

The Sorrow of a Nation.

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## A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

COLLEGE CHAPEL AT PRINCETON, N. J.,

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1881,

BY

REV. JAMES O. MURRAY, D.D.

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COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY,  
PRINCETON, N. J., SEPT. 27th, 1881.

PROFESSOR JAMES O. MURRAY, D.D.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR :

At the close of the appropriate and impressive services in the College Chapel on Sunday morning last, a general desire was expressed both by members of the Faculty and by students, that the eloquent discourse on our national bereavement to which we had listened with so much interest and profit should be published. Meetings were accordingly held on Monday, at which the undersigned were appointed a Committee to request of you the discourse for publication as a fitting tribute from the College to the memory of our lamented President.

JOHN T. DUFFIELD,  
HENRY C. CAMERON,  
EDWARD B. CRITCHLOW,  
GEORGE F. GREENE,  
JAMES S. HARLAN,  
LAWRASON RIGGS, Jr.,  
ROBERT K. PRENTICE,  
JNO. Y. BOYD,  
ALEX. HARDCASTLE,  
F. W. SCOTT.

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COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY,  
PRINCETON, SEPTEMBER 29, 1881.

GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:—

It seems not unfitting that a college, which has given to the country so many public men, should render some public tribute to the memory of President Garfield. I accordingly submit the discourse for publication, thanking you for the very kind terms of your note requesting it.

With great respect,

Yours truly,

JAS. O. MURRAY.

ISAIAH 5 : 30. " *And if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.*"

There are two days in the calendar of our American history so darkened by portentous crime, so clouded with mighty sorrow, so fateful to the national welfare, that they can never be recalled without bitter pangs and shudders of dread. One of them is that 14th day of April 1865, when amid the exulting joys over the ultimate triumph of the national arms, President Lincoln fell by the hands of a malignant and cruel assassin. Some of us can recall that woful morning after the terrible deed, when, mute with horror we felt that the last and dreadfullest vial of anguish had been poured out on the suffering country.

The other is the 2d of July, 1881, a day still fresh in all memories for its awful shock, when for the second time the bullet of an assassin sped its fatal course, and President Garfield was its shining mark and victim. But when Lincoln was assassinated, the country was familiar with sorrow. The long agony of war had convulsed countless households. The mourners over their dead fallen on fields of honor had gone about our streets. Not even final victory could efface from the hearts of men, the aching sense of loss. It was the final and greatest anguish, but it was one of a long and dark line of woes.

How differently came this last fearful blow ! The wounds of our civil war were fast healing. Men of the North and men of the South were coming into

kindlier relations, doing willing homage to valor which was alike the heritage of the South and the North. Commerce was rising. The land was busy in great enterprises. The skies were peaceful. The early summer was arrayed in all its wonted beauty, when suddenly like a shock of doom, we all stood face to face with the horror of a second assassination of the Chief Magistrate of the United States.

The records of history show that in most instances the weapon of the assassin has done its fell work speedily.

“ Even at the base of Pompey’s statue  
Which all the while ran blood, *great Cesar fell.*”

William the Silent knew but few moments of agony after the bullets of Balthazar Gerard had entered his body. The second stab thrust by Francis Ravailac into the heart of Henry IV. of France, “ the most gallant and loving heart of Christendom,” and the king fell back dead. The aim of Booth, more deadly and more merciful than that of his successor, soon ended the life of President Lincoln. Dynamite in the hands of an accursed Nihilism mangles horribly the body, but soon releases the suffering soul of Alexander, Czar of Russia. But we turn our thoughts to eighty days of heroic suffering at Washington and Long Branch, to eighty days of fluctuating hope, when sometimes our fears belied our hopes and our hopes in turn belied our fears, day by day the sorrow of the nation growing, struggling for relief in prayers to God offered on all altars, till the anguish on the heart of the whole people swelled like the waves of the sea. There is something majestic in a great sorrow. The woes of communities devasted by fire, or famine, or

pestilence, the grief of whole churches when their pillars have fallen, the strong staff and the beautiful rod broken—these appeal to the deepest emotions of our natures. They send a hush out upon the storms of life. But I think it may be safely said that the sorrow which to-day broods over the land is unique in history. Not only for the numbers that feel it, though they are fifty millions of people, but for the character, the special quality of the grief, is this sorrow a spectacle of deep moral meaning and grandeur. The voice of our land to-day to all the world is the majestic plaint of Constance.

“ I will instruct my sorrows to be proud  
 For grief is proud and makes his owner stoop.  
 To me, and to the state of my great grief  
 Let Kings assemble, for my grief's so great  
 That no supporter but the huge firm earth  
 Can hold it up : here I and sorrows sit,  
 Here is my throne, bid Kings come bow to it.

This then is the theme for discourse this morning : *The sorrow of a great nation*, so vividly portrayed in the prophetic language of Isaiah in the text, “ And if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.”

Before attempting to analyze its sources, or to point out its lessons, a more vivid, a more adequate view of the sorrow itself should be sought. All summer long it has brooded over us. Scattered in our paths for rest and recreation by mountain sides, or shores of sounding sea, there was no charm in nature to make us forget the impending woe. The first shock of despair yielded to buoyant gladdening hope. That was soon shaken by ominous tidings. Then hope revived, and sickened again like the suffering patient, and

so the wearing suspense dragged on the lingering weeks. Consciously or unconsciously the nation's sorrow has been deepening every hour since the fatal morning. The sorrow has reached all classes. It has hushed party strife. It has touched the hearts of children and they have come under its shadows. It has evoked from all religious communions, the sympathy which overleaps all creeds, and binds Roman Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Gentile, in this bond of common grief. It has found no where fuller, sweeter, nobler expression from first to last, than in the South, on whose fair fields the dead martyr once stood fighting to the death her sons. Nay, it has swept over Christendom, over civilized mankind. From all lands and all powers have come the messages of sympathy, which reveal far more than official and decorous routine. They express a grief which is felt. Kings *have* bowed to it. There is no great nation of Christendom, there is no high potentate, civil or ecclesiastical, who has not conveyed to our national authorities the sense of sorrow. It is, more truly described, the sorrow of a world. And nothing in recent history has so revealed the fact that our human progress is tending to knit mankind more closely together in bonds of brotherhood. We have had our International Expositions. We hold our International Congresses. These a few centuries ago would have been impossible. To-day it is a great sorrow lifted and borne on the heart of a world which shows us how the world is slowly but surely becoming one, at least in those great interests which give our life here its deepest significance. Conspicuous however above all the rest has been the sympathy of England and the Queen. The voice has been



heard there from all classes. Pulpit and Press, Lords and Commons, Churchmen and Dissenters, all feel the grief and haste to its expression. They followed, as we did, with the same anxiety, the last bulletin from the sick room at Washington or Long Branch. No sooner had the tidings of the removal been flashed across the sea than a leading journal of literature prints in its columns lines like these:—

“The hush of the sick-room; the muffled tread:  
 Fond, questioning eye; mute lip, and listening ear;  
 Where wife and children watch, 'twixt hope and fear,  
 A father's, husband's, living-dying bed!—  
 The hush of a great nation, when its head  
 Lies stricken! Lo, along the streets he's borne,  
 Pale, thro' rank'd crowds, this gray September morn,  
 'Mid straining eyes, sad brows unbonneted,  
 And reverent speechlessness!—a 'people's voice!'  
 Nay, but a people's silence! thro' the soul  
 Of the wide world its subtler echoes roll.  
 O brother nation! England, for her part,  
 Is with thee; God willing, she whose heart  
 Throbb'd with thy pain, shall with thy joy rejoice.”

And then those messages from the Queen herself to that pale, anxious sister-woman, queenly by no royal descent nor sceptre, but queenly in the dignity of her carriage amid the agonizing sorrows and suspense,—those messages so graceful, so tender and gracious, so freighted with sense of sorrow and answering sympathy. What is not that sorrow which called them forth! The messages could not satisfy the full desire of that royal soul. The Court is put in mourning. On the bier at Washington, on the form so wasted, once so proud, there rests the floral wreath, the last expression of a Queen's sorrow for the nation in its mighty grief, quite as truly as a tribute to the virtues of the departed ruler. We must note in all this not



only what should forever endear to American hearts Victoria as a Queen, but also the greatness of our own sorrow.

Nor can I pass from the consideration of this topic without alluding to what has already been brought to your notice in this place, the suffering of our land in many of its portions. Fierce droughts have burned our vegetation, dried our springs of water, kindled awful conflagrations, making hundreds houseless and homeless. As the autumn wears on, it brings far more than its wonted sadness. That may after all be but sentiment, though the word of the Lord which abideth forever assures us, "We all do fade as a leaf and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away." But the autumnal sadness is heavy and sore. The signs of it are in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. They are the accompaniments, the "trappings and the suits" of the deeper woe which saddens all hearts to-day. They are the voice of Providence bidding us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

From the greatness and extent of the sorrow we turn to its sources. What is it which makes the mighty grief, so poignant and so universal? In considering this, we touch the heart of our sad theme. It may not be overlooked that there is a sense of humiliation to the nation in the thought, that such a deed should have been wrought among us. Sixteen years only, separate from each other these two dreadful crimes by which two Presidents have been assassinated. The child is not yet grown to full manhood, who heard wonderingly of President Lincoln's foul taking off. Nor can relief be found in any theories of insanity on the part of the assassins. Madness call it, but the public mind

is well assured that it was responsible madness. This is in part the bitterness of our woe. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the deed has in it and on it the same damnable qualities that will brand forever the murderous heart of Russian Nihilism.

Nor again is it the fact that the awful deed was perpetrated so soon after the President had assumed the duties of his high office ; that he was cut off on the very threshold of his great official career. Four short months were all he knew of active duty in his high position. Four short months, and then all ended by the bullet of an assassin. But some of us can remember how President Harrison sickened and died after only one short month of Presidency over the Republic. President Taylor held the office longer, but he too was cut off by disease running its fatal course with woful rapidity. These however died by disease. The nation sorrowed over these heroes and buried them amid sincere and deep lamentations. But to have two of our Presidents *slain* by an assassin's hand within a score of years, to have the deed repeated so soon, makes thoughtful men pause and think. We had begun to associate such crimes with the wild lawlessness of middle ages. We had begun to say within ourselves, such barbarism is of the past ; Christianity has put it aside forever. But human wickedness is still rampant, and the assassin of rulers is still more than a possibility. He is a living, working, dreadful reality. And what gives to us as American citizens our humiliation of grief, is the thought that we in our fond dreams and hopes for popular government imagined, that in a land where the nation chooses its own rulers, self-governed, there could be no social nor political condition out of

which such crimes could spring. We dreamed it so. Alas! it was but a dream! Must we face such possibilities in the future? Must we reckon on them as contingencies to be guarded against? Must we turn to the world and say with shame and confusion of face, "It was once our glad republican idea and hope that institutions like ours made such crimes virtual impossibilities. But our idea was visionary, our hope was the baseless fabric of a vision, vanished, utterly vanished under the double assassination of rulers which stains our annals." Who is there that does not feel the humiliation and bitter anguish of this thought? It is no small element in the mighty grief under which the nation is bowed to-day.

But the nation's sorrow has elements of the most subduing type in the loss from public life of such a man. Anything like a complete survey of his career I certainly shall not attempt to-day. It belongs to a different occasion, and demands a longer study. But there is a three-fold aspect in which that career may be generally and cursorily viewed, which will disclose the grounds of the wide lamentation which seems only to gather volume in these passing days, instead of spending itself in one outburst of grief. That three-fold aspect is *The Preparation, The Achievement, The Suffering*.

The American people always hold a man specially dear to them, whose origin is humble. To this, our popular institutions and traditions educate us. That some of our ablest and worthiest chief magistrates have sprung from humblest conditions of life, is what our democratic notions proudly recognize. From such conditions President Garfield sprang. The whole

story of his early life, like that of Lincoln, is the story of poverty, struggle, and obscurity. Yet his ancestry was of the best Puritan stock. It is "tolerably certain that the male ancestor of the American Garfields was one of that picked company, \* \* \* \* which bore Governor Winthrop to the shores of Massachusetts." Five generations of that ancestry lie buried in and around Watertown, one of Boston's finest suburban towns. It is however the fact, that the early life in the forests of Ohio was for President Garfield a school of hardship, bravely encountered, cheerfully and signally mastered, on which our thoughts may dwell to most advantage now. There is here a great lesson for all young men struggling for education, and for those also to whom education comes as the easy gift of opulent or well to do parents. From the outset an enthusiasm for knowledge made him an earnest student. It all comes out, not less in the log school houses of Ohio, than in his subsequent career at the college. But how little of the future brilliant career seems likely to happen, as we see him at sixteen years of age, chopping by contract his hundred cords of wood on the shores of Lake Erie, and pausing in his toil to catch glimpses of the blue lake, which seemed to start up within him longings for a life of adventure on the sea. We recall by sad contrast, the wounded, dying President propped in his chair at Long Branch and looking wistfully out on the waves of the ocean rolling evermore. How little of the high station that awaited him in after life seemed likely, when he plodded along the tow-path of a canal for three months, employed as a driver. Yet all this early hardship made him stronger for severer struggles.

An illness turned all his thoughts toward education. And then ensued that laborious struggle for it. He spent much of his time, through the winters, in teaching a district school; during summers, he was in the hay field. But he *conquered* all difficulties, of preparatory study and of support. He *conquered* them, this is the significant part of the story, and entered on his college course at Williams. So far in life, he was master of himself and of his circumstances. It is a very trenchant remark of Pres. Hopkins that Gen. Garfield was not sent to college, that he *came*. He took from a good college all a good college could give him, simply because he was there to make his education *a force in after life*. "There was no pretense of genius, or alternation of spasmodic effort and of rest, but a satisfactory accomplishment in all directions of what was undertaken." Seeing clearly from the very outset, what a well-trained mind is in after-achievement; seeing this as a boy in the district school over his grammar and arithmetic; seeing this at the academy over his Latin and Greek, seeing this at the college in the broadening field of mental culture and discipline, he has made a record for himself which is significant to every young student in our country.

The motive-power in all this we may well believe was christian earnestness. His christian life began early. The whole life shows its power. The unfaltering type of his christian profession, stands out clear and distinct from the first. He joined himself, like Faraday in London, to a humble denomination of christian believers. It has no great name in ecclesiastical history. It fills no high place in the thoughts of men. Its work is confined to localities. He has made it more widely known than ever before. And *we*



in this christian college, should not fail to-day to mark the characteristic quality of that life in its preparatory stages, as christian. Undoubtedly the christian element gave moral earnestness, large and serious purpose in living, a high and solemn sense of accountability. And now, what is all our outward and decorous garb of sorrow worth, if it does not also enwrap a fruitful and blessed recognition of this preparation as having meaning for us. By it, he being dead yet speaketh. Gathered as a college we shall be on the morrow to unite in the religious services appointed by the Civic Authorities. Is it to be merely the sentiment of grief, or is it to be something deeper and better? It will be, if young men catch enthusiasm from this shining example of early struggle passed triumphantly, of educational advantages valued highly and pursued christianly. *That preparation* amid such hardship, pursued to such purpose, issuing in such equipment for life, how it shames, how it rebukes all triflers in this high business of mental training; how it encourages, how it ennobles all similar struggles and strugglers in the course of education!

Of his life as an achievement, it will only be expected that I speak in the most general way. So large a part is in the political sphere, as to make any other mode of treatment ill-timed. But in its broad, general features, it may in any place however sacred, before any audience however gathered or mixed, be pointed to as fulfilling the law of all high achievement,—noble aims fulfilled by noble effort, and reaching a splendid goal.

His first year after graduation was spent as a teacher in the Seminary which had nurtured him. That

ended, he was sought for the Presidency of the Institution. In a year from the time he reached this post, he was called to the Senate of Ohio. Then came the civil war, and with the first reverse of the National arms, he was found turning his back on his literary life for the field of war. Beginning as a Colonel, he rose by promotion to the rank of Major General. He was taken out of the army to serve his State in the National Congress. "There was no lack of generals in the field, but there was lack of men in Congress who understood the affairs of the army." Thus and then began his great public career, which ended in the unsought elevation to the Presidency of the Nation. Almost the first thing that strikes the reader of his biography is the fact, that he is *conspicuous* as one of that select class of public men whom positions seek but who never seek positions, as place-hunters in our politics. His whole career from the position of teacher in the Academy after graduation, to his nomination for the Presidency at Chicago illustrates this principle. Such a fact lifts him at once above, far above all the low management, all the wire-pulling, all the machinations by which place is won sometimes, and high place too. He never had occasion in his life to stoop to a trick. He may not have been tempted as some men are. But on this high vantage-ground—sought for but not seeking position—he rose to his great eminence, and whether or no he reached the higher ideal of statesmanship, he never sunk to the arts of the politician. It is indeed no crime in a great man to desire rule over men. Who thinks meanly of any one of our great triumvirate, Calhoun or Clay or Webster, that he had ambition for the Presidency? It was *our*



loss that they were not in the office. They knew, and all discerning men knew, they were fitted for it. Still it is better for men that positions seek them, than that they seek positions. For this is the great fact on which all young men may safely rely, that surely as the course of human affairs runs on there will always be positions calling for men. Let me in view of the great career ended, in view of this great characteristic of that career, deeply impress on my audience this morning the importance of being ready when the call comes. Only one thing makes any man thus ready, hard, conscientious, painstaking endeavor. The call comes. You shall hear it. But it never tarries. It must be often answered on the spot. Unanswered, it passes on and the man is left behind forever in the race of life. Again let me remind you that wherever that call came to the departed President, in the sphere of Teacher, Soldier, Statesman or Ruler, it was heard and the voice replied, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Let us never fail to do honor to men whom positions seek, who do not seek positions.

So too a strong emphasis must be put on the fact that his career shows in him constant high ideals. These are of different degrees, positive, comparative, superlative. We need raise no question in which category his ideals of public life are to be placed. All candid judgment will concede to him the praise of high ideals. They ruled him in college; they ruled him in his vocation as teacher; they ruled him in camp; they ruled him in congress. They were evidently to rule his administration. To one at least of our great public questions, he brought an amount of research, a compass of severe, patient, discriminating, statesman-

like service, which sufficiently marks this characteristic as one to be emphasized. A writer in the *Nineteenth Century*\* has said that "The entire record of British legislation on commerce and currency for two hundred years had been so studied that he had all their most important facts at command." And when the public credit was threatened, "the Secretary of the Treasury had his speeches on the subject printed in pamphlet form and sent to the leading statesmen and financiers of Europe." They fell under the notice of such masters of the subject as John Bright and Mr. Gladstone. On their nomination, he was chosen an honorary member of the celebrated Reform club. So with all his work. The influence of these high ideals shape all his public utterances. Addressing young men, his whole tone is that of a man who will have success won only by having and following such. Nothing is further from him than any *doctrinaire* thinking. Possibly on the great question of civil service reform, there was not even enough of this. But to succeed on high levels of achievement was his moulding, controlling aim. And is it not certain that if public life is to be thoroughly renovated among us—if there is to be such a thing in our history as American Statesmanship worthy its high ancestry in the Fathers of the Republic, and commanding the respectful homage of the world—his method must be chosen. It may be the death of politicians. It will be the resurrection of statesmen—let us also hope of christian statesmen.

And addressing as I do this morning an audience of young men, I may be allowed to press home this

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\*Nineteenth Century. August, 1881.

consideration. If high ideals do not rule men in the period of Preparation, they are not likely to do so in the period of Achievement. The trouble is like to be most with the men of one talent. They, as our divine Lord has taught us in the parable, are most like to hide in a napkin, or bury in the earth of worthless, aimless living, that one talent which needs the high ideal as truly as the two or the five. And let no one of you forget the solemn lesson from this great career, of which christianity was the root and mainspring. The christian element here must be powerful. How can it help being so, with a judgment to be passed when every man shall give account of himself to God, and when there remains to every good and faithful servant the promise of the final award, "Well done, enter into the joy of thy Lord." Shaped then by these two forces, that course was finished. And because it was so shaped there is such a grief in all truly American hearts to-day. For we cannot spare one such man from public life and not feel the loss. But when he holds the high office of our chief ruler and is smitten down, the whole land mourns. Among the last words of David, King of Israel, are these, most striking and most pertinent, "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me. He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds." Christian statesmanship is the highest ideal of statesmanship. And such, all nations need. The loss of one such anywhere should cause profound grief. We should be recreant to all our noble christian traditions if the national sorrow were less general, or less deep.

Preparation and Achievement ended and transfigured by suffering, so our survey of the career must come to its close.

So indeed it has been given to some of the noblest human spirits to pass off the mortal stage. The active ministry of the great apostle terminates in a passive ministry, bonds, imprisonment, shipwreck, death at last by the headsman's axe, under a Nero. So the bright memorable service of William the Silent ends by the shot of an assassin. So the dagger of Ravailac spills the blood of Henry IV. of France. Death which ends all careers, is seldom more than a close, a winding up of the whole. But in the ending of that career over which a nation is bowed in grief to-day, it is death preceded by months of suffering which sheds a strange transfiguration over the whole. It adds nothing to the Achievement. That was a finished chapter when the pistol shot rang through the city of Washington on the fatal morning. But there were days and weeks and months in which the calmness of christian fortitude, the brave determination to struggle for life, the patience, the cheerfulness, the hopefulness—all maintained to the last hour—shed a serene and holy light on the most pathetic scene in our national history. The heart of the nation was there through it all—North and South and East and West, watching, hoping, praying. It was there in sympathy with the noble wife, now widowed of her noble husband, and at times almost forgetting its anxieties and suspense in admiration of her bravery and cheerful hopefulness—bringing as she did to the awful exigency all the ministrations of finest, completest womanhood. It went out from there to that distant home in Ohio where the gray-haired mother of

the stricken President, to whom in all stages of his career he had ever shown a filial love and veneration as beautiful as they are impressive, sat waiting not for her own departure, but in anxious care lest she should outlive the son whom she had so nobly trained, and whom she follows now to the grave. There is no element of pathos wanting. Tragedy pales before this scene of struggle, suffering, and at last death. But it all throws a light, softened and pure and holy, around the whole career. We see him now—not through the record of a wise and pure and good administration of his office, not through the eloquence of his oratory, not through the statesmanship of his Congressional course, not through the brilliant record of his military career, not through early hardships and heroic struggle for a thorough mental furnishing. We see him, we see it all, through the unbounded pathos of the sick room at Washington and Long Branch, and in all the sorrow of the nation in which we all have our part, are yet moved to say for *him*—

“ Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
 Or knock the breast ; no weakness, no contempt,  
 Dispraise or blame ; nothing but well and fair,  
 And what may quiet us in a death so noble.”

Are there now no lessons for us to heed in this heavy hour ? Whose heart would not tremble as he seeks to point them ? I cannot attempt to read them all as they are written for us by God’s solemn providence. I shrink even from entering at all on this high office. “ God is his own interpreter.” But there are one or two which in broken fashion I must essay. On these I cannot be silent.



First of all we must be careful that no guilty unbelief as to a true doctrine of prayer assail and seize the national heart. If profane and ungodly lips say to the christian world, "You have now fairly tested the power of prayer and it failed in the awful exigency;" if from this there spring the atheistic notion that there is no Divine Ruler over nations, no Providential eye watching our national welfare, no Providential hand shaping its course, we are in such peril as a nation, as never before frowned on us. Nay, if we think that prayer to God for national blessings is not still our highest duty and most exalted privilege, we are in jeopardy every hour of divine judgments which will make men stand aghast. All we have to do is to recall that prayer in Gethsemane, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." That cup did not pass. Ours did not. If we prayed aright, we prayed submissively to God's holy will, and trusting all to His Wisdom and His Love. He has not forgotten those prayers. If we hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering, a childlike, devout faith may anticipate unnumbered blessings in years to come. We prayed in our ignorance of a mortal wound. We should have been false to our duties if we had not prayed. Nay, we should with unfaltering lips cry to God for blessings on him who succeeds in the high office, who has borne himself so nobly through the late crisis, and who so feelingly has set apart the morrow to the offices of religion.

But the closing word which must have utterance is this. By solemn and terrible judgment we as a nation are warned against the evil which had been for

years gathering head, corrupting the sources of political life and entrenching itself in the basest passions of men. Let me here disclaim any attempt to estimate the degree of connection between the spoils system and the awful deed which has clothed the nation in woe. More remote or less remote—the offspring of frenzy or revenge, with determining all this the pulpit has nothing to do. But the connection is too plain to be mistaken. It exists; and all educated men are bound to throw aside their partisanship—to look at the one great duty—the purification of our politics, the redemption of our republican system from a threatening evil against which discerning men have long been warning us, and which must now with all right-thinking men come to an end.

“ All is best, though we oft doubt  
 What th’ unsearchable dispose  
 Of highest wisdom brings about  
 And ever best found in its close.  
 Oft he seems to hide his face,  
 But unexpectedly returns,  
 And to his faithful champion hath in place  
 Bore witness gloriously. \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

His servants he, with new acquist  
 Of true experience from this [dread] event  
 With peace and consolation hath dismissed,  
 And calm of mind, all passion spent.”