

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON

THANKSGIVING DAY,

December 12th, 1850,

IN THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, AT CLINTON.

BY ROBERT G. VERMILYE,

MINISTER OF SAID CHURCH.

CLINTON

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CLINTON, Dec. 14th, 1850.

REV. R. G. VERMILYE,

Respected Sir:—We, the undersigned, members of your congregation, tender our sincere thanks for the very timely, able, and eloquent sermon delivered by you on "Thanksgiving day."

Believing that the cause of truth, the good of our common country and the principles of the Bible will be greatly promoted by giving the sentiments contained in it a wider circulation, and that very many who had not the opportunity of hearing, would be pleased to read it, we therefore earnestly solicit a copy for publication.

With great respect, we remain yours, most sincerely,

B. BUTLER,
A. G. GRIDLEY,
MARCUS LATHROP,
SAM'L. COMSTOCK,
CHA'S. BARROWS,
CHAUNCEY C. COOK,
S. CURTISS,

B. BUTLER, Esq., and others,

Gentlemen:—The discourse which you solicit, though written necessarily, within the few hours previous to its delivery, and with no purpose of publication in view, is nevertheless placed at your disposal. I have deemed it proper to commit it to the press, in the same form in which it was delivered, except a few verbal corrections. Those, however, who heard it, will observe that some of the closing thoughts which for want of time compelled me to compress into a few sentences, are here expanded.

Thanking you, gentlemen, for the kind terms, in which you have expressed your approbation of the discourse,

CLINTON, Dec. 16th, 1850.

I am sincerely yours,

ROBT. G. VERMILYE.

S E R M O N

PSALM CXLVII: 20.

He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.

This is the day of our annual Thanksgiving: and it may not be improper, that we should be reminded of the original design of such an occasion, and of the feelings which are most suitable to its proper observance. According to its primitive purpose, and its intrinsic nature, it is a day for the recollection of the divine mercies, and for the public expression of our gratitude for them. Its predominant feeling, then, should be one of humble and devout, but joyful thankfulness: its prominent subject, should be the goodness of God, towards us, our friends, our nation, and our country—especially during the past year, and in the blessings of his Providence; its peculiar associations, should be those of religious joy, of kindness, benevolence and charity. If it be possible, no note of discord should mingle with our strains of gratitude; no voice of sadness break in upon our holy festivity; no thoughts of alienation and strife, destroy the peaceful flow of happy feeling. Solemnity there should be; humility there should be; trust and confidence in God, inspired by the past, should be exercised for the future, while we commit our ways to him. But the tone of our feelings, the key-note to which all should respond—should be that of gratitude for unmerited mercies, and of humble reliance and earnest seeking for future blessings. It is a day for good; will to men, and praise to God.

It will be conceded that this is not the most popular way of carrying out the appointment of this day: these are not the ordinary, common topics of discussion on such an occasion. It is almost expected that the theme of a thanksgiving discourse should be some point of public policy, or some question of governmental rights and duties; something in reference to which there is a wide and agitating difference of opinion among men, if it can be found. That which is dark in our condition and prospects, or what is wrong in our public administration, will often furnish the most fertile and acceptable theme of discussion; and the whole tone of the observances of the day, is dispiriting, harsh, and uncharitable. In fact, it has been intimated, at least by one religious paper, claiming a wide influence, that such discourses are peculiarly appropriate on this day; and now, since, as they serenely claim, they have fought the battle for the freedom of the pulpit, and we are at liberty to discuss political subjects,—it may be expected that many clergymen will avail themselves of such permission, especially on this day. I am thankful for the liberty. I had supposed that we were always at liberty to discuss the principles of our duty to God and to man, in all the relations we may sustain to one another, as they are laid down in the Bible, according to what may seem wise, suitable, and likely to prove beneficial to those to whom we speak. Farther than this, I have no desire to go. Questions of public administration—questions of mere governmental policy—questions of constitutional law, and executive authority—questions of party politics, and the like—although with regard to them all, I may entertain my opinion, as a citizen, and carry it out, as opportunity may offer, I consider to be foreign to the pulpit, and not likely to give religious weight or moral force to its ministrations. They interfere too much, I think, to say no more, with its peculiar office and functions, as the theatre of the ministry of reconciliation, and the exponent of specially religious and spiritual truth.

I shall not therefore avail myself of the liberty so kindly afforded. I shall not employ the present occasion, however strong the temptation might be, arising from certain present circumstan-

ces, in any special discussion of the recent policy of our rulers, or of any of their laws, good or bad; nor in any maledictions upon the government under which we live. I shall not convert your Thanksgiving into a day of sour and discontented objurcation and fault-finding. I think there has been enough of this. I think the day has been perverted from its legitimate use, to promote such ends, until we can almost employ, with reference to it, the language which our Savior used of the spiritual results of the introduction of his kingdom on earth: "it has come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." My design is, if possible, to call up the sense of your individual, personal obligations to the goodness of God; to remind you of your social and civil blessings,—not hardships:—to awaken joy, not sadness and despondency. When Nehemiah was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, and re-establishing the government, and while Ezra, the scribe, read the law of the Lord, the people were so affected with a sense of the privileges they had forfeited, the sufferings they had endured, and the sins they had committed, that they could not refrain from weeping and tears. But Nehemiah said unto them: "Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry." Very much in the same feeling, I would desire to observe our Thanksgiving festival. I should be glad if it could be restored, in a good degree, to its primitive and appropriate purpose. Let the day be consecrated, not to the enkindling of passion, alienation and strife, but to grateful recollections; to associations of joy and pleasure; to the enjoyment of the blessings God gives us; to mutual congratulations upon our happy lot; to deeds and thoughts, and prayers of charity and kindness; to bright prospects and anticipations, for the future, if it be possible; and above all, to a religious sentiment of profound gratitude to God, the giver of all. I am persuaded men may be made better, by such occasions as these. They may enlarge the common stock of social

happiness ; they may lead us away from the mere selfish possession of blessings, to think of our obligations for them ; they may fasten the bonds of social order, and contribute to the patriotism of the people, the stability of the government, the prosperity of our nation, and our more speedy escape from evils and dangers which may threaten us.

Seventy-five years ago, the first blow was struck for the freedom of this people. The God of battles favored our fathers ; and as we think, by giving success to their arms, set the seal of his approbation to their rebellion. He made their cause to appear just and right. But at the close of that war, glorious and honorable as it was, how weak and small were we as a nation ! how feeble in power ! how scanty and limited in resources !—and what a formidable difficulty, still presented itself to our fathers, in the formation of a constitution, and the establishment of a government, calculated to unite the varying interests and influences of our land, and acceptable to all ! We speak with commendation,—and none can be too high,—of the toils and dangers of the revolution, and of the patient endurance, the wisdom in council, and the valor in action, of those who achieved it. But perhaps an equal tribute should be paid to the wisdom, the forbearance, and the patience which carried them successfully through the subsequent trial, and established a government of order and law. Perhaps we should rather say, we are thankful to the same Providence which carried them through the struggle of the revolution, for guiding them through these difficulties, and bringing them to so successful an issue. Thus the ship of state was launched forth upon the world.—But how astonishing has been the progress of our people, since that period ! If the history of this nation, during the half-century just closing, were to be written, it would be a history of prosperity and growth, such as the world saw never. The increase of our population has been vast and rapid, almost beyond belief. It had advanced from three to twenty millions, five years ago. I will not conjecture what an aggregate the present census may show : but, as a single fact, illustrating its growth, let it be remembered, that our principal

city now contains within its own limits, and without its suburbs, one sixth as large a population as that of the whole country at the close of the war. The subjection of our territory to cultivation and civilizing influences has kept pace with this increasing population. The place where we now dwell, and enjoy the comforts of religion and of home, and which is now far behind the centre of advancing progress, had then not been opened even to the rude habitations of the first settlers. The increase in the number of states, has been more than double : from thirteen to thirty. The increase in the extent of our territory, has gone on in the same way ; we have expanded and grown, until our territory has almost become a burden to us, and multitudes of acres lie yet uncultivated by the hand of industry, and even untrodden by the foot of civilized man. I am not one of those who looked with a favoring eye to the acquisition of these immense lands ; nor could I, as a citizen, approve of the policy which seemed to demand them, or the mode in which they were acquired.—But I promised not to reproach the administration of our government, to-day, either past or present.—Yet I will say, notwithstanding previous predilections, that I cannot be blind to the developments, even to the intimations of Providence. May it not be possible, that in these things God has his own ends in view, apart from man's purposes ? May he not over-rule the wrong designs of men, to his honor and glory ? If slavery would have territory, may not that territory become the abode of freedom, as well as a mine of wealth ?—But now, what a scene does the mighty extent and population of our country afford ? What a glorious Union is this ! The East has grown into the stability and order of the most venerable nations, yet with all the vigor and energy of manly years. She is the mother of states, while yet she is continually replenished with new inhabitants. The West has become the centre of civilization and refinement, and the arbiter of political power ; and we are almost expecting a new state to grow into maturity each year. The shores of the Pacific have already become the home of a free people, and an organized government ; and the woodsman of Maine, upon our eastern border, now shakes hands as a brother, not with the pioneer of advancing civilization upon the Alleghany

Mountains, or the Mississippi river, as a few years ago, but with the miner, the princely merchant, the Christian minister, the free citizen, of the free state of California. It is the boast of England; that upon her possessions the sun never sets; and that from her island home, she sways a sceptre over subjugated nations, and gives laws to distant people, in a continuous circle round the earth. We think we have a nobler scene. As the sun reaches his meridian height, over the centre of our land, he looks down upon the bustling activity of a people, reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, stretching over one-sixth of the circumference of the globe: one people, one nation, one language, one government. So may it ever be! May the cords which bind us never be sundered! May no mutual disagreement, no fraternal hate, no sectional interest, no party passion, no mad ambition, ever break the unity and the glory of such a scene!

And the development of our resources has been in the same proportion. Wealth has rolled in upon us, like a torrent. Notwithstanding some periods of commercial embarrassment, some checks in the tide of prosperity,—the increase of national and individual wealth has been unexampled. Every branch of industry, has been prospered. Agriculture has not only subdued vast tracts of uncultivated land, but has been improved as an art: it is the substratum, the foundation of all our riches, and furnishes abundance for the millions of our inhabitants, and much to spare. May the time never come, (perhaps it never can, in the nature of the case,) when we shall cease to be largely an agricultural people. Commerce has grown; our ocean trade has been facilitated, by the use of steam, and other inventions, until it seems to be probable, that in our merchant and passenger marine, we may soon dispute the empire of the ocean with our venerable mother.—Manufactures have started into life; have advanced towards perfection, if they have not reached it; and if we cannot compete with the old nations, in many respects, yet this branch of industry has become essential to our prosperity; has furnished subsistence to multitudes, and contributed largely to the wealth of our country. Everywhere, the signs of prosperity and of unexampled growth are seen: in the shop of the artisan; in the field of

the husbandman, in the store of the trader, in the counting-house of the merchant, in the ships of the mariner, in the streets of our cities, in the councils of our cabinets, in the conflicts of our armies, and, not least, in the homes of our countrymen. With all abatements for individual cases, for untoward circumstances, for occasional disasters, the tide of prosperity has swelled and increased, in an unexampled degree. Every one has felt it, in his private relations, and as a citizen. The government has felt it; and as its power and duties have increased, it finds no lack of means to carry out its purposes. In every respect, in external prosperity the land of our fathers has become a goodly land. I repeat it, its advance has been wonderful—unexampled. The union of causes tending to this result, has been marked and extraordinary. History tells of no such event. The hand of God is most visible in it. "He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord."

There has been a growth too, in many other respects. In refinement, in social comforts and advantages, we have shared in the benefits of older nations. Indeed, in many points, we have surpassed them. Where, for example, will you find the comforts and enjoyments which are associated with the name of an American home, so widely possessed, by the mass of the people, and so easily obtained? Where do you find so well understood, and so powerful, in any other land, the blessings and influences, which cluster round that word? One of the grand peculiarities and blessings of our country is, that we have homes, and understand their value. One of the greatest deficiencies of some other nations, is, that they have no such general diffusion of home comforts and enjoyments. May the time never come, when the power and preciousness of these domestic influences shall become less, or be less highly prized among us! If, again, we have not the high refinement, the exquisite polish of society, the luxurious extravagance, which large wealth, accumulated in an aristocracy, as among the nations of the old world, may furnish; or if we have not made those advances in arts, science or learning, which they have gained, yet we are not deficient in these respects. In

literature, science, learning, inventive genius, a practical, apt, useful cast of mind, in energy of character, who shall say that we are deficient? These make a people, fit to enjoy large external prosperity, and to grow. They are the elements of national development, as well as of national character. They are not wanting among us. Perhaps they have kept pace with our outward growth: at any rate, they have advanced enough, to excite the wonder and emulation of other people.

Has there been a corresponding growth and advancement in intellectual and moral, and religious influences among us? I dare not say there has. I dare not say, that general education, and the cultivation of the mind—that public and private morality—that religion, either in its form or its essence,—that these things have been commensurate with the reach of our country, and its growth in territory and wealth. I dare not say that we have done for ourselves, and for God—for ourselves as rational and immortal beings, and for God, as our bountiful benefactor,—in proportion as the gifts of Providence have been lavished upon us. I fear improvement has not kept full pace with prosperity. But after all, there has been a large, a gratifying advancement even in these respects; an advancement which places us in proud comparison with any other land. All these interests have been impeded by one of the very elements of our growth. I mean the foreign population which has been cast upon our shores. I say it in no spirit of condemnation, nor of unwelcome; in no disparagement of many of them; for it is rather their misfortune, than their fault, that they have grown up, before, in ignorance and superstition. But such is the fact. The friends of education, and of morality, and of a Protestant, Bible Christianity, which we believe to be the safety of this land,—besides the burden, which would have fallen upon them, have had to grapple with this additional weight of ignorance, of lax principles, and of superstition, which circumstances have thrown upon us, from the old world. Yet in all these respects, there has been sensible, obvious advancement. In education, morality, religion,—so far I mean, as relates to opportunities, and a general public sentiment, in their favor, and to practical influence, we may stand a compar-

ison without fear, with any nation, I believe in the world. Where is there a higher tone of morality, found among any people?—Where is religion more respected, and more potential, though under no governmental patronage or favor? Where does its spirit control more powerfully? Where are its grand principles and precepts better obeyed? Where is its Sabbath more widely observed? Where is there a deeper interest in its institutions, or more vigorous and untiring efforts for its dissemination? In what land is there a spirit of larger charity or benevolence? In all that belongs to a Christian people, there is but one nation in the world, which we are behind; and I am not sure that England, all things considered, will surpass us. I am sure, that if we take all her possessions into account, she will not; for she does not provide as well for her national offspring, I think, as we do. But this may be conceded; I have the profoundest respect for a large portion of English philanthropy, benevolence, and religion: not for it all. I say these things in reference to our country, without being at all unmindful of our great deficiencies and sins, in these respects: of the moral wastes and desolations of our land: of the duty of religious and moral benevolence, to which we often urge you: of the danger which may flow to the republic, yet, if these interests are not carefully watched. But I say them, because I believe they are true. I say them, to the glory of God, to the praise of good men, to enkindle your gratitude for your share in them, and for the encouragement of all, who have the solid advancement of their country at heart, and are striving to promote it.

These rapid suggestions, as to our growth and condition, would be essentially incomplete, if I were not to point you, to the *nature of our civil institutions*. It were trite to say, that this is a land of civil and religious liberty. But you must remember, that seventy years ago, the idea of a confederated republic, was a novel one: an experiment. That God had been training a people, for a century or more, for this very experiment, I doubt not. But to the eye of man, it was novel: it was an experiment. I have reminded you that there were intrinsic difficulties in the way, and that wisdom was necessary to establish a government. But it was established: a constitution was formed. I am not to defend

it. It needs no defence. But I say, make what allowances or abatements you please, and there is no country on the face of the earth, where there is a better understanding, and a more thorough guarantee than here, of all the reasonable liberty, the rights of man: aye, and of woman too. For a wise exhibition, a fair adjustment, a full security, a free exercise of these rights,—our country stands pre-eminent. The power is with the people, not the governors:—and it is their own fault, at least the fault of the majority, if it is not wisely, and righteously exercised. By the ballot—in the beautiful simile of another “falling noiselessly as the snow upon the rock,” mighty results are achieved: changes of policy and of rulers are accomplished, which would shake other nations to their centre. I think that every general election, over this vast nation, is a glorious testimony to the excellency of our government, and I will say, of the people. It is a sublime sight; and there is nothing which more impresses the mind of an intelligent foreigner, or calls for more wondering admiration, than to witness such a process. Perish the hand that would corrupt the purity of the ballot-box, or weaken the moral power of such a spectacle! By the frequent elections provided for in our Constitution, an additional security is given to liberty and justice. Things are not irrevocable: wrong is not permanent. It is in the power of the people if they wish to amend it. Now, where on the face of the earth will you find a better government than this, with all its imperfections, if such there be? More vigorous and efficient, yet less galling, and annoying: one which gives you so much security, and so little trouble? Is not this, at this hour, the model government of the world? Blot it out, and then show me its parallel? Destroy it, and if such another ever lives, it must spring up from its ashes: for no where on the earth, will you find the fire which shall rekind its glory and light. Or, again, what do you wish, better than such a government as this? I mean in its substantial elements, and to be administered by fallible men? Of the history of its administration, it might be invidious to speak; except to say, that in its history, it has sustained some shocks, has encountered some dangers, has been threatened more than once; but has proved itself fully equal to every past emergency. May it prove

equal to every future: and by its own inherent power, extricate itself from all its difficulties. I say these things again, to the glory of God, in thankfulness to his Providence, which has guided and preserved us; to remind you of our origin and obligations, and to inspire, if possible, an increasing love and attachment to our country and its government.

Our blessings sometimes appear more real and precious, by contrast with the condition of others. I think this is a legitimate way of exciting gratitude, and a just appreciation of our privileges. It certainly does not minister to pride, but to humility, when undertaken in a right spirit. Of the nations of Europe, we may say, in general terms, the *people* have looked with wonder, with longing emulation, and alas! almost with that heart-sickness which results from hope deferred, upon our condition: the *rulers* have looked with envy and malignity, and have eagerly watched for our halting. I shall not speak of the influence which our country has exerted upon European politics and movements: it would lead me too far. Nor can I dwell upon the history of their late, alas! unsuccessful struggles for constitutional liberty. I simply point to facts. Go over the nations of Europe at this hour:—I speak of course, of no other quarter of the world:—and what is their condition? Contrast it with your own. Think of their history for fifty years; place it by the side of your own. I will not ask, if there is a land more blessed, in these respects: if there is a government, with which you would exchange. But I will ask you whether you expect to learn any thing good from those governments: whether you do not feel competent, as a citizen of the American Republic, to teach them much? Whether with the exception of England, the whole aspect of the continent, is not pitiable, fearful and dark, for the cause of human liberty and rights, for the cause of order and constitutional government. They have been struggling for liberty; but they have not succeeded. They have caught a glimpse of our beacon-fire, and have been trying to light a responsive one: but it has been quenched. God has not given them success. They were not prepared for liberty, we fear. The fire indeed may not have gone out entirely: it may only be buried in the ashes. The tempest has

lulled : but it has not departed, and left a clear and serene sky : its scowling and ominous clouds still linger about the horizon of European politics. The volcano has not burnt out its fire, nor been extinguished, but only smothered : and we fear it may be destined to burst forth again, with tremendous destruction, before it shall settle down into the calm and steady flame, upon the altar of genuine liberty. Meanwhile their condition is sad and deplorable. We feel as if *we* might view them with the eye of pity : But ought we not to have our gratitude to God enkindled, when we contrast our condition with theirs ? “He hath not dealt so with any nation : and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.”

But there are deficiencies, faults, evils, in our government ! So there are. I will not deny it. There are sins among us ; there is a dark side to this picture. There are evils, more or less widespread, which are regarded as threatening disaster to our country. There is a great deficiency, in some of those good influences to which I have adverted : while on the other hand, there are active, strenuous movements, tending to the promotion of infidelity, vice, and ungodliness among us. Our very prosperity may be perverted : *Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked*.—Our very liberty may be abused : *Who is Lord over us ?* and the goodness of God, instead of leading us to repentance may be despised, to his provocation, and our injury. Then again, Providential circumstances, which we cannot overrule, may sometimes seem to threaten us : such as the influx of foreigners, which I have mentioned. But, with regard to all these things, I may remind you that the battle is set, between good and evil, between righteousness and sin ; that it is your duty to join in this contest, on the right side ; and that in this conflict, while the friends of right, the armies of morality and religion, contending with Satan’s hosts, shall vigorously and faithfully prosecute their war,—we may feel safe. Trusting in God, and opposing evil influences, to the best of our power, we may leave the issue in his hands.—Yet we may say, these are not the dangers, which to the eye of most men, immediately threaten our government and institutions. They may undermine it : they may rot away its foundations : they may corrupt public virtue, until it

is dead, if they be not checked. But they are not so palpable, and obvious in common estimation, as some others : perhaps they are not as much thought of, as they should be.—Yet there are other evils more manifest, at least at this time.—Perhaps there is one.—I will name it.—It is *Slavery*—Have you not noticed, that there is always, almost, some one topic of interest and excitement, which agitates the community, and seems to threaten danger and disaster, and it may be ruin, to our country ? Sometimes it has been at the north, sometimes at the south ; then again, confined to no particular locality. It has been popular commotion : repudiation : nullification : financial policy :—the wonderful inpouring of foreigners, ignorant of our institutions, and unfit for liberty. It has been the Missouri question : or the Catholic question : or the war : or the admission of Texas.—Of late, it has been slavery, and its relations : this has been growing, and becoming more and more formidable, until it seemed to cover the whole horizon, and shut out almost every other topic. I mention these things, not to compare the one with the other : but simply to express the hope, that as these clouds have one after another rolled away, and a kind Providence has preserved our liberties, our blessings, and our country, so the same goodness will dispel what seems the threatening aspect of this great evil.

I am not to discuss the question of slavery, here ; neither in its moral bearings, nor in its dangers.—It were easy to load it with obloquy, or to dismiss it with a passing curse : as the bane of our country, the fertile source of countless evils, and dissensions.—It were easy to do this ; but perhaps it would not be wise.—It is only the fact, that it is associated with our constitution and our government, to which I advert. Will it destroy it ? Is it a hopeless canker ; not to be cured nor mitigated, nor mollified, until it eat out the vitals of our national existence ? My hearers, let it be remembered, that the government and the constitution are not responsible for this evil : they did not make it : they found it : and they found it here as well as at the South. They found it thrust upon this people, by the cupidity and tyranny of the mother country, against earnest remonstrance, on the part, of some at least of her colonies.—The constitution is not to blame.

But how, and when, is it to be removed? Not in an hour; not by the hand of violence: we shudder to think of it: let no man breathe it:—not by the power of the government: it has no such authority, and was never created for such a purpose; as it is not responsible for its existence.—It is plain, that if ever this evil is to be eradicated,—and we are sure, that it must fall,—while we cannot see the time, nor the means directly,—it must be by the deep convictions, and the voluntary movements of the South. I know of no other way. The truth is, my friends, it is a subject encompassed with the most profound and serious difficulties.—It is a solemn subject.—I am sorry, that at present, the aspect of the South is so unpropitious; though I am not surprised at it.—I am grieved, that good men at the South, do not seek at once, to remove some of the more objectionable features of the system. I am pained,—not surprised, at their unwillingness to look at the subject, at all. I am astonished at the boldness which can declare it to be, an advantage, a necessary appendage of their state of society. I am amazed at the recklessness and infatuation, which would undertake a fratricidal war, for its maintenance. I am disappointed, that Kentucky, has rejected the opportunity of engrafting emancipation upon her future prospects.—But after all, I can trust in God, and be patient. Believe it, his providence has something in store, which will meet the emergency.—Believe it, it can not destroy our government, if wisdom, moderation and kindness guide our councils.—And be assured, if you ever reach the heart of the South, on this topic—if slavery is ever made to cease or its vigor is in any degree mitigated, by human instrumentalities,—it will be, not by the thunderings of denunciation, not by threats, not by pictures of its horrors,—sometimes true, oftener false: not by depreciating and scorning, what is really done for the slave:—but it will be by the voice of kindness, of reason, of argument, and of justice. It will be by the gradual, silent, persuasive influence of religious truth, and of right principles, gaining the hearts of the good and the pious, aided by considerations of advantage and interest; and, I think, by providence opening some way for the removal of the difficulties, which beset the subject. Say not, that your patience cannot brook this

slow progress! that you are tired of this long delay. Ah! my friends, God is not tired of sending blessings upon you, though you are unthankful and unworthy. Beware of hastening his providence: beware of doing evil, that good may come: be satisfied that much has been gained, as to the extension of the evil: by the cessation of the traffic in our National Capital: by the very discussions on Emancipation.—And last of all, remember, that your own state, a little more than a hundred years ago, was not only marked by the existence of slavery, but distinguished by the severity of its negro code. Do you not know, that a little more than a hundred years ago, thirteen negroes were adjudged to the stake in New-York? Do you not know, that it is but thirty-three years,—scarcely a generation,—since the act of emancipation was passed; and only twenty-three, since all born upon this soil, became free? If here, at the North, with all the influences of freedom, and the example of other States, and with the very small number of Slaves in existence, progress was so slow,—how can you expect the South, with its overpowering numbers, and borne down by prejudice and interest, to be revolutionized, speedily!

I have made these remarks, prolonged beyond their intended length, simply to remind you, that there is nothing which should prevent our rejoicing together to-day, over the blessings of Providence, and his goodness to our land. Make every possible abatement, and it still remains a palpable and glorious truth, that we are blessed beyond most nations, in our civil relations, and in the benignant kindness of our Heavenly Father. "He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord." And as to the closing year, for which especially we are called upon to give thanks,—it has its reasons for special acknowledgments.—Publicly; for general health: for abundant harvests: for foreign peace: for domestic tranquility: and especially, for the new testimony given to the strength and stability of our institutions. During the year, God, has in his inscrutable providence suddenly struck down our honored Chief Magistrate: but how quietly and successfully has the crisis been met, and constitutional order prevailed, in the

accession of his successor to office: and that too, amid the highest strife of tongues, and the apparently almost hopeless conflict of passions, interests and opinions.—Let it be a new omen, of our prosperity. As to your peculiar and private causes of thanksgiving, I leave the catalogue to be made up by your own grateful recollections, and thankful hearts.

Let me now renew your attention, to a few brief suggestions, as to some points of duty, springing from the review of our condition, and incumbent on us at the present time.—What is the duty of a patriot?

1. *Let us speak well of our country.*—We are under obligations to do so: and there is every reason why we should. We are far from being perfect: there are evils, sins, among us. But if our views be true, there is cause for the most profound gratitude, for strong confidence and hope, for decided commendation and praise. There is a tendency sometimes to depreciate our country: to dwell upon and magnify its evils: to keep out of view its blessings and its honors: to pass over what is praiseworthy. Sometimes you are to believe, that there is nothing good in it: that it is just about to fall to pieces by its own corruption or by the frantic and seditious violence of some of its unworthy sons. It is a sink of iniquity: the offscouring of God and man: with no hope for it, but to be destroyed.—It is not so. I cannot believe it. I will not admit it.—There are too many precious hopes treasured up here, to believe it: there is too much at stake, for God, for religion, for humanity, for the world, to think of it. I grant that there is need of much exertion, on the part of patriots, wise men, and Christians. But there is much, very much, that is good here. There is piety, morality, large-hearted philanthropy, patriotism. Here is a noble government, the model of the world: there are men of whom any nation might be proud. There are clusters, multitudes of ardent, devoted lovers of their country, and its welfare. Let us speak well, and hopefully of our country.

I avow it.—Next to religion, and my home, I know of no object dearer in the world, than my country. Her very stones and dust are precious in my sight. I rejoice in her prosperity, and take in, in the arms of brotherhood, all her millions. With all her faults,

she is the fairest land of earth. I am proud of her government, of her institutions, of her order, of her religion, of her prospects. I can stand up, in the presence of any man, of any nation, and call myself an American: for no man shall make me ashamed of the title: no man shall stop me of this same boasting, in any region on the globe. I can trust, that her continuance will be lasting as time, in unbroken and happy unity. Let us speak well of our country: for, when her own sons traduce her, when with parricidal hand, they strike a blow at her peace, prosperity, and happiness,—they are not aiming a blow at her alone, but at the general interests of truth and righteousness, of liberty and religion in the world.—Where would these be, without the American Republic? If this experiment fail, the hand upon the dial-plate of the world's advancement is set back, more than ten degrees. If this fails, for all that I see, you may bid the crushed and oppressed millions of Europe, to lie still in their degradation and oppression: for there is no hope: for all that I see, you may surrender Christianity,—itself to another struggle with superstition and error, and another long and dreary waste of dark ages. Let us speak well of our country: for it is in a large degree the hope of the world. May it never be divided: or if, upon our western shore, another empire must arise, for convenience of government, may it be in harmony, and peace: so that the two may be twin constellations in the political heavens: one in feeling, one in constitution, one in religion, one in furthering the advance of a common humanity; divided only in name.

2. Let us cherish the institutions, and yield homage to the government, and laws of our country. It would ordinarily be sufficient, simply to announce this duty, and it would commend itself to the heart, and secure the approval of every true patriot.—Our local laws, our state institutions, our government both in its general features, and in its practical operation,—as we have intimated,—are worthy of our sincere respect and devoted attachment. Our federal constitution, which has been pronounced by another, (Dr. Bacon,) “in every thing so admirable,—in every thing so clearly and wonderfully marked with the impress of the Divine Providence that gave it,”—secures for our people, the

great objects for which it was planned and has worked for years to the prosperity and growth of this nation, and is the model of the world. No true-hearted American citizen ought to need to be urged to cherish the principles it embodies, nor the noble instrument, in which they are set forth, and applied. And as to homage to law, it has been the general sentiment of the country : deviations from it, and resistance to law, have been but the exceptions, and have been almost universally reprobated ; and when such resistance has been put down, even with great severity, by the constituted authorities, it has been with the approbation of all good citizens. I need not repeat the common axiom, that submission to law, is an indispensable principle, under a free government. Under these circumstances, an argument on the subject might seem out of place.—Yet peculiar circumstances at this time, seem to demand a re-affirmation of these principles : and perhaps they may call for a new and thorough discussion of the whole subject. It does not fall within my province, nor my time, to enter upon such a discussion to day : but you will allow me to state briefly, and without argument, a few principles, which seem to lie at the foundation, of the practical duty, to which I exhort you.

As to the general duty of obedience to law, it would seem, after all, as if there were a substantial agreement on first principles : the general duty is conceded : and the foundation on which it is built, that government is an ordinance of God, and is to be yielded to, on this ground, is almost universally granted. Indeed, there may well be, on the question of submission, a unanimity of opinion :—for, not to argue from reason and necessity, in its favor,—do you know any duty, of a practical nature, more clearly and explicitly set forth, in the word of God, than this ? Do you know any, more beautifully and accurately illustrated, in the life of Christ, and his apostles, than honor and respect to the government, and submission to the powers that be ? I should be glad to go over with you, some incidents in the life of the Savior, and his followers :—and mark the wisdom with which, without compromising duty, he yielded to power, and escaped the snares of those, who sought to entrap him on this point. But we have not

time.—Yet you remember, how he paid tribute, miraculously providing it : how he taught the Jews, that they must render unto Cesar, though a foreigner, and a tyrant, the things which are Cesar's,—while they must render unto God, the things that are God's : how he said, “my kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews :”—how he yielded himself to unjust arrest, and forbade his rash, though well-meaning disciple, to employ carnal weapons.—But this is unnecessary. I lay down the principle, fearless of contradiction, that the government and laws of the country must be submitted to : that no individual has a right to set up his judgment and will violently against it, unless he is prepared to take the consequences of rebellion, or of refusal. And that even though a law may work hardship and injustice, it is not to be violently resisted on any other terms. I believe that substantially all agree, on these points, in the general : certainly the major part. Duty, interest, scripture, reason, point to these principles ; and demand their adoption. I have been interested, besides other passages of Scripture, in reading what is said in Jeremiah, to the Jews carried away captive in Babylon.—Jeremiah wrote them a letter, by divine direction, as to their conduct in the land whither they had been banished for their sins, and where they were destined to remain for many years. He says, “seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives : and pray unto the Lord for it : for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.” Here, their own interest demanded submission to authority : and they were to seek the welfare of the land of their oppressors. I do not offer this as a parallel to the case of modern slavery ; but simply to show that the general principle of submission to the powers that be, was inculcated under the Old Testament, and was to be exercised until God should open a way for their deliverance.

But is there not a *limit*, to this duty of obedience ? Here again, it will be conceded, almost universally, that there is : although, the distinguished Chalmers, if I understand him aright, in his comments upon the 13th of Romans, would absolutely forbid Christians from violent resistance, at any time : even from taking

a leading, and active part in any revolution or rebellion. He of course would not say, that they were actively to conform to a law, commanding us to violate our duties to God. But while we do not agree with his views, if they be such as we have before mentioned, it must be granted, that submission to the authority of the law, and the power of magistracy, is very strongly and extensively urged in the scriptures and, more, that it is not only a duty, but that there is a moral force in it, sometimes, which is mighty.—There is a holy power, often, in patient submission, even to wrong, which vindicates the teachings of the word of God. Still, we believe that there is a limit to *active obedience* to the commands of the civil magistrate: and that there is a limit on the part of a people, though it is much farther on, even to *passive submission*, to such authority. But if you ask, what is the duty of a good citizen, of a patriot, in reference to the laws of his country,—I reply: I speak as a Christian, you are Christians,—he must *submit*, unqualifiedly, to the laws of the land: he must *obey* those laws, to the utmost limit of possibility, in consistence with a good conscience: and if he cannot conscientiously obey them, he must submit to them in enduring the penalty, while they are laws, and if he cannot avoid their operation upon himself; he must do this patiently and meekly; he must, by no means, oppose violence to the dignity and authority of the law; he must enter into no combinations to resist it, and obstruct its execution, unless he is prepared to take the consequences of rebellion and revolution:—I am happy to say, that these principles also are almost universally conceded. I believe them to be the teachings of the New Testament. I believe combined, violent resistance to law, to be an extreme and fearful movement: involving the most solemn responsibilities, and to be undertaken only in hopeful circumstances. I believe no individual has a right to take the responsibility of resistance:—certainly not in a government like ours.

Now we have said these things entirely in the abstract: but it is plain, that as principles they apply to the case, which now agitates the community. What are their bearing upon it? What shall we say of the fugitive slave-law? Its practical operation is,

sad and harsh in many cases: sometimes peculiarly so. Is it not offensive in many of its provisions to the feelings of our citizens, to the public opinion of the North? It is; unless these provisions are a mere homage to the form of law. Is it constitutional? I do not know: wise men say it is: wise men say it is not. I suppose the *principle*, at the basis of it, is constitutional; it seems plainly to be written there: and has long been incorporated in a law. Whether its *details* are, I imagine is to be decided, not so much by individual judgment, as by the constituted judicial authority, to which all must submit. Must we submit to it, without violent, bloody resistance; pay its penalty, if need be? Yes! as you are citizens and Christians;—unless you are prepared, so far as you are concerned, to introduce lawlessness, anarchy, nullification, and confusion. Must we obey actively, its mandates? When the time comes for each individual, to decide that question, let him decide it, in the fear of God, and before his own conscience: but let him be sure, that his conscience is right: that it is wisely enlightened by as clear, unprejudiced and intelligent a view of the whole subject, as he can gain. If you ask me, for its ultimate results, I am not able to descry them in the future. It may not have any direct bearing on the question of slavery: it may be, that that God whose province it is, to make the wrath of man to praise him, may somehow make this law instrumental, in extending right views, on that unhappy question. All I say now is, that while it is a law, on the principles we have laid down, submission to it, is the part of every good citizen.

There have however been certain teachings put forth, by a particular religious journal, on this subject, to which I deem it my duty to advert. I do so, not merely because of the general principles involved, and in the exposure of which, all are alike concerned; but because that paper is often recognized, and indeed has been publicly spoken of, as the *organ* of the denomination of Christians, in this state, to which this church belongs. It is not, indeed, in any correct sense, such an organ: but, as you know, is a private enterprise; and for the sentiments contained in the paper, the Editors alone are responsible. Yet, it seems proper, with some reference to this supposed fact, as well as for general

reasons, solemnly, to protest against some of the doctrines, which it has put forth on this topic:—and the more so, as they have, contrary to our hopes, been substantially reiterated, of late, and the thought, that they have been retracted or essentially modified, has been distinctly spurned. I allude to the encouragement given, to resist the execution of the law, at the hazard of bloodshed and murder: nay! to prepare deliberately for such violent resistance; to carry deadly weapons, and to shoot or stab the officer of the law, while attempting to carry out its provisions. I am amazed and grieved at the exhibition of such doctrines, by ministers of the Gospel of peace, and at their repeated avowal and justification. I repudiate them utterly. I hold them to be entirely inexcusable.

Let me give you some extracts from the article in question, to illustrate its tone and spirit:—

“Since, then the law *is to be* resisted, it is important to determine how it can be resisted with the best effect. * * * To resist it, even unto death, is their right, (that of the fugitives,) and it may be their duty. We would dissuade the fugitives as a class, and especially would we dissuade the colored population, as a whole, from any combination to resist the law by violence. *

* * * But to each *individual* fugitive, * * * we say, be fully prepared for your own defence. If to you death seems better than slavery, then refuse not to die,—whether on the way-side, at your own threshold, or even as a felon upon the gallows. Defend your liberty and the liberty of your wife and children, as you would defend your life and theirs against the assassin. * * * Should you destroy the life of your assailant, you will pass into the custody of the criminal law as administered in the free states, under an indictment for murder; but the verdict of the community, and the verdict of almost any jury will be, ‘justifiable homicide, in self-defence.’ * * *

Or should a different verdict be found, and you be condemned to die as a murderer, your ignominious head shall be luminous with the halo of the martyr, and your sacrifice shall be for the deliverance of your people. * * * As it is better, if possible, to avoid the effusion of blood, you may choose to reserve the right

of self-defence, as your last resort. * * * It may be expedient for some fugitives, * * * to waive the right of self-defence, and consent to return awhile to slavery, as propagandists of liberty. Go back to be a preacher of freedom, to teach others how to escape, and see to it, that you do not return *alone*.

“Let the fugitives throughout the North, form a *secret* society, with signs, passes, and watchwords; let them consult as to the best means of protecting themselves against the law that seeks to oppress them, and also of aiding in a second flight, such as are captured, and of spreading information among the slaves at the South as to the means and methods of escape. * * We carry no arms, as we should do, if we were fugitives from slavery. We shall not shoot or stab a claimant or his bailiff, as we might do if he should lay hands upon our persons to drag us into slavery.—

* * * Upon a soil where every man is free, he, (the citizen,) should withstand the kidnapper, (the officer of the law,) just as he would withstand the highway assassin. We would render the execution of the law odious and infamous. * * * We reject the fugitive slave law, as unconstitutional and therefore void. But if it is according to the Constitution, we, nevertheless, reject it.”

But enough.—I enter my solemn protest against such sentiments. I warn you against their adoption or encouragement. I denounce them as unpatriotic, unchristian, atrocious. They are cruel to the fugitives themselves: rebellious against the constitution and government of the country: contrary to the spirit of the Gospel. They are the sheer insanity of fanaticism.—Some of the men, who guide that journal, I have numbered among my personal friends, notwithstanding we are compelled to differ widely, in some of our views: and I am willing to admit, that there have been other sentiments on this topic, far less objectionable and dangerous in their tendency: nay! from which, perhaps, the true principles, on which the question is to be decided, might be developed. But I cannot refrain, nevertheless, from this deliberate condemnation of doctrines so repugnant to the spirit of the Gospel, and its teachings as these. With all earnestness, I ask, whence have these men imbibed sentiments like these? Where have

they breathed this spirit? Is it from the example of the blessed Redeemer, or of his holy apostles? Is it from their instructions? Would Paul thus have counselled any of his fellow-Christians? Are these sentiments worthy of the minister of the Gospel, and the expounder of the divine word? Is it not time, my brethren, that we should come back, in the simplicity of a genuine humility, to this fountain of all wisdom, this sure directory, and should take our standard of duty, not from the impulses of excited feeling, not from the dictates of an unwise and an ungodly philanthropy, not from our wishes merely, but from the simple teachings of the word of God!*

I return to the practical duty before us: and I repeat it: let every citizen yield homage to the laws and government of his country. Let obedience, and submission to lawful authority, so long the happy characteristic of our people, ever remain a distinguishing feature, in our national character. Let no spirit of insubordination, lawless violence and rebellion, find a place or be encouraged among us. Be assured, a reverence for law, lies at the basis of all our safety and prosperity. In the language of another, (Dr. Bacon,) "Wo to those men who are laboring to counteract such a sentiment. If they do it in the sacred name of liberty, or in the more sacred name of philanthropy, theirs is the greater condemnation. Far distant be the day when the white wand of an unarmed constable shall lose its potency, or when that word, **THE LAW**, shall no longer be a word of power to still the tumult of the people."

* While this sermon was passing through the press, the writer chanced to meet the following extract from a work of Rev. Dr. Bacon, one of the Editors of the journal alluded to above, though now absent in Europe. He has no hesitation in putting it on record here, both because of the sound sentiments it contains on the precise point at issue, and because of the source from which it emanates. It was published in 1839:

"One day last spring, the author of this discourse, being in Boston, entered the gallery of Marlborough Chapel, where a society, claiming a high place among the philanthropic institutions of the age, was holding its anniversary. One of the leading spirits and public agents of the Society, was holding forth his sentiments on that part of the Federal Constitution, which requires an apprentice or servant fleeing from one State into another, to be given up to those who by the laws of the State from which he flees, are entitled to his services. He was expressing the hope, that juries in New-England, trying cases under this Constitutional law, would so far perjure themselves, as to bring in verdicts contrary to known law and facts: and in so doing, he expressed great contempt for that strange deference to judicial decisions, as he called it, which is so prevalent in the community:—as if he did not know that it is this very deference to law, as expounded and applied by the judges of the land that permits him to wear his head in safety.

"An association protesting against an existing law, as unwise or unjust, and using lawful means to change the law, is one thing. An association which undertakes to pronounce

3. *Let us, as patriots, promote the diffusion of those moral and religious influences*, which tend so directly to the preservation of our liberties. While we cherish an affectionate veneration for our country, and rejoice in her prosperity,—and while our example and influence are on the side of order and submission to authority,—something more is needful. I may well assume here, that public morality and religion, are the safe-guard of all nations, and most especially, of free institutions: and that if the welfare of our country is to be secured, and our permanency, as a people maintained, it must be by cherishing and extending these. It is the duty of all to foster such influences: everywhere, to seek to plant religion: to cause to flourish all over the land, those same religious institutions and habits, which none but an infidel will deny to have been one mainspring of our past prosperity. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." By invoking the divine favor upon our rulers, by commending our

the law no law, to denounce the sworn ministers of the law, to whom the Constitution gives no discretionary power, as criminals against freedom, humanity, and religion,—to organize measures for resisting the law,—is another thing, and is likely to do more harm, by teaching people to despise all government and magistracy, than it can do good by any philanthropic endeavors."

Let us now place side by side, the doctrine, of the two extracts, we have given, and look at the contrast, both in the letter and the spirit, which they exhibit:

They, (the fugitives,) can have no scruples of conscience about the law, or the constitution. To them, this law is no law — The law, is to be resisted. We reject the fugitive slave law, as unconstitutional and therefore void. But if it is according to the Constitution, we nevertheless reject it.

Be fully prepared for your own defence.—Defend your liberty and the liberty of your wife and children, (against the sworn minister of the law, remember,) as you would defend your life and theirs against the assassin. Should you destroy the life of your assailant, (viz: the sworn minister of the law,) you will pass into the custody of the criminal law, as administered in the free States, under an indictment for murder: but the verdict of the community, and the verdict of almost any jury will be, justifiable homicide in self-defence."

Should a different verdict be found, and you be condemned to die as a murderer, your ignominious head shall be luminous with the halo of the martyr, and your sacrifice shall be for the deliverance of your people.

We would render the execution of the law, odious and infamous.

That part of the Federal Constitution, which requires an apprentice or servant fleeing from one state into another, to be given up to those who by the laws of the state, from which he flees are entitled to his services. This Constitutional law; (viz: the former fugitive law,) An association which undertakes to pronounce the law, no law, * * * to organize measures for resisting the law.

An association which undertakes to denounce the sworn ministers of the law, to whom the Constitution gives no discretionary power, as criminal against freedom, humanity and religion. * * *

He was expressing the hope that juries in New-England, trying cases under this Constitutional law, would so far perjure themselves, as to bring in verdicts contrary to known law and facts.

He expressed great contempt for that 'strange deference to judicial decisions,' as he called it, which is so prevalent in the community:—as if he did not know, that it is this very deference to law, as expounded and applied by the judges of the land, that permits him to wear his head in safety.

country, with all her interests, and her difficulties, and our magistrates themselves, to the divine guidance and protection,—by cherishing a profound gratitude to Heaven, for the mercies we enjoy,—we honor God, and are in the way to secure his blessing. By the wide diffusion of general education, by exemplifying and defending principles of public and private morality, by sustaining justice, truth, and righteousness,—above all, by scattering abroad the Bible, and the institutions of pure religion—by advancing, sustaining, establishing a Protestant Christianity, and setting up the temples of the cross in every hamlet in our land,—we are obeying God, honoring religion, and providing for the spiritual welfare of our fellow-men: but, at the same time, we are most effectually consolidating the foundations, and binding together all the parts of the glorious temple of liberty, in which it is our privilege to dwell.

Who does not long for the perpetuity of this Union? Who does not tremble sometimes lest there may be causes, which shall rend it asunder, or dissolve it into fragments amid its own corruptions? And who does not turn instinctively to the Gospel, as the agency, which by its quiet and unobserved, but most potent influence, is to remove our dangers, and disappoint our fears?—Nothing but religion will accomplish this: the schemes of men, without it,—excluding it,—are idle and worse. Nothing but the Gospel; religious influence; visiting every village and hamlet, penetrating even to lonely huts, and solitary clearings, mingling with the people, following them in their occupations by day, and resting with them in the shades of evening, teaching them not in churches alone, but in school-houses, and cabins, and by the wayside, nothing but such an all-pervading, universal, penetrating influence as this, can give security and stability, to our nation.

My hearers, it is your duty, as patriots, to be deeply interested in such a diffusion of religion. Let us glance down the future of our wide-extending, rapidly-populating country. I see on the one hand, at the end of some few years, a vast mass of discordant population, whose wickedness cries to heaven for vengeance: among whom passion, in every form, rules unrestrained, and is enkindled to madness. I see every noble and generous sentiment departing,

and a supreme selfishness in all hearts. I see laws trampled under foot, the most sacred and settled principles of government disregarded, the constitution of our country despised, denounced, violated. I see religion set forth chiefly in the trappings of a magnificent idolatry, and employed to enslave the minds and debase the manliness of those whose morals it does not care to cure. I see this mighty mass, heaving and surging to and fro, at the instigation of passion or of cunning leaders, until in their wildness and fury, they demolish the whole fabric of liberty, and make another country of this. On the other hand, I see, at the termination of some such period, a firmly united, and, to a good degree, homogeneous population, extending from ocean to ocean: a people, among whom public morality and private virtue prevail: where law, the embodiment of right and justice, is potent.—I see the members of this vast community, standing up in the manly dignity of conscious and well-sustained independence.—I see a pure religion, the conservative element in all the framework of society: its temples smiling from every hill, and dotting every plain. I see the fair edifice of liberty, towering higher and higher, until it becomes a beacon-light for all nations, indicating where they may find, or how they may become, a free and happy people. Do you ask which vision is to be realized? God only knows! I pray, I trust, I believe, it will be the latter. But I am sure, that order, education, morality, religion, can alone ensure such a result. May they be diffused, with a rapidity commensurate with our vast growth in population and extent of territory!—May our institutions, established, perfected, more deeply than ever *Christianized*, be the pride, the protection, the happiness, of many generations.

NOTE.—There has been an unexpected delay, in the publication of this sermon, for which the writer is in no way, responsible. Meanwhile, however,—a change seems to have come over the vision of the Independent. It is amusing, and would be surprising, if anything from that quarter could be so, to see with what adroitness they have slipped off from the positions animadverted upon in this sermon, while yet pretending to hold them unmodified. In that journal, of January 12th, is an article on Obedience to Law, in which strong positions are taken; and the very extract from Dr Bacon, is given and endorsed, with the utmost coolness. The Independent has outwitted its assailants: and by a masterly activity,—has wheeled into the ranks of Law and Order, and is at the head of the advancing line! “Order reigns” throughout its columns! The re-action is complete! But it has not changed its position, at all!!

There is an advantage in having many men of many minds, in a religious journal.—There is an advantage in such a journal, being entirely Independent. But by what Barometer shall we conjecture, or by what Thermometer shall we estimate, its fluctuations?