

Special Causes of Gratitude.

A

THANKSGIVING SERMON,

PREACHED

IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ELIZABETHTOWN,

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TO
THE YOUNG MEN
OF THE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ELIZABETHTOWN,
AT WHOSE REQUEST THIS SERMON IS PUBLISHED,
IT IS MOST AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,
BY THEIR
FRIEND AND PASTOR.

SERMON.

Giving thanks always, for all things, unto God.

EPHESIANS v. 20.

GRATITUDE for benefits received, is a duty universally recognized. However men may differ in other things, they agree in this as a rule of duty; and a man is excluded from the association and confidence of honorable men who flagrantly violates the common and ordinary rules of gratitude. And an appeal to men on the ground of favors conferred in times of distress, finds always, from true hearts, a ready response. And this is the obvious and common sense ground of Paul in our text.

The seasons for the cultivation of the earth, and the ingathering of its products, are just closing upon us; and in accordance with our time-honored custom, we assemble at the call of our respected Chief Magistrate, to render our Thanksgiving to Almighty God "for the health which we have enjoyed, for the prosperity which has prevailed, for the peace to which we have been restored, and for all the bounties of his providence, and the richer blessings of his grace." These blessings are many and various. The seasons of the year have followed each other in regular succession, each vying with the other to encourage

the cultivators of the earth. We have had a genial Spring, an exceedingly productive Summer, and an uncommonly fruitful Autumn. And now, at the opening of Winter, our whole country is overflowing with abundance, and the needful means of subsistence are within the reach of all our industrious poor.

Our Commonwealth has been also greatly blessed with health. In no part of our State has there been a pervading pestilence; and whilst in some localities there has been more than ordinary sickness, we as a community have been remarkably blessed. Although autumnal fevers have been more frequent than ordinary among us, our deaths have been comparatively few; and whilst some are absent who were with us on our last day of Thanksgiving, our bill of mortality at the close of the year will be comparatively a very small one.

In a civil point of view we must also say that "the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places." Our State, though small, is homogeneous. We are free from debt, and, consequently, from onerous taxation. The laws emphatically govern. The lawless mobs and street brawls of some portions of our land are unknown amongst us. Justice delays not in the punishment of the guilty. And, hence, we sit under our vine and fig-tree without any to molest or make us afraid, with a sense of entire security both as to person and property. Our State government is economically administered; men of capacity fill our places of influence and administer our laws; and, perhaps, in all the earth there is not to be found a people enjoying so much liberty and security, and at such little expense.

The blessings of religion we also enjoy, and in the way best calculated to make them blessings indeed. We have no state religion;—and from a curse so heavy may our remotest genera-

tions be ever free. We have no pains nor penalties against fanaticism; its fires soonest burn out when left to burn without notice. We are left to worship God as we may judge best; and the system which is the most scriptural, and sensible, and natural, is that which will finally prevail. And whilst much is yet to be done in some portions of our State, we should be thankful that the influence of the Gospel is so deeply and widely felt. Our own privileges as a community are, in this respect, unsurpassed.

Such, my brethren, is but a summary of the blessings, civil, social, and religious, which we have enjoyed through the closing year. And whilst, in conformity with the injunction of the Apostle, we would "give thanks always, for all things, unto God," these require at our hand, to-day, the most devout thanksgiving. And in the view of the bounties and blessings of the year, which, to-day, rise up in numbers before us beyond the power of our computation, we would address one another in the joyful language of David: "O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him in psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great king above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is also his. The sea is his and he made it; and his hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."

Having thus accomplished the object of our assemblage, by expressing our gratitude, and rendering our thanks to Almighty God for the blessings of the closing year, we shall, in the remainder of this discourse, present some of the special causes of

thanksgiving which its history presents for our consideration. It has been a year more eventful than any which has passed over the world for three centuries.

I. THE PEACE TO WHICH WE HAVE BEEN RESTORED IS ONE OF THESE SPECIAL CAUSES OF THANKSGIVING.

War, for whatever purpose or object waged, must be regarded as a monstrous evil. Especially is it so to a people, with free and open institutions like ours. It interferes with the benign influence of commerce. It expends the treasures of the country, which, otherwise, might be rendered greatly useful, and leaves the people burdened with debt. It corrupts morals, and the moral sense, and engenders national jealousies. It sacrifices men without number who have no interest in the contest. It begets a warlike spirit, which is impatient of negotiation, and which seeks to settle difficulties at the mouth of the cannon. It raises up a class of men who seek civil station as the reward of their valor in the field, and who obtain a dangerous influence over the popular mind by their courage and success in the deadly breach. Cæsar first conquered its enemies, and, then, enslaved Rome. Buonaparte drove the Bourbons from France, and returned from the victorious battle-fields of Italy and Germany to assume the Dictatorship of his country. And whilst on each of our two previous Thanksgivings we were called upon to mourn over the existence of war with the Republic of Mexico, we are to-day called upon to return unto God our thanksgivings "for the peace to which we have been restored." May it be an enduring peace!

Although great and manifold evils are connected with all wars, yet good people should look upon them in the light of God's providence. It is by God that "kings reign and princes

decree justice." God has ever made the wrath of man to praise him, and brought good out of evil. The thirty years' war of Europe, which rolled a tide of desolation from the Black to the North Sea, and from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, and which for half a century smothered the glimmering sparks of civilization, gave Europe much of its independence.* The bloody wars of Britain introduced the Revolution of 1688, and gave her people civil and religious liberty. The war of our Revolution, protracted through seven years, and at such a fearful expense of blood and treasure, gave existence to this Republic, which stands up as a light-house amid the nations of the earth, directing them into the paths of civil and religious liberty. The wars of Napoleon, the bloodiest ever waged, broke the power of the Pope,—weakened all that remained of the old feudal system, and taught the crowned heads of Europe the power of the people. The wars of Britain in China and India, denounced by the civilized world, opened those countries to civilization and religion. And may we not hope that our recent war, much as all good men deplored it, may be overruled for the good of benighted and semi-civilized Mexico. Vast portions of its territory have been ceded to these United States. Texas, New Mexico, and Upper and Lower California, said to form a territory as large as the original thirteen United States, and hitherto closed up against all free religious institutions, are now reposing under the emblems of our sovereignty, and are open to the reception of *all* our institutions. However we may object to the manner of obtaining these vast territories, or to the incorporation of their people with ours, there can be no question as to the good resulting to the people themselves. And seeing that the territory is ours, and that its people are our fellow citizens, the

* See Schiller's "Thirty Years' War."

best way to repair the evils of war among them, is speedily to send to them the institutions, and the Gospel, of peace. And already are the ministers and missionaries of our own Church preaching the Gospel in districts of ancient Mexico, where until recently the voice of a Protestant minister could not be raised save at the risk of his life. And the fact that peace has been restored to us with so little injury to ourselves, and with so many hopeful prospects of good to Mexico, forms a special cause, to-day, of thanksgiving to God.

II. ANOTHER OF THESE SPECIAL CAUSES OF THANKSGIVING IS THE PROGRESS OF FREE INSTITUTIONS AMONG THE OLD NATIONS OF EUROPE.

Upon this subject the present year has been one of amazing development. Up to its commencement, with scarcely an exception, the nations of Continental Europe were oppressed and depressed by arbitrary and grinding civil and social institutions. Italy was governed by a civil and religious despotism. There the Pope and his Cardinals absorbed all power. The empire of Austria, and the lesser states of Germany, were also despotisms. So was the kingdom of Prussia. France, comparatively free, was yet receding towards despotism. Civil matters were confined to the kings and a few nobles; and religious matters were in the hands of kings and a few ecclesiastics; and the masses of the people were excluded from all civil, and social, and religious rights; and were compelled to believe and to do as their civil and religious despots enjoined them. Every thing was tending to an extended and iron despotism; to the strengthening and perpetuation of a privileged order in church and state, with a divine right to make of the masses of the people hewers of wood and drawers of water. Such was the

state of things when the present year dawned upon the world.

In the month of February last, some liberal Deputies of the French Chambers, together with their supporters and sympathisers, appointed a great feast to be held in the vicinity of Paris, with the design of propagating their opinions. It was forbidden by the government; and the military was called out to suppress it. The people and the government were thus brought into collision;—the people rose together against the encroachments of the crown;—the military joined the people, and in three days the monarchy was overthrown,—the king of one revolution was driven into exile by another,—and a republic was declared by the people. A national assembly was soon called; a republican constitution has been adopted; and before the present year closes, a republican president will be elected by the nation, in the exercise of universal suffrage!

Paris may be considered the civil and social centre of Europe—the very heart of the continent;—and its pulsations are felt from Gibraltar to Archangel, and from the British Channel to the Volga. As if by telegraphic wires, the news of the revolution in Paris flies across the Alps into Italy and Germany; and across the Rhine into Prussia; and across the Vistula, and up the Baltic, to Russia; and in a few weeks Europe is shaken from its centre to its circumference. The people are every where made to see their power, and princes their weakness; and a war is commenced between *might* and *right*. No similar political movement occurs in history. Great changes have been effected by a single battle; but there has been no battle here; there has been only a spontaneous and wide-spread movement among the people. This is what makes the European Revolution of 1848 a prodigious phenomenon. Reactions may

take place; the people may be again cajoled into subserviency to power; but things can never be again as they have been. The temporal power of the Pope has been wrested from him. Sicily has been separated from Naples. The Austrian Cæsar has been despoiled of his Roman empire. The French monarchy has been abolished; and the Prussian is undergoing great changes. A new Germanic empire—an utopian creation aspiring to be the shadowy representative of that of Charlemagne—is forming out of the states that formed the Austrian, for the purposes of mutual defence. Rebellion in Ireland, and Chartism in England, are quelled, but the principles which gave them existence are leavening Britain. The spirit excited by the “*emeute*” of Paris, has penetrated to the very heart of the empire of the Czar of the North; and the banks of the Vistula are lined with armed Cossacks, to check the march of the spirit of freedom. These are wondrous things, and seem to us like romance; and yet they are the doings of a single year, and of even a few months of that year!

As to these revolutions, we have nothing to fear. We have no privileged classes—no hereditary nobility—no rulers by divine right—no state and stall-fed ecclesiastics, putting forth their preposterous pretensions to the possession of the keys of heaven. We have all that the people of Europe are seeking to gain by their revolutionary efforts. The people make and modify our laws—they make and unmake our magistrates. No resort to arms is needed. The vote, with us, is more powerful than the sword. And whilst we should be thankful that the Atlantic rolls between us and the heaving nations of Europe; yet, because of the truthfulness and equality of our institutions, we would have nothing to fear from them if the Atlantic should dwindle into a river. There is no cause for revolution among

us, as the power is with the people, and as the majority rules. This should be, to-day, a special cause of thanksgiving. Whatever waves of popular excitement may roll over the nations of the old world, sweeping their ancient thrones and dynasties into promiscuous ruin, they lose their violence and fury as they approach this new world, and sink quietly to rest upon our shores.

III. THE SIGNS OF PROVIDENCE AS TO THE FALSE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD, IS ANOTHER SPECIAL CAUSE OF THANKSGIVING.

We refer not now so much to the opening of India and China to the Gospel; nor to the fact that the grosser systems of idolatry are every where waning, as to the changes, in religious things, passing over the nations of Europe, and which have been wonderfully accelerated within the present year. If in Christendom there is a system of religion more in opposition to the simple Gospel of Christ than another, that system is Popery. This statement we make on the double ground of its doctrinal and active opposition to the Gospel. How signally the hand of God has been upon it within the few last months! Its own internal corruptions and shameless impostures, are inducing hundreds of thousands to flock out from its control, in all lands. Every change in the civil and social state of the nations, is against it. The Papal power is smitten by God, not only in its head, but in all its members. Pius IX. is deprived of his civil power; and even the down-trodden Italian is demanding religious freedom, and must have it. Austria, which has been styled the last crutch of the Papacy, has been struck away. France, the protector of Catholicism and the Jesuits under Louis Philippe, will no longer be a focus of religious

propagandism in the name of the Virgin Mary. The Irish, betrayed by their priests in their recent rebellion—who first stimulated them to arms, and then deserted them when they saw that success was impossible—are speaking out against the men who have impoverished and brutalised them. The Jesuits have been expelled even from Italy and from Austria, as the dangerous enemies of all social progress. Men are every where asserting the right of thinking for themselves, of reading the Bible, and of worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences. And when these rights are universally possessed, the days of Popery are ended. It can live only amid general ignorance, where the Bible is unknown, and where freedom of thought is suppressed. And all over the earth the chains of superstition are breaking, and new channels are constantly opening for the circulation of the waters of life. As no free and stable government ever has been, or ever can be erected without the general prevalence of truth and intelligence among a people, this should be a cause of special thanksgiving with us all.

IV. WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR THE CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS UNDER WHICH WE LIVE.

The hand of God is conspicuous in all our history as a people. The discovery of this land, previous to the convulsions introduced among the old nations of Europe by the Art of Printing and the glorious Reformation, is note-worthy. It was discovered just in time to become the asylum of those whose high principles on civil and religious liberty would not permit them to bow to the crown or the crosier. It was the wind of civil and religious persecution that filled the sails which wafted to these

shores their first European occupants. It was the love of civil and religious liberty that settled America.

And it was the same love, burning in the hearts of the sons of Pilgrim sires, that wrought out for us the liberty and the institutions which we, to-day, enjoy, and for which we render our sincere thanksgivings to God. The story of the cruel oppression of kings and bishops, had been transmitted from parents to children; and each succeeding generation was warned to guard their liberty with sleepless vigilance, and to retain it, and transmit it, at whatever price. And when, in various forms, and under various pretexts, they witnessed the encroachments of the king and the bishop; and when neither by remonstrance, petition, or persuasion, they could check these encroachments, they rose in their might and secured the independence of our country. And the hand of God may be as distinctly seen in conducting our revolutionary struggles to complete success, and in guiding our fathers to lay the foundations of our institutions, as in the deliverance of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, and in safely conducting them into the Land of Promise. And for the political equality of all our citizens—for the way and manner in which the inalienable right of every person to liberty is guarded—for our liberty of conscience to worship God—for our freedom from a privileged aristocracy—for a state without kings or princes—for a church with or without bishops, just as the people prefer in the free exercise of their judgment and conscience—we should render, to-day, our grateful thanks to Almighty God.

In the possession of these institutions, we should never forget that the eyes of the world are upon us;—those of the friends of civil and religious despotism, looking for our failure; and those of the friends of civil and social progress, looking for our suc-

cess. We are proclaiming our principles and carrying on our experiment of free government, in the midst of an amphitheatre, surrounded by the nations of the earth as spectators. And it is our high duty so to demean ourselves as not to retard the progress of human liberty in any land, and as to transmit our institutions, unimpaired, from generation to generation. To do this we must,

1. *Educate our people.* Our existence is bound up with the education of our people. The elective franchise is in the possession of all. The poorest, the most illiterate, and the most immoral, have the same weight at the polls as the most affluent, the most intelligent, or the most virtuous. We are not now asserting the wisdom of all this, we only state the fact. And, hence, the need of a wide-spread and pervading intelligence among the people. This destroys the element in which demagogues live; prevents delusion by partizan leaders, and enables the people to examine the merits and results of things for themselves. The rottenness and ruin of all our institutions will be the speedy results of an ignorant people, and a corrupt public sentiment. A general intelligence is the cheapest antidote to all those forms of political and religious fanaticism which would endanger our beloved institutions. Hence, our legislators and people should vie with one another in the establishment of colleges, and academies, and common schools, until all the elements of a solid education are placed within the reach of all our people. To the shame of New-Jersey it must be confessed, that in this respect she is far behind many of her younger sister states. There is not within our bounds a college nor an academy raised by her munificence; nor has she placed a stone upon the walls of those which Christian philanthropy, and individual enterprize, have erected. And she is doing just

enough for common schools to hold up her parsimony to reproach. She readily taxes her people to build up a magnificent state prison, and to erect county gaols and court-houses, for the trial and punishment of criminals; but she does comparatively nothing to prevent the ignorance which is the parent of crime. And the intelligence and high morality of our people we owe far more to the character of the first settlers of New-Jersey, which has been maintained by their descendants, than to any munificence of our rulers or legislators.

2. *We must morally educate our people.* Mere education has no moral power to restrain the passions of men. The history of the world demonstrates, that the most gifted and the best educated, without moral principle, have been those who have done most to unfurl over it the scroll written within and without with mourning, lamentation and woe. Who, in Rome, was more intelligent and cunning than Cataline? Who, in England, than Laud and Jeffreys? Who, in France, than Voltaire? Who, among the crowned heads of his day, than Frederick of Prussia? And is not the passing history of our race daily proving, that high intellectual culture, without moral virtue, is doing more to sap the foundations of all good institutions, than is all brutal ignorance combined? And is there not evidence, sad and fearful, that the moral instruction of our people has not kept pace with their mental, nor with their rapid growth? If otherwise, why the scenes which so often disgrace some of our legislative halls? Is not the legislator the moral, as well as the political, representative of his constituents? Why those laws which so often set God, and right, and honesty at defiance? Why the low character of so much of the public press? Why the putrid morality of even some of that press ostensibly erected for philanthropic purposes? Why the un-

measured abuse of public men, which, by weakening public confidence in our rulers, removes one of the main elements of good citizenship? Why the corrupt means so often used to carry our elections? Our existence is bound up with the moral, equally as with the intellectual, culture of our people. And in view of the deluge of ignorance which is pouring upon us from all the nations of the old world, and of our immensely increasing territory, now stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, it behooves every true patriot to see to it that the whole moral power of the nation is put into full requisition for the moral education of all our people. With good sense and good principles among the masses, our institutions will be going on from strength to strength. Unless our walls and bulwarks are cemented by that righteousness which exalteth a nation, we are only building houses on the sand. Nor shall we wonder, if, previous to our next Thanksgiving, a fierce military despotism has its iron hoof upon the neck of France. Do you ask, why the thought? Its present National Convention was elected on the Sabbath; and the election of its first republican President is fixed for the second Sabbath in December!! And God has said, "them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

3. *We must have just and wholesome laws.* Such laws will always gain the assent and the support of the people. If the wicked rise up in opposition, the good and virtuous will sustain them. And the laws that unite these in their support will stand, and will be a blessing.

When laws essentially unjust are made, and for whatever cause, they give rise to hostile parties in a state, and thus weaken the bonds that ought ever to bind fellow citizens together. And opposition to unjust laws has not unfrequently

overturned empires, and kingdoms, and dynasties, and drenched the earth with blood. The illustrations of this we have in sacred and profane history. The despotic laws of that infamous race of princes now happily extinct, the Stuarts, at whose name the genius of tolerance and freedom turns pale, introduced the civil wars of England, and the Revolution of 1688. The unjust laws which England sought to enforce in her colonies, produced our glorious Revolution. The despotic ordinances of Charles X. sent his family into what we hope may prove a returnless exile from France. And those strong pulsations of the hearts of the people of Europe, which, like the hidden agencies that produce the earthquake, are shaking that land in all its nations and tongues, causing its kings to quail, and its thrones to crumble, are instigated by the unjust civil and ecclesiastical laws, made to pamper the prince and the priest, at the expense of the people.

Viewing this subject in the broad historic light which we possess, we must teach our legislators that no laws will be borne by us unless they are wholesome and just, however they may promote the weal of one class at the expense of another. And we fearlessly assert that laws exist in this land which would be a deep disgrace to any land. We refer to some of those laws pertaining to slavery, which bind over the victims of oppression to perpetual ignorance, and which make it a penal offence to teach them to read the Bible! It is almost impossible to conceive of a more flagrant outrage upon natural rights, or a more barbarous thing to be done by a civilized State. It is not in civilized human nature to let such laws alone. They must be repealed. The genius of universal emancipation, the spirit of the age, and the angelic form of Christianity, are pulling at the rope that is tolling the death-knell of Slavery, in

all its forms, throughout the earth. Let only these be kept at the rope, and let fanatical hands be kept off, and it will die the sooner.

Let our laws be wise and just, and all will respect them. Then there will be no fuel to feed the fires of party—no causes for extended dissension among the people. Such laws will unite all the wise and good in their support; and the institutions which grow up under them will be enshrined in their hearts.

4. *We must have good rulers.* On this subject, the Scriptures often and emphatically speak, and the world's history teaches many lessons of deep importance. "As a roaring lion, and as a raging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the people." In proof of this, look at Judæa during the history of the successors of Solomon—look at Rome in the days of her Neros and Caligulas—look at England in the days of her first and second Charles! "If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked;"—that is, he will elevate to authority those like himself. What kings, but those like James I. and Charles I., would patronise such a wretch as Buckingham? When the wicked are in power the land mourns.

These positions, the truth of which is obvious to all men of knowledge and reflection, should be understood by our people. Mere political adroitness, should be no qualification for office. Nor should great abilities, unless regulated by moral principle. We are less in danger from weak, than from great men, who have the degree and the kind of talent that fits them to be demagogues. And our danger from this source is daily increasing. So tightly are party lines drawn, and to such an ascendancy has the nefarious principle risen, that the spoils belong to the victors, that the great question is, irrespective of moral

worth, who is the most available candidate? Who is most likely to draw after him the slave-holding, or the papal, or the abolition interest? Or for whom will the rabble hurra loudest? And good men, who, in other matters, act in the fear of God, will not unfrequently reject the good man because not of their party, and elevate the bad man because he is. Nor do we know of any way of correcting this enormous evil, save for good men and true patriots, of all parties, to free themselves from party trammels, and to go only for good men and good measures. By such a course, they would soon hold the balance of power in their hands, and would act as an effectual check upon all parties in the state.

After all that is said about great talents, and political experience, and diplomatic skill, the men that we need as our presidents, governors, judges, legislators, and magistrates, are men of stern moral principle, who will not swerve from the right, and who have practical common sense to judge of the right. Such a man was Washington. And such men are now to be found in all the States of this Union. They make no noise at mass meetings. They make no inflammatory speeches at political dinners, or suppers, or barbecues. They flare not up before the public on all great and small occasions. They are the hacks of no party, and would be an ornament to any. As long as office is the reward of political party service, these will remain in obscurity. But if the day ever comes when the country will be satisfied with wisdom, patriotism, and purity in her high places, these will be exalted. The arrival of such a day would be a sufficient cause for a national jubilee.

5. *We must leaven our people with the pure principles of the Gospel.* A religion of some kind and form has been connected with all the governments that have ever existed. Old

Egypt had its gods, temples, and priests. So had all the nations whose names are associated, in the Bible, with the Jews. The Greeks and Romans had their gods superior and inferior, whom all the people worshipped. The religion of Mahomet is the pillar of the throne of the Omars, and that of Budh is interwoven with all the forms of civil government of India. The Popish, is the religion of most of the governments of Continental Europe; and, with the exception of our own country, where will you find a nation without an established religion of some kind? And the effect of the national religion upon the national character, is obvious. We see it in Heathen, Mahometan, and Christian states. Their system of religion is the prime cause of the degradation of the Heathen; and of the semi-barbarism of the Mahometan; and of the low point in the scale of nations, to which Spain, and Portugal, and Italy, have fallen. What but their religion places England and Spain—Scotland and Ireland—Massachusetts and Mexico, in such broad contrast?

And the great aim of the different systems of religion is obvious. Popery degrades the people to elevate the priests. To secure faith in her lying vanities she locks up the Bible, and shuts out intelligence, and forbids private reasoning. We are to judge Popery, not by her hollow pretences, and assumed liberality, in Protestant states; but by her avowed principles, and by what she is, and does, in purely Papal states, where, without constraint she acts out her nature. She is, at heart, every where the same, whilst she changes her external garb to suit her latitude and longitude. If she cannot educate our youth to suit herself, she will educate them infidels. Hence, she will drive the Bible from the common school. If she cannot make the people submit to her iron rod, she will goad them

on to efforts to secure the largest liberty. "Rule or ruin," is her motto in all the earth. She shuts out the Bible from Spain and Italy—she prints corrupted editions of it in England and America! She excludes all that differ from her from Sicily and Austria; she condemns to death converts from her faith in the isles of the Mediterranean; and yet she preaches up liberty of conscience in America! Having reduced to semi-barbarism the nations where she has obtained supreme control, she comes over here to civilize and elevate us! Having bound other nations in fetters of iron, she comes over here to assist us in protecting our republican institutions! And not content with the protection of our institutions, nor with the rights and privileges of home-born citizens, she aspires to dictate our laws, to select for us our magistrates. She sends her priests into the political arena to tell her votaries how, and for whom, they shall vote. And because of her power over their minds and consciences, she leads them into our political contests, and puts them up for sale to the highest bidder. And thus, because of the profligacy of many of our politicians, she is advancing to power. Her avowed principles, and all her history, and her entire organization, prove Popery to be the enemy of our institutions. It must be watched with vigilance; its principles and its practices we must never let alone.

Prelacy, too, because of its modern developments but a miserably parody on Popery, needs to be watched. As connected with these developments, its aim is obvious. By basing the existence of the Church on the visionary, and absurd, and utterly undemonstrable idea of Apostolical succession; and connexion with the Church on the fact of receiving the sacraments from such successors; it has for its object the elevation of its prelates to be the only dispensers of grace, and to make the

sacraments as administered by their authority to be the only link that connects us with the visible Church of Christ! Allow its claims, and we have a close corporation of mitred, and not unfrequently graceless, heads, monopolising the dispensation of the grace of Heaven to our sinful race! The effect of this system is obvious in Britain, where those claiming to be the only true descendants of the fishermen of Galilee, who made their living by catching fish and mending nets, are parading their gilded equipages amid a people, for whose salvation they take far less care than they do to maintain the pomp of their position.

There is yet another form of religion, with a different object in view. It bases the existence of the Church on the existence of the truth. It makes faith in Christ the great connecting link with the Church militant and triumphant. It makes the Bible the only and all-sufficient rule of faith, and opens it to the world. It sends the Bible, and the minister, and the school-master among the people. It has no cathedrals to build, and no hierarchy to glorify, and no peculiar tenets to maintain, save those which lead to repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It has no walls to build up between believers in Christ—no monopoly of grace to advocate. This is the religion of the Reformation—of the descendants of the Non-conformists and Puritans—of the whole Presbyterian brotherhood. It is the religion which was first wafted to these shores in the Mayflower. It is the religion which wrought out for us our liberties, and which has never lowered its voice in maintaining them. And if America is true to herself, it will ever be the religion of her people.

Let, then, the religion which has made Scotland what it is—which has made New-England what it is—which has made our

community and our country what they are; the religion which places more stress upon the power, than upon the form, of godliness; the religion not of priestly interferences, of sacraments, and ceremonies, but of the heart; the religion which scatters the Bible, and preaches charity, and expands the affections, and builds the school-house, and educates the people; the religion which elevates Christ, and not the priest—which aims to raise up the people to heaven, and not a hierarchy over the people;—let this religion obtain in our land, and there is a bulwark impregnable around all our institutions. Navies may be buried in the ocean by storm, or be sunk by a superior enemy; armies may be destroyed by pestilence, or be cut to pieces as was that of Xerxes in invading Greece; but an intelligent and moral people, wise laws administered by good rulers, and the pure principles of religion pervading the masses, form walls and bulwarks, and towers of defence, which nothing can destroy. By these walls, and bulwarks, and towers, let our glorious Republic, and its free institutions, ever be guarded! And, then, this great confederacy of States will be ever a beacon-light to the nations of the earth, directing them into the path-way to freedom and glory.