowned." His scars, proudly conspicuous in his face, shew him to be a man of genius from the university. Whether he gets a diploma besides, Dwight does not distinctly say.

It is remarkable that the sprightliest people on earth, the French, do not allow of such absurdities.

The philosophy of the phenomenon above noticed, so far as dullness is concerned, is this: the stupidest people resort to external means of excitement, for the want of excitement from the mind within. Savages, and such as in civilized nations are as dull as they, are always fond of drinking and carousing, the noisy tumult of the chase and of war.

To a mind which has been imbued with sentiments of true honor, concealment offers no motive to the doing of an unworthy act; since such a mind has learned to dread its own rebuke more than the voice of public censure. When once this noble spirit becomes prevalent among the students of a college or university, the ends of government may be considered as, in a great measure, accomplished, for thenceforward they become a law to themselves; and they will no more think of forming themselves into bands for the purpose of parading the streets at midnight, making every thing resound with all the hideous noises which they can contrive to mingle in the wild uproar, than they would think of uniting together for the purposes of robbery and murder.

The disgraceful practice, so prevalent in this country, of injuring and defacing the doors and walls of public buildings, a practice which travellers from Europe never fail to cast up to us as a reproach upon our manners, and a proof of the licentious tendency of our free institutions, is testified in the shabby and filthy appearance of all the college edifices, I believe, throughout our land. But this has been owing not to the freedom of our institutions, I must believe, but to the fact that our mode of government in families, schools and colleges is not brought, as yet, into exact conformity to the spirit and genius of these institutions. In too many cases people are employed among us, not indeed in patching an old garment with new cloth, but the reverse of this, in stitching on the new garment of our free institutions, shreds and remnants of the old and antiquated institutions which arose out of the "feudal system" of the middle ages. Let our youth be habituated, even from their tender years, to an enlightened and rational mode of government, and all will be well. The tendency of liberty towards licentiousness is not to be checked by multiplying the artificial restraints of law; for this would be to return to despotism, but by enlightening the minds and elevating the morals of the people. But the system must be introduced into families first, or it never will be fully successful. It is a fact perfectly known and understood by all experienced and observant teachers, that such pupils as they receive from the families of such religious sects as are noted for the early and assiduous care that they take in the instruction and government of their children, are always orderly in their behaviour and attentive to their studies. In the course of my own observation, extending from the fifteenth year of my life to this, which is the fiftieth, I have met with not more than some half a dozen cases, exceptions to this rule; and the exceptions were always such as to confirm the rule, as, in every such exception, there had been manifest neglect of the principle of the rule.

I once made an experiment in the most unfavorable circumstances that can well be conceived, the nature and result of which I think worthy of being stated. Damage in various ways was done to the college property. Enquiry was in vain, for *nobody* did it. I addressed the students, explained to them my views on the matter, and exhorted them in future to give information, not on one another, but each one on himself, if, by chance, he should strike out a pane of glass, or the like. The experiment was partially successful, and I am fully persuaded, that, had circumstances been favorable for following it up and carrying it out with system and perseverance, it would have been completely so.

The world has grown too old and too wise to believe that mankind, or womankind—much less boykind, can be kept in order by *watching*. The hundred eyes of Argus were not sufficient to guard *his* charge, no, nor the head itself that held them, against

the artful Mercury, though he had but two. This, methinks, should teach government—whatever be its sphere—not to enter into a contest of vigilance with its subjects. For sooner or later Argus will be found nodding, and then the falsehoods of Mercury

“Callidum quicquid placuit jocosò
Condere furto”—

will be ready on the occasion. When once a system of espionage, on the part of the rulers, has rendered them odious, as it cannot fail to do, to the minds of their subjects, the latter will take a revengeful pleasure in thwarting their designs and embarrassing even their most equitable measures. Thus have I known the regular business of a literary institution to be suspended, for days in succession, because the Faculty were occupied in attending to cases of discipline: all the students of the better sort being, in the mean time, unfurnished with employment, became uneasy and vexed, and many of them, at length, left it in disgust.

To prevent the possibility of such a state of things ever taking place in a college, those who are immediately engaged in the business of its instruction and government, must take the precaution, whenever a student has evinced a character not to be managed by a rational and liberal treatment, to dismiss him at once from the institution, and that, though he may not have committed any offence demanding a more ignominious punishment. For what else can be done? To prolong his trial would be useless to *him*, and may be pernicious to others. For, though his idle and profligate habits have unfitted him for intellectual employment, his animal impulses will drive him into business suited to his taste and capacity, and, by solicitation and example he will not fail to draw others along with him.

I have said, on another occasion, and I repeat it, “a college is not a penitentiary.” It is not surrounded with walls, nor provided with keepers, for the purpose of cutting off its inmates from temptation to crime, or chance of escape. It has no solitary cells where the miserable prisoner is forced, in the darkness which surrounds him, to find employment for his thoughts by turning them within. Parents who are punished with seeing around them sons who have become vicious or refractory, because their infancy and childhood were neglected, need not send them to college—no not to one of *those* colleges—*least* and *last* of *all*, I mean to say, to one of those colleges which most resemble a penitentiary in their restriction and espionage—in the hope that they will be reformed. It is a vain hope. I say it is a *vain hope*, because it is in opposition to laws of nature that never vary. *Parents* are appointed the first governors or teachers of their offspring. The duties of the office are not few nor easy; and if, to avoid the task of performing, or if they can persuade themselves that the task does not

really devolve upon *them*, because, forsooth, they have business to attend to which is more important—improving their breed of hogs, it may be—or scraping together money in trade—or spouting in the legislature, or in the pulpit, or in the halls of Congress—or discharging the office of consul or ambassador in foreign countries—or pursuing pleasure, it may be, wherever pleasure may be sought—(except in doing one's duty)—I say, if parents, on any of these considerations, decline the task imposed on them by nature, of forming the character of their children while young, they, in so doing, violate one of nature's laws, and they must pay the penalty—the heavy penalty—of seeing them abandoned to ruin.

Lady Mary Wortley Montague spent the greater part of her life in rambling over Europe, in seeing what was to be seen in Constantinople, and in writing home, in her own inimitable style of grace and sprightliness, accounts of all that she had seen and all the gay thoughts that employed her fancy. But while she thus sought entertainment for herself and furnished it by her pen, to thousands, she neglected the care of her son's education, and had the cruel mortification to see him grown up an incorrigible, silly and contemptible profligate. She introduced from Turkey into England the practice of inoculating, or, as it was then called, "engrafting" for the small pox, and this she did in opposition to the bigots in medicine and religion. This was her highest praise. But she suffered her son to catch the infection of a moral virus far more terrible than the small pox, and his ruin was the consequence. What a killing stroke must this have been to the mother! How sad the reflection, that both the example, and its just retribution, should in the experience of thousands, continue to be repeated from age to age—and still in vain!

Those parents whose public duties necessarily call off their attention from the early education of their children, ought to devolve it, as the old Romans did, on some venerable pedagogue, qualified to take the parent's place, in the discharge of so delicate and responsible a trust. But after they have been spoiled through neglect, to put them under the tuition of a Faculty at a public institution, whose care and superintendence over them must be shared by hundreds besides, is the very extravagance of folly.

Another important feature in the government proper for a college, is the adoption of an arrangement of means calculated to excite and maintain a spirit of generous emulation among the pupils. One, and perhaps the most considerable, of the advantages of a public over a private education, consists in the tendency it has, by means of numbers associated in the same pursuits, to generate such a spirit.

Praise and distinction are the rewards which justice bestows upon merit; and a prudent distribution of them naturally stimu-

lates to efforts which the sluggish nature of man would not otherwise make, and which, besides, strengthening the active powers of the individuals who make them, produce results that are highly beneficial to the community. Even the conflict of claims, which takes place between competitors for the prize of distinction, though it may occasionally produce an effervescence of feeling in the young, which maturer judgments may not entirely approve, yet it affords, upon the whole, a healthful and invigorating exercise to the faculties, the moral as well as the intellectual, inasmuch as it puts in requisition patience, candor and other virtues which find no occasion for exercise, or trial, in a dull monotonous state of existence. It is infinitely better that the atmosphere of our feelings be stirred by the gentle breezes of a kindly excitement, and even agitated, once in a while, by the storms of passion, than that it should settle into that sluggish calm in which life itself seems to stagnate.

I observe, in the last place, that there can be no good government in colleges without religion.

"God," says the Duke of Sully, "is the true owner of kingdoms, and monarchs are but the ministers, who ought to exhibit to the people a true copy of the perfections of him in whose place they stand; and remember that they do not govern like him, but when they govern as fathers." Such are the maxims as stated by a most sagacious statesman and brave soldier, according to which, civil government ought to be administered. They are, indeed, maxims which at first view one would hardly have expected from a man who spent his whole life between the turmoils of war and the intrigues of a court. And yet, on further reflection, it would seem, that it is from such men precisely that we should expect such maxims, for that, having been deeply engaged in the management of great affairs, they enjoyed the best opportunity for observing how intimately religion is blended with all the springs of social order and national prosperity. And, certainly, it is still more closely united, nay, may I not say, it is perfectly identified with that species of government now under consideration, which has for its object, not the regulation of a perishable empire, bounded by geographical lines, but the formation of the character of an immortal mind, made to transcend the boundaries of the world and time, and find its happiness in the bosom of its Creator.

The astonishing vagaries on the subject of religion, into which the human mind has always fallen, wherever destitute of the light of divine revelation, while they have justly deterred the friends of christianity from trusting to reason alone as a sufficient guide in the things of religion, have betrayed them—many of them at least—into the opposite error, that, I mean, under the influence of which they seem to regard religion in the light of an effect produced upon the mind by the force of Almighty power, acting indepen-

dently of the laws of mental operation, if not traversing and overturning them. If, indeed, this were so, it would be improper to speak of religion as a part of education ; for it would, on that supposition, be entirely out of our sphere and above our reach. All we could do, would be passively to wait the visitation of the supernatural agency. But it is not so. Religion is an element of human character, the product of the mind itself, unfolding its powers and capacities to the quickening influence of that "grace and truth," which, like light and heat emanating from the natural sun, radiate from "the Sun of righteousness"—"that Light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world."

But though religion is an element to be incorporated into that system of means by which the character of the young ought to be formed, it is an element not of a gross and earthly nature, but pure and spiritual, requiring the utmost delicacy in its management. The least admixture of art and finesse destroys it. It cannot be rewarded by any thing that man has to give. Even the breath of praise corrupts it. It shrinks and withers under the gaze of the public eye, nor can it well endure the confined air of the cloister. Though it has flourished and thriven in the fires of persecution, it is apt to languish and die, if showered upon by the profusion of royal bounty or saluted by the incense and hosannahs of the multitude.

It resembles those subtle but powerful agencies in nature, which, though they pervade all bodies, are never found in a detached and separate state, and which, if for a moment detached by the art of the chemist, hasten through the transient display of some startling phenomenon to hide themselves under the covert of their original combinations. Should you ask me now, by what rules and methods a teacher should contrive to carry the influence of religion among his pupils, my answer would be this : the thing admits not contrivance ; it refuses to submit to the technicality and formality of rules. Let the teacher be really and truly a religious man—not a bigot—not a fanatic—not a canting hypocrite—not a base time-serving pretender—but one who honestly feels what he professes, and acts as he feels, and the spirit of his religion will be manifest in its fruits—in the purity of his life and manners, and the punctuality and fidelity with which he will perform all his duties. And the influence of such an example will not be lost on his pupils.

It remains to say a word on the mode of *instruction* proper to be observed in schools and colleges. So far, however, and no farther, shall my remarks be extended as may be necessary to show how a correct mode of instruction becomes subservient to the purposes of good government. The time was, when the teacher's business, so far as instruction was concerned, was in his view accomplished when he could support his positions by the authority

of text books, grammars and lexicons. That time is past. It is, at length, discovered that an opinion is not necessarily true because it is found *in print*. The teacher must go beyond *the book*, now, or fall into the rear. He must be able to show to his tyro, whom he is conducting along the path of science, those avenues that open a view on either side into far distant regions of enquiry; and, if classical literature is his subject, he must penetrate beyond the mere forms of the language into the spirit of the author. He must himself see the very mind of his author in the language he uses, and must understand the philosophy of language in general. Deeply imbued with the love of letters and the spirit of philosophical investigation, he must know how to call into exercise every latent faculty in the mind of his pupil. I do not mean that he should *think for him*. This is the very opposite of what I mean, and resembles the method of those nasty nurses, who themselves masticate the food which they afterwards put in the unconscious infant's mouth. The best example of that kind of instruction which I have in view is found in the discourses of him who "taught as never man taught," and whose illustrations never fail to please, because they are drawn from nature: the next in point of excellence is presented in the incomparable Analogy of Bishop Butler, who, as has often been remarked, never thinks for his reader, but always puts him in the way of thinking correctly for himself.

Now, I have only to observe, that the youth, whose mind has been properly instructed and disciplined in this manner, will be furnished, in the love of learning, which it can hardly fail to inspire, with one of the surest safeguards against all temptations to disorderly conduct.

What a rich and glorious reward, for all his care and toil, will await the competent and faithful teacher, when in taking a last farewell of his beloved pupils, he rejoices in the confident hope, that, whatever fortune may attend their future course in life, their character and conduct will show them to have been worthy the instructions they have received;—that they will ever be found in the practice of what is fair and just and useful to the public—that they will prove true to their principles and faithful to all their obligations—that whatever difficulties or temptations may beset their path, they will maintain a fixed and steady purpose of soul, relying on the favor and aid of that gracious and Almighty Being who is the friend and guardian of the virtuous, to do and suffer every thing rather than violate their conscience—that they will be wise and circumspect, as well as upright and courageous, of a prudent and considerate temper, always viewing things in a proper light and tempering every impulse which they may feel by a critical examination of circumstances, times, occasions and conse-

quences, and estimating every thing in the present life according to its bearing on the interests of the life to come.

Happy, thrice happy, beyond all that wealth can give or ambition aspire after, are they who enter upon the stage of active life with a character such as to justify these expectations ! Happy, also, the teacher who may have contributed, by instruction and example, to the formation of such a character !

VALEDICTORY.

BY

REV. A. WYLIE.

GENTLEMEN OF THE COLLEGE OF TEACHERS:

The series of meetings in which, for some days past, we have been so pleasantly, and, I trust, profitably engaged, is now at a close. To me has been assigned the painful duty of bidding you farewell. It is a word which, on the present occasion, I pronounce with peculiar emotions. I have enjoyed great satisfaction in meeting you here. It is the first time I have had the privilege. I hope it may not be the last. That, however, is among the uncertainties of the future. One—Mr. Kinmont,—who participated with you in the business of your last anniversary, is not here—he is gone to the congregation of the dead. At our next meeting, whose place shall be left vacant, or, whether it may please the Disposer of events that any vacancy should occur, it would be useless to conjecture. But the loss which we have sustained—which the cause of literature and education has sustained, in the event to which I have alluded, suggests the reflection which I have made, a reflection never improper for us while in a state of existence so precarious and transitory, but peculiarly in harmony with those tender and solemn feelings which naturally come over us in this hour of parting. While, however, we indulge for a moment those feelings of regret which the loss of a respected fellow laborer in the good cause of education necessarily inspires, and while we anticipate the fate which, we know not how soon, awaits us all, we will not murmur at the will of Heaven, which has assigned to us a career so short and uncertain, nor will we look forward to our own impending fate with fear or despondency. No: we will rather be stimulated, by thinking on the

brevity of life, to make the most of it while it lasts, by turning to good account every moment of which it is composed and every opportunity which it presents.

That we may do this, it is important that we should never suffer ourselves to sink into discouragement under the many difficulties which beset our course. We have no aid in sustaining these difficulties from the sympathy of the world. We can have none. They know nothing of them. They are such as experience only can explain. *You* know what they are, for you have felt them. You feel them now, and the hearts of some of you are perhaps at this moment, ready to sink under them. I refer not to the difficulties of the mercenary teacher which consist, of course, in devising and executing plans for making money. Such teachers, indeed, there are. They are the pests of the profession and the plagues of society. But I address none of this character. I pass them by. I let them alone in their baseness. If such were here I might, perhaps, say to them: Avaunt! "Procul! O, procul este profani." How came ye here? What prompted you, with your love of gain, to enter the sacred temple where the young soul is to be not merely instructed in the arts and sciences, which have their objects in the world of matter, and which contemplate the interests of common life, but initiated into the sublime mysteries of wisdom and virtue—taught to love moral beauty and to loathe its opposite—to feel a sense of its own dignity and worth as the offspring of the skies and an inheritor of an immortal nature—to aspire after things worthy of its high destiny, and to glow with feelings of admiration and intense delight while contemplating the glory of the Eternal Mind as reflected from all his works. How, I would ask then, did the demon of avarice, so sagacious usually in conducting his devotees, commit such a mistake for once, as to bring *you* into this sacred place, with those who labor on principles which you cannot understand and for a reward which you cannot appreciate? You have missed your way! This is not a temple of the god of wealth! Out! Begone forthwith! and seek elsewhere the golden prize for which you pant, for no where else are you less likely to find it than here." Such *would* be my language, were mercenary teachers before me. As it is, I have other and very different things to say. *You* are enthusiastically devoted to that which is the legitimate object of your profession, the improvement of your pupils in knowledge and virtue: and, as all your cares and labors are directed towards this object, your troubles arise from whatever obstructs its attainment. Of these troubles, some proceed from your pupils, some from their parents or other relatives, and some from the interference of ignorant intruders.

Your pupils are of various tempers, habits, and prejudices. Some are ardent and impetuous; others, sluggish and dull. Some

self-confident and aspiring; others, diffident and despondent. Some prompt and eager at first, but possessed of no steadiness of purpose; others, slow in the beginning and hard to be excited, but resolute and persevering when their dormant energies are once awakened, and they are set upon the right track. Some are suspicious and reserved; others, open and confiding. A few, it may be, have been blessed with good parents, by whose instructions and examples they have been trained to correct habits; the greater number, probably, have been neglected by their parents, and suffered to grow up "like the wild ass's colt;" and are, consequently, giddy, wayward, obstinate, and perhaps dissipated. Nor, however young they may be when they come under your tuition, do they come free from the bias of preconceived opinions and fixed antipathies. Happy! were the bias towards virtue. Often, too often! it is against it. Ah, me! with what feelings and views in regard to honor and religion and utility, do pupils often come to us. How full of difficulty is the task of dealing with all their different tempers, habits and prejudices! Nor is this all. Parents are often most unreasonable in their demands. They look to you for what is impossible, and hold you guilty for not working miracles. They would have you impart not only instruction, but capacity, and reform habits derived by imitation of their own bad examples, and sustained by corrupt principles which they have instilled. They send you a rotten egg, and are sorely disappointed that you do not bring out of it a healthy, strong, and well-fledged bird!

But of your troubles the heaviest pack is yet to be opened, and I am, to tell the truth, not in the humor to open it. Nor shall I. Time would not allow it, were there no other reason. I shall only roll it over, that the spectators here may have a guess at its contents. *You* can more than guess. You are, I shall suppose, a president or professor in some public institution. And there are other professors associated with you. Aye! and they are all just—what—what—they should be. That is well. You are fortunate. But there is a Board of Trustees. Who compose it I should like to know? Here is a list of names; let me read—Solomon Black, Ned Roarer, Grimace Graceless, Nicholas Van Puff, Minimus Tiny, etc. etc. These worthy men are your trustees; and it must not be said respecting them, "*Tractent fabrilia fabri—Ne sutor ultra crepidam*;"—for, with their appointment to office, they received their qualifications, and they are competent, *ex officio*, not only to manage the external affairs of your institution, but its internal also. As if a company, undertaking to build a bridge or a factory, should not only employ an architect, but direct him how to proceed in his work; what tools he is to use; how the joints and mortices and braces and pins and pillars and arches are to be made; and how the whole structure is to be fitted and framed together!

In such circumstances, what must be the troubles of the architect may be readily imagined. "One sinner destroyeth much good," says the proverb; and the truth of it is in no case so easily and so lamentably verified, as in the concerns of a literary institution. A faithful and accomplished teacher, after having succeeded, by years of incessant and anxious toil, in rearing up a seminary to a high state of reputation and usefulness, sometimes has the mortification to see the result of all his labors scattered to the winds, in consequence of the interference of some impertinent blockhead, who wishes to appropriate to himself the glory of the achievement;—or, if failing in this, sets to, "with axes and hammers," making havoc with the "carved work," thinking to gain to himself the honor at least of a *reformer*.

Such are some of the difficulties incident to the employment in which you are engaged. Suffer me to suggest some considerations which may help to encourage you under them.

And let me remind you, in the first place, that nothing great and good in human life can be effected, without encountering difficulty and opposition. So it has always been, and so it must always be. Think not, therefore, to escape the common lot. Let your difficulties be met with firmness. Zeal and perseverance will surmount them. "Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good."

Consider next, the high importance of the work in which you are engaged, as it stands connected with the best interests of our beloved country. Our condition, as citizens of these United States, is peculiar, and without example in the history of the world. Neither Greece nor Rome, so much celebrated for their free institutions, knew any thing of the liberty, civil or religious, which we enjoy. The governments of Europe know nothing of it. Ours is pre-eminently a government of the people. The will of the people directs and controls every thing. I rejoice and glory in it. So do you all. In other countries, the direction in which influence passes is downwards, from the rulers to the people;—in ours, it is upward, from the people to the rulers. With them a privileged few make the laws; and their minions, guarded by the bayonets of the military, put them in execution. We, the people, make our own laws; our executive officers are our servants; and they have no other protection than what they derive from the moral sense of the community, which imposes an invisible but an effective restraint upon violence. With other nations government is a thing of mechanical contrivance, moving along in a slow and safe track, guarded on both sides by those defences which authority has, at infinite expense, erected to secure its prerogatives from encroachment on the part of the people—the objects of its hatred and fear. With us, government is an affair of reason and sentiment—not of force. With the eagle for its appropriate em-

blem,—(the arrows and avenging bolt have not a domestic, but a foreign reference,)—*our* government pursues a loftier course in a region above the clouds. But its very elevation makes its position dangerous. If it fall, the disaster will be proportionably great. In other and plainer terms, we are making an experiment, by which the capacity of the people for self-government is to be tested. It is an experiment for the world, and for future ages. If it fail, a second, probably, will never be tried. All philanthropists, not among ourselves only, but in every nation throughout the world, are anxious for the result; and are earnestly looking on, some with confident hope, others with trembling solicitude. For myself, I am determined “never to despair of the Republic.” But my trust respecting its destiny is not founded on its excellent constitution, though it resulted from the deliberations of the purest patriots, enlightened by the wisdom which they had collected from the experience of ages;—nor is it founded on the physical relations which nature has established in the geography of the different states, however they may be strengthened by those numerous channels of inter-communication, by which, as by so many chains and bands, the different sections of the Great Confederacy may, by means of a wise system of internal improvement, be linked and bound together;—nor yet on the abilities of our statesmen, though statesmen we can boast, whose great capacity and distinguished public services have brought safety and glory to their glory. Much less do I rest my hopes on our widely extended territory, reaching through so many degrees of latitude, and across the continent from sea to sea; nor on our gallant navy, illustrious for its exploits; nor on our armies so often crowned with victory; nor on our accumulating wealth, or our spreading commerce, or our thriving manufactures, or our improving agriculture, covering the teeming soil with its rich, various and abundant productions, vegetable and animal. I do not rest my hopes on any, nor on all, of these advantages, which a benignant Providence has, with a liberality so bountiful, accumulated in our condition: for I well know that an infatuated people may frustrate them all. God never bestows blessings so great, so numerous, or so well guarded, that man (who, when he pleases, is omnipotent in mischief,) may not convert them into occasions of guilt, and instruments of ruin. I therefore repose no part of my confidence, as it respects the future prosperity of my country, in any of her privileges or external advantages;—but, under God, I repose it *in you*, and your fellow-laborers in the cause of education. For, to you it belongs to form the rising age, and to transmit through the channel of the *living mind* a diffusive and sound moral influence. On this depends our liberty. A people morally corrupt, cannot be free. Public sentiment must be pure, and preserved pure, else the spirit of liberty will forsake our institutions. Now, it is to you, and others

engaged with you in the same office, that it belongs to form the public sentiment. How vast, then, is the responsibility attached to your office !) And, will you suffer your labors in it to decline through discouragement ? Will you grow weary in your well-doing, and relax your energies ; and so suffer vice, the only enemy our country has to fear, to make inroads upon us ? Heaven forbid ! The rising generation pleads—the increasing multitudes who are hastening into life, and who, when we are gone, will throng our streets and people our extended vallies, and fix their dwellings in every cove and dell of our mountains and hills—press forward on the scene and urge their claims and expostulations ? They cry—“ For *our* sake be faithful, and for the sake of the countless millions that are to succeed us.” Can you be insensible to these entreaties ? No : you cannot. Go on, then, with spirit and alacrity in discharging the momentous duties of your noble vocation. Another consideration presses on my mind, but I hesitate whether to present it, because it may seem to some in the audience, if not to any of you, too solemn for the occasion. Be that as it may, encouraged by the respect for religion by which your discussions have been characterized,—for I have not heard a single remark or allusion drop from the lips of any speaker that savored of any other sentiments than those of piety and virtue,—I shall not withhold from you the expression of the deepest convictions and feelings of my heart on this subject. Yours, then, my respected associates and coadjutors in the cause of education, is, in the fullest and highest sense, a SACRED office. If worthy of it, you have been *called* to it of God. And to Him, for the discharge of its high and solemn duties you are held responsible ; and to Him you are to look for your reward. Him you are to serve, in forming to virtue the mind which he places under your guidance and tuition. And, remember that, of virtue, the invigorating and life-giving principle is religion. Not the religion of the noisy declaimer, or angry polemic, the cunning Jesuit, the cloistered devotee, or the sanctimonious formalist ; but the religion of the moral feelings, the religion of the heart and life, the religion taught by Christ in his Sermon on the Mount. You cannot teach your pupils any thing to purpose without teaching them this religion. The mind is God’s temple. Its thought cannot go forth in any direction without meeting Him. Woe to the teacher, who, out of the elements of literature and science, weaves a screen to hide Him from the eyes of his pupils ! But such will not be your course. No ! with Heaven’s own fire of pure and holy love burning in your bosom, its guiding light in your eye, and its sustaining power giving energy to all your faculties, you will lead your pupils to Him who is the Father and Friend of the good.) And, in closing this address, I can frame no better wish for each of you, nor do I desire any thing better for myself, than to have a share in the

rewards which will follow such a course of instruction. When, for the last time, my head reclines upon my pillow, and fancy is busy in painting on the memory the scenes of the past, may the consolation be mine—may it be yours—to look over the land and see here and there, faithfully serving God and their country, those, who, when the tidings of our demise,—a euthanasia may it be—shall reach them, will say, while the tear of fond and grateful remembrance trembles in their eye—“He was my teacher, beloved, honored and revered ! Blessings on his memory ! for he taught me to love truth, to love virtue, and to aspire after communion with their AUTHOR.”

NOTE.—The above Address was spoken extempore, and not reduced to writing till several weeks afterwards. Those who heard it will, doubtless, recognize the train of thought to be the same. The author of it has endeavored to preserve its identity so far as his memory would serve,