

ANNUAL ADDRESS

XX.

BEFORE THE

EUPHRADIAN AND CLARIOSOPHIC

SOCIETIES

OF THE

SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE,

DECEMBER, 1853,

BY JOHN S. PRESTON.

(“DROITURE D’ESPRIT.”)

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ADDRESS.

[THIS "Address" was intended to be a *spoken exhortation* to the young men of the South Carolina College—nothing more. It was prepared exclusively for the *ros-trum*—leaving much to be added or omitted in the delivery, as the suggestions of the moment might dictate. As there was no purpose of literary display, no care was taken to give it any pretension to mere literary merit. It may be said, under these circumstances, it ought not to be printed. I think so; but the young gentlemen demand a different course—and it is theirs. I have neither the time, nor, indeed, the nerve to revert to it for revision. Having no literary reputation to maintain, nor the hope of achieving one, I let the "Address" go, claiming charity for it on the plea of a worthy purpose—that of suggesting to my young countrymen a sure way to the highest Truth; for the liberty they live under is neither more nor less than the philosophy of Christian Truth, applied to the institutions of their country.]

GENTLEMEN OF THE EUPIRIDIAN AND CLARIOSOPHIC SOCIETIES :

There be not one of you who doth not remember the magnificent words of Milton in his great essay on the freedom of the press—"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam, purging and unscaling her sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance, while the whole noise of flocking and timorous birds, and those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means." Thus spoke, in prophetic vision, England's sublimest poet and hopefullest patriot. Could his great spirit, from that home near his God, which he won by his triumphant fight for Truth, behold this nation, of which we are the denizens, he would feel his prophecy all fulfilled—he would feel that here his rapturous aspirations for truthful liberty might be realized. It is the spirit of Truth on which this "puissant nation" has built its foundations and hope; Truth was its mother, nurse and guide, and is the star leading it on to a greatness, differing from all—surpassing all that has gone before. It is true, that amid the waves and currents of human folly, we may, at times, lose

our reckoning, or, amid the storms of human passion, we may be tossed skyward or plunged into a wild abyss; but with that cynosure in our heavens, no ocean tempest so strong as to drive us from our career. Onward and upward is the path of that man or nation whose star is Truth. Still looking toward that holy guide, let us yield the hour we have together in the effort to catch some beams of its "heavenly radiance" as they fall across our life's pathway. If, in this converse, one ray is sent to your young hearts, then have I met my mission and answered to the distinguished honor you have conferred on me.

The great truths which have controlled the destiny of man have been born to the earth at remote periods, often in obscure places, are few in number, and have required whole epochs for their maturity. By such truths, I do not mean merely the results of human action, or the causes leading to and influencing those results. Alexander's Universal Monarchy was a fact—a result—but far from being a truth. The existing European political system is a great and prevailing fact; but who says its confederative principle of exclusive legitimacy is any more a truth than was the single universal rule of Macedonia or Rome, or that its individual monarchical despotisms are political truths? The philosophy of Confucius rules a fourth of mankind, yet it is not a truth.

Custom teaches us the every day recurrences of nature; man's science, surer than history, tradition or monumental stone, traces the phenomena and revolutions of the Universe back beyond the era of man, or predicts their coming with an almost divine prescience. The wild comet, that rushes with fearful and fiery speed through the wide empyrean, comes back in tame submission to the magic figures of science; from his safe cabinet, the philosopher turns from the frightened ship the dread hurricane that rages in tropical seas, or guides her safely through the dark rolling tempests that howl forever around the Southern capes. With inductions, which in their application seem to need no aid of inspiration or revelation, he tracks with unerring sagacity, the profoundest labarynths of ratiocination, until he emerges into the clear and genial sunshine of seeming truth, and yet, even in the material things around him—things of his own grosser nature—palpable—part of his senses—how often and how sadly has he erred! The world was old in the precedent error until Copernicus gave motion to the Solar system; it was ignorant of the law which maintains the order of this system, until Kepler proved what must be, and Newton proved what is. If the eyes, ears, hands and reason thus delude or fail to enlighten man, how little should it astound us if his mind fails for ages to recognise the great moral truths which control

his earthly and his immortal destiny. The motion of the earth on its axis, and in its orbit, are primary and necessary laws ; these laws could not be executed but for that other, which keeps them in their just relations. So are the mighty truths, which regulate the human heart and intellect, fixed from the beginning and inexorable, but energised, executed by a power which we know exists, but cannot comprehend.

I propose to you to inquire, when and where some of those truths have been revealed by the reasoning of man, or the inspiration of God, and what is the practice by which we are to arrive at their use and application. Mighty questions, involving the problem of all history, and the full demands of that life you are now beginning, and requiring us to mark distinctly on the chart of time, those headlands which have directed the mazy tides and currents of human affairs.

The science of Mathematics, regarded as the surest for the development of the truths it proposes, consists in determining by certain rules the functions and relations of the various physical objects of the Universe. This is the practical purpose of the science ; but the laws by which these solutions are to be attained exist in nature, and are discovered by an intellectual process so exalted, and of such dignity as is rarely reached by human reason. Newton, Gallileo and a few others have exhibited this power ; sometimes as the result of intense and enlightened study of nature—sometimes by a sure process of analytic logic, and sometimes by a seeming accident ; seeming only, for if it were accident, it would oftener befall the fool than the philosopher. With the principle settled and the rule ascertained, mathematical reasoning, painful, laborious and highly intellectual as it is, becomes, according to its best definition, but the “ measurement of magnitude ;” but this measurement, if truly made in all its parts, functions and relations, solves the physical problems of the Universe, reveals to man the mysteries and influences which surround him, and the order and destiny of that system in which his Creator has commanded him to exist. So near an approach to perfection in its reason and logic has the science of calculation made under the master minds of our race, that by it, the most astounding problems presented in the Universe are solved with an accuracy which our senses cannot give to the simplest occurrences surrounding us ; and yet, clear, determinate and accurate as it is, it is but the exercise of a finite intelligence on a creation of infinite wisdom, and therefore, only approximates the truth. And he who seeks to solve any problem by a chimerical search after perfection or elemental truth, rushes into those absurdities which have made the wise of one age the laughing-stock of another—that enable the freshman of to-day, led by

Newton along the links of nature up to nature's God, to smile in pity at the follies of an intellect which demonstrated the most recondite problems of morals and physics, yet called the earth, moon and stars, sentient Gods. And even this Newton, who might weigh each grain of dust or ray of light of which the Universe is made up, who was the disciple of Bacon, and the cotemporary, if not the master of Leibnitz and Locke, who had all human learning, and had already demonstrated the profoundest laws of nature, confessed himself a child gathering shells on the shores of a boundless and untracked ocean! Thales, of Miletus, stood gazing upward at the stars; his servant said to him, "Do you suppose yourself capable of discovering what is going on in the Heavens when you cannot see what is at your feet."

An eminent citizen of this State, now dead, distinguished alike for his accurate legal attainments, for the exceeding elegance of his literary tastes, and his profoundly philosophical investigation of all subjects presented to him, regarded Newton as the very type of the imaginative philosopher, and as an instance greatly illustrative of the practical uses of the faculty of imagination. With very sincere reverence for the judgment of the great man I have alluded to, I must think his view of the intellectual character of that philosopher altogether superficial.

In the falling of the apple he saw only an indication of a general law of nature, and his eye and mind measured its velocity and the power that attracted it by a strictly mathematical rule. He saw an universal physical law illustrated by the simplest event. Step by step, with pain and labor, by reason, logic and wise concatenation, he proved its universality, and his mathematical demonstration comprehended a wider domain than the wildest imagination can reach. The truth is evident, the law is ascertained, and the tremendous results to the uses of man have been felt in the mighty impulsion given to human affairs in the succeeding years. Galileo observed the accumulating velocity of falling bodies—Newton exhibited this quality in all its relations and functions; one truth, a great truth was demonstrated, and Newton and Galileo are immortal. So of the discovery of gunpowder; the magnetic principle; the elasticity of steam, and the thousand other great physical truths which have influenced the condition of man.

But, gentlemen, let us turn to those evolutions which more directly concern our moral, intellectual and social relations. Here we shall still find that truth is an original principle, and that the wisdom of man is given only to demonstrate it, and that to do this he is required to measure with caution all its functions and relations. In most of the mate-

rial things of the earth, change is the active law, and, day by day, every yesterday is absorbed into to-day. Not so with those we now propose to consider. A moral truth, once uttered, never perishes; like the invisible seed floating in the air, it falls on some ground, germinates and bears fruit for good. In the lapse of time, it may disappear behind the clouds of human artifice or ignorance, but if it be of truth, it will come back to earth as genial dews of heaven distilled by the generous sun.

The existence of Truth, then, must be admitted as absolute, as in all philosophy there must be an absolute belief, requiring no demonstration—a reality as a starting point for the finite human intellect, and a hope, to which as a haven, Reason and Faith may guide us. The primary truth, comprehending and controlling all others, *without which none other exists*, the beginning, parent and sole principle, is the existence of an infinite God. Start where you will, save from this, and error clogs your way, disappointment closes your career. It is the primal truth, the first necessity. It is no postulate for an argument, for nothing exists without it. Material nature, human intellect and moral being, all proclaim this principle; traceable to it, deducible from it, is every truth which has been evolved as applicable to the condition of man. The earliest philosophy, starting from every point of untutored and barbarian fancy, could not avoid this. It would reason only from facts palpable to the senses, or from delusions arising from ignorance; and yet the Chinese, the Hindoo, the Egyptian, the untaught Hebrew and the early Greek, came back to this, no matter what path he traveled. The monad of Pythagoras was God. He began with this, and almost revealed the truth; but in his vain attempt to demonstrate that truth by strict and scientific induction, he wandered away into error, darkness and chaos. He could not measure the magnitude of God. The infinite is immeasurable. What was the result? The God of the Greek was reduced to the comprehension of finite humanity, and reduplicated to meet the exigencies of human passions and infirmities.

I was in the Apollo chamber of the Vatican with the sculptor Powers, whose soul is as poetical as his hand is plastic. He gazed enraptured at the representation of the God of the Greek—cold marble, but so wrought as almost to make us feel a divine influence. I asked him if he could equal that. With his great, glittering eyes, still gazing unmoved, he answered as if out of a trance—"It is his God; I cannot make my God."

From this error of the early Greek schools, it may be safely asserted, there has been an entire failure in the application of one single, enduring truth to the affairs of men. Their philosophy soon wasted away in

the idleness of Sophism, or the mischiefs of skeptical argumentation. But before these had gone so far as to turn the career of Greek civilization back to the chaotic confusion of Orientalism, Socrates appeared, and proclaimed, as if by divine inspiration, the undying truths, that Wisdom, Justice and Obedience to God are the essence of virtue. Save one, this annunciation is the most important to man before the coming of Christ. It is a landmark standing out in his history, by which he is guided far, very far, into the way of Truth. It taught that there is truth and that there is a way to find it. The common consent of civilized people for twenty-two hundred years has confirmed the Socratic truth. Its application to the individual and social uses of man has been the avowed purpose of all philosophy since the days of Socrates. His earliest, and perhaps greatest disciple, Plato, endeavored to solve the metaphysical and psychological mysteries of humanity in accordance with these sound ethical principles. How are they to be demonstrated to my fellow man, asked he, with a boundless and almost divine philanthropy. He set down in Dialectics the wisdom of his great master—he searched through all the precedent and contemporary systems of Greece—he gained knowledge of the priests of Egypt and the fantasies of Persia; art, poetry, rigid mathematics, the natural sciences all yielded their tribute, and were filtered through the alembic of his noble genius—he combined, united, separated, analysed all the elements of science, leaving, not as some have said, a mere contemplative mysticism, but establishing a system which mere philosophy has not, and cannot change. For did he not, at the command of his master, bid man believe in the being and benevolence of God by the manifest designs of nature, and to reverence Him for the great good of His moral government? He approached the proof of those truths almost to the point that mere human reason can reach. But he did more than this; he indicated the mode, the rule, by which the human mind was taught to seek, and the human heart was taught to admit these truths. He showed that there is truth, and the mode of attaining it. In a word, Plato stood upon a promontory from which he could almost leap to the promised land.

This philosophy embraces many truths of important interest, grand and prevailing in their influences, deducible from the original principles, and yet, some grand errors which corrupted its application and use.

That man must be aggregated, social and mutually dependent, is directly the result of his common connection with the great principles which control his moral being. From his first aggregation to this moment, his entire effort has been to fix the rules and forms by which this

principle is to be wisely and justly applied to his condition and conduct. The solution was left for later ages and other revelations than the times and wisdom of the Greek Philosophy.

While in the abstract rigid and exacting definition of Truth, the Greek Philosophy cannot in all cases be regarded as meeting its full requirement, yet so marked is it as an era in human history, so distinctly are its features traceable in that dispensation under which we live, so illustrious are the people who nurtured it, so glorious in patriotism, so noble in heroism, so magnificent in intellectual splendor, that to the philosophy of that language in which Homer sung, Miltiades commanded, Plato wrote, and Demosthenes spoke, we who have tasted its sweets cannot refuse the name of a great and prevailing Truth. Yes, gentlemen, we know that the fiery words of Homer are true, for they wake the soul to worship the good—we know that the divine aspirations of Plato are true, for virtue, justice, wisdom and happiness are their purpose—we know that the heroism of Marathon and Thermopylæ is true, for it rolled back the hosts, who, conquering Greece, would have substituted the teachings of Zoroaster, corrupted by the Maji, for the purity of the Socratic theme, developed by Plato; the despotisms of Xerxes, for the popular liberties of Athens; the morals of an Oriental Satrap, for the stern virtue of a Roman senator; the bloody and sensual path of a Mahomet, for the exalted glories of Jesus Christ. How dare then the skeptical poet standing on the ruins of Athens, the ruins only of walls and temples! ask

“Where are thy men of might, thy grand of soul?
Gone glimmering in the dream of things that were.”

They have not passed away; they live in all that is noble in Grecian record and Roman power; they breathed in the souls of those who defended and preserved our blessed religion; they fired the heart and nerved the arm of those who have died for our civil liberties; and here to-night, they live, breathe, dwell in your young hearts as you come within these College walls to drink their divine philosophy.

I might pause here to recall to your memory, the thousand errors which have influenced the destiny of man, almost to as great an extent as have the great physical and moral truths I have mentioned. Dark masses of storm-laden clouds, have often obscured the whole heavens, at times, sending forth terrific bolts that have blasted nations—wars that have slaughtered millions to feed ambition, bigotry or the lust of power

—morals that have loosed the passions and suffocated the charities of the human heart—governments that have bound in chains the image of God, and religions that have blackened his soul. But our purpose is to seek the channel by which we may reach the haven, guided by the lights which gleam along through the darkness of time. Whole epochs have been lost in the quicksands of error, and it still seems to surround us on all sides; yet there is a way through its mazes, and that we seek.

The name and spirit of Greek philosophy was almost lost in its fusion with orientalism. The delusive sensualism of the East, drew away the minds of men from the virtuous forms of Greece. It was the errors of the two which were agglomerated, and in their union swelled themselves into an assumption of superiority over all doctrines, creeds and systems, into the claim for meeting all the wants of human usage, science and hope. This alliance seemed to raise Error to the throne of the world, and to be driving man on to that condition which could be arrested only by a second total destruction. But in the order of that superintending Providence which all systems acknowledge, another remedy was ordained—not destruction—but salvation.

Geographically, between the Asiatic and European peoples, the hand of God had established a people, conducted out of civil bondage by his immediate presence and taught the truth by awful communings with himself. Pythagoras sought to demonstrate the prime necessity by a system of dynamics, in which the motions of the universe were to be regulated by its central power. Plato seized it by a syneresis, prompted by a combination of all that had gone before, with all his own vast and intricate investigations. The Hebrew started with the absolute knowledge and revelation of that which the Greek had to search for and prove before he could begin—he made his beginning, his God. To the Hebrew, that first cause, first necessity, parental truth, was revealed amid the waves of the Red Sea, and beneath the thunderings of Sinai. He felt, and saw that an infinite primal unity existed; the Greek could only prove that it must exist. At the time of Columbus, all philosophers could demonstrate the necessity of another continent. But he was chosen to be guided through oceans, and have it revealed and shown to him. Chosen to receive his mighty revelation, with it, the Hebrew was cast upon the restless and ever varying tide of human affairs; shining in glory under David's son, or weeping in captivity, dust and nakedness by the waters of Babylon; with the Queen of the South coming with tributes of gold and precious stones, and the soldiers of Caesar ravaging the streets and razing the walls of Jerusalem; subdued, fallen, stricken, still the

Hebrew bore the truth deep down in his heart ; and when it seemed lost to earth, even in the wild hills of Galilee, it came forth, born again, and the wise of the East came to worship it.

Speaking in terms of mere human philosophy ~~of the earth~~, and not daring to trench on the holy vocation of your eloquent, pious and learned President, the advent of Jesus Christ furnished the first perfect development which is recorded. Truth was perfect in the form and teachings of man once, and once only—when Jesus Christ walked upon the earth.

Seemingly remote and obscure in its origin, suffering pain, shame and ignominy, the science of Faith (Plato almost identified it by another name) and immortality, came into the world to enlighten, purify, direct and control the usages of men. From its birth downward no truth that exists can be separated from it.

Aristotle was the wisest practical philosopher of the ancient dispensation. He took all precedent systems, and, with an acumen and a breadth of understanding never excelled, filtered, moulded and shaped them to the uses of life. But they could not last, for the foundation was not of the living rock ; like the splendid coëval edifices, they crumbled, but like the beautiful fragments of those temples, they are scattered over the earth, models and ornaments for the taste, admiration and instruction of mankind. No such exponent as Aristotle came to the aid of the second dispensation—no statesmen logician or naturalist—yet do you not mark how strangely, how steadily it has gone on, increasing in original intensity, stamping every system of thought, and developing the practical truths of human wisdom.

Guided by this original light, it would be to you a subject of curious research and rich reward to trace the many paths of human history illuminated by its rays, to identify its offspring, not only in all that is good and permanent, but in all that is great and practical.

Century after century passed in its conflicts with the ancient systems before it began to be distinctly and avowedly a truth influencing every department of human conduct. For five hundred years, the struggle was tremendous ; it exhausted the powers of ancient philosophy and of pure Christianity, and for more than five hundred years a third power, utter barbarianism, or a fanciful and vicious combination of the first two, ruled the morals and socialism of the world. A beautiful episode in this dark epic is the offering of that good Bœthius, a Roman Senator, but an humble Christian, who proffered to his contemporaries the virtues of the Greek philosophy grafted on the revelations of Christianity. Both were rejected ; Mahometanism in the East, and Barbarianism or rude

superstition in the West, controlled all reasoning, morals and institutions. In the active affairs of life, force was the sole arbitrator, the sole element of social organization; all institutions depended on the rivets of the coat of mail, or the strength of the lance; fixed laws, intellect and morals were utterly rejected; a vague theology, and a wilderness of turbulent despotisms represented the ethics and the civilization of the period. But the philosophical truths of Christianity could not be crushed by the heel of despotism, wasted by the follies of scholastic disputation or neutralized by the poison of orientalism; they were in the souls of men, and must become the rulers of their conduct. They arose out of chaos, and, raising their standard higher than the temples and tribunals of the earth, inscribed on it—Faith in God, and Justice among men. The Reformers seized on the first and deduced from it the mighty truth of the freedom of conscience. An epoch of two hundred years and the peopling of a new continent were necessary to the firm establishment of the first and second as substantial motives in the institutions of men.

If then, gentlemen, the course of statement I have adopted, (for to argument I do not pretend,) be correct, the Christian philosophy is the sole fundamental Truth on which human action can be based; and the ignorance or rejection of it has caused the errors, crimes, suffering and destruction of all other systems; and from it are rightly and strictly deducible all the practical truths which now control and regulate the conduct of man. It is the parent—its offspring are giants.

History and your own observation teach, that the untrained and uncontrolled mind of man will run with rapidity into delusive errors or destructive vices. You, gentlemen, are sent to this College to correct this tendency and avoid its results. Your mission here is to be set straight in the paths of Truth. Aristotle acquired all human knowledge, and gave it a logical form. Bacon stands with you over nature, and dissects before you her minutest organism, or leads you by strict induction into her interior kingdom, and through to her remotest confines. Aristotle disproves himself, and Bacon leaves you on the brink of a precipice. Demonstration cannot comprehend the infinite God. Induction cannot invade the realms of Faith. And yet, in much you have to learn here, in the physical, intellectual and moral sciences, the Baconian system, may be safely commended to you as a truth which you may and ought to adopt. Your learned astronomer will induce you to demonstrate the Solar system by its various analogies, and by them prove his problem; your moralist will bid you look to the source of the Solar

system for his Truth, and deduce its existence from the innate faith of your souls, or, far more surely, from the direct revelation by God himself!

Having then, gentlemen, led you (with much eccentricity of progress) to this over-topping Truth, will you stand there and overlook the world which lies below. Pause before we descend to act our part—a noble part—in this life's drama; for here, we are but young actors conning the scenes we are to enact on the trembling stage of life.

Behold then, amid the wild confusion of the raging scene, Israel's leader at the very summit receiving the Word, "I am the Lord they God—thou shalt have none other gods before me;" see Greece beating back from Marathon the hosts, the crimes and errors of the East; hear that mild voice, but teaching as by authority—"Do unto men as you would they should do unto you," his lowly disciples, the Martyrs, the Reformers, Huss, Wickliffe, Luther, Bacon, Cromwell, Hampden, Washington! through what a waste of woe does this little silver stream wind its way, and here before you, for you, deepening, widening, covering the earth with rich fertility and golden fruit. You are the inheritors, and to you is entrusted the culture.

The French have a phrase, "*droiture d'esprit*," which may be rendered rightness of intellect—the morality of the mind. It indicates the action of the heart upon the mind, and may be termed, for illustration, the soul's polarity of Truth. It is the attribute of your being, which your foster-mother here is appointed to nurture, develop and direct, and which, by every moral responsibility, you are bound to pursue. She sends you her chemist and her mathematician to tell you the truths of the material world, that you may the better provide for your material necessities—her linguist and historian, to impart to you the wisdom which has lived before you—her metaphysician and logician, to unfold and demonstrate the phenomena of your intellect—her moralist and civilian, to apply all these to the higher purposes of your being, the service of God and your fellow man.

What, then, is your part? Diligently, earnestly, perseveringly, to give all your strength to the right forward search after the truth; not to seek to know, but to seek to know the truth! Bayle, Voltaire and Gibbon, who seemed to know every thing, never knew one truth in philosophy, history, religion or civil order. Martin Luther, the father of Christian liberty and its train of progeny; and John Knox, who saved Great Britain from retrogression, knew more truth than all the book-disputants from the dialectic subtleties of Dun Scotus to the vicious backslidings of Pusey and Newman. Knowledge may be power; but it is not truth. It is, or may be, her handmaid; but it is not her sub-

stance or spirit. Gather instruction, but see that you gather it for a higher purpose than merely to know.

We believe, gentlemen, that we live under a government where social and moral truth has been established, and that we are in the direct path for its perfect development. Freedom of conscience and the equality of man are our practical truths—the truths which belong to and make the American era. To those who are selected by the organized authorities or voluntary philanthropy to be instructed in human knowledge, is committed the duty of protecting and developing these principles. Those men who are now at the Capitol of the Republic, and in the State House here, are engaged solely in the office of preserving them for your enjoyment and use, while you are here, preparing for their custody and transmission. You have, each of you, the dread responsibility of being agents for the protection of a system of government on which depends the social advance of the human race, and a system of ethics on which depends human hope. When you go hence, every sentiment you hold, every word you utter, every line you write, every act you perform is to have its distinct influence in these enormous agencies. A graduate of this College is a teacher and ruler among the people. His diploma is his commission, and by virtue of it he will be obeyed. Are you fitting yourselves for this office? You can and may be by setting the seal of Truth on every purpose. But you will ask—what truths? Obedience to God. What is that? I cannot teach you; go ask that holy man who gathered here that strength which enables him, day by day, to tell you of this primal duty. What next? Love of country, patriotism, devotion to the system, the order, the forms which have been hallowed by the wisdom and blood of your sires; to that civil freedom which gives wings and strength and power to every virtue, and drives vice and sin from the land. Waken every faculty, energise every nerve by this principle; for you will be called to exercise them. Dig deep into the caverns of science for its precious metals. Meditate profoundly on all that is placed before you. As citizens of this Republic, you have a mighty contest in hand. The old world is struggling to maintain its untruths and its rottenness—they may strike against us. You are to live in an age of turmoil and storm—no calm—no quiet—but all your art, all your strength. You must know—you must learn—you must be strong.

“— Each pretty hand

Can steer a ship becalmed, but he that will

Govern her and carry her to her ends, must know

His tides, his currents, how to shift his sails,

What she will bear in foul, what in fair weather,
 What her springs are, her leaks, and how to stop 'em—
 What sands, what shelves, what rocks do threaten her,
 The forces and nature of all winds,
 Gusts, storms and tempests, when her keel ploughs Hell,
 And deck knocks Heaven; then to manage her,
 Becomes the name and office of a Pilot."

Even in our land and day, fearful assaults are making upon the truths of our social compact. Antique falsehoods are maintained to embarrass our intercourse with other nations. Fanaticism, always mean and wicked, seeks to disturb institutions sanctioned by God and necessary to our good. Profanity, infidelity and filth are poured out in public places and through an unfettered but prostituted press; and above all, in this connection, the *name* of our form of government is sought to be substituted for its essence.

Even the great Webster, whose intellect almost entitled him to the apotheosis bestowed before death, and who seemed to be profoundly and philosophically an American freeman, was deluded into the exclamation, "Union and liberty." Liberty is the truth—Union the incident. The Union may perish, for it is man's work; but, thank God, in America, liberty cannot die, for it is His gift. You are her guardians and sentinels. Arm yourselves with the breast-plate of Truth, and be wary that you droop not on your post. Cultivate every faculty which will enable you to separate the pure good from the glittering gloss; subject it to the test of intellectual rightness and moral righteousness. The dreams of an insane fanaticism, and the offall of a bloated pruriency will vanish before the test. Blasphemous rationalism, unclean socialism that seeks to disturb the holiest relations; disloyalty, that would sink freedom in the name of a crude and false philanthropy—all fly before that spirit of truth, which earnest and loyal hearts are here taught to nurture. They may be tricked in all the gorgeousness of transcendentalism and all the meretricious finery which appeal to the passions and impulses of youth, but they are like the beautiful maiden sent to Alexander nourished on poison—her embrace was death. Aristotle saved his pupil. Within these walls, may be gathered that philosophy which will shield you from the poisonous breath of bloated sensualism, and your country from disorganizing sedition.

And is there not enough in this philosophy to satisfy the longings of the most fervent soul among you. Are you a poet, and love to have the truth "dressed in ten thousand hues?"—here Homer is taught and Milton is recited. Is not this enough—listen, then, to the harp

of David and the song of Isaiah. Are you a philologist?—here the “alms-basket of words” is emptied upon you, and, to use the phrase of another, the fossilated fragments of etymology, dug out of antiquity, are conjoined and served up as a grateful feast. Do you seek to unravel the mysterious web of your intellectual structure?—the learning of this day has strung the faculties in just concatenation, opening a noble field for the philosophical investigation of your mental organization, and the energies of truth may yet penetrate its misty vagueness and show “what worlds and what vast regions hold the immortal mind.” Are you a searcher after physical truth, with your young imagination vivid and wild, as you “look through nature to the range of planets, suns and adamantine spheres, wheeling unshaken through the void immense,” or, in softer mood, calm and peaceful, as you gaze “in the bright eye of Hesper or the morn, in nature’s fairest forms?”—go with that learned man to his laboratory, or that other, (now sadly absent,) to his observatory, and search and gaze until your aching mind prays relief from the immensity of the untraveled worlds they reveal. Or, above all, is your young soul afire to tread the “honored paths” that lead from earth to heaven? Here daily is proclaimed the word, “I am the way.” No want, no craving, no hope, no aspiration which may not be realized here, if you seek it truthfully, if you seek it assiduously, by the cultivation of that sentiment of the heart by which intellectual direction is given and maintained, and out of which the true “*droiture d’esprit*” is born and fed.

If, then, by study, teachings, and observation, we find the places where Truth dwells—whether in green valleys or on rude mountains—by pleasant homes or in savage wastes—by the Hissus or the Sea of Gallilee—we shall love and cherish her. The heart that truly loves her will be guided in the search by a ratiocination which is trained to reach its goal only by direct paths. Rugged and toilsome they may be; but they are straight. The ship may be tossed and driven by waves and tempests far out into a trackless sea, or back on fearful breakers; but a light gleams over the dark waters, shining. The storms may rage and beat and break at its very base; whirlpools, rocks and sands seem all around. The steady mariner keeps his eye on that light, and his strong muscle guides the helm. Out of the darkness she rises on a rolling mountain—heaving—straining—trembling—toppling—she plunges into the wild roar of waters. You shriek in hopeless agony—is all lost? That light is above you—she rises, and floats away in summer seas. Honor is at the helm, Truth is the light and undying Glory is your reward.