

Woman

FEMALE MIND.

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT

OF

MADISON FEMALE COLLEGE,

GEORGIA.

JULY 27, 1854.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH CROSS, D.D.

CHARLESTON:

JAMES, WILLIAMS AND GITSINGER,

STEAM-POWER PRESS, 3 BROAD-STREET.

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ADDRESS.

AMONG the remarkable characteristics of the age, and the thick-clustering honors of our country, perhaps no circumstance is more worthy of note, than the rising estimate of female intellect, the improving appreciation of female influence, and the increasing facilities for female education.

Female seminaries are of modern origin. Female colleges are peculiarly American. They were unknown to ancient civilization. They were unthought of in the proud age of chivalry. I am not aware of any such institutions now existing in Europe. The convents and nunneries of papal countries do not claim to be schools for female culture. They are ostensibly, whatever they are really, asylums for female piety. To the present age, and the American people, belongs the honor of originating this powerful means of human improvement. It indicates an advance in civilization. It is a proof of our practical wisdom—an instance of the most suitable means, employed for the most desirable ends. The patriot seeking the good of his country, the philanthropist laboring for the weal of humanity, next to the Gospel of Christ, find their surest, speediest and most economical agency in female education. By female education, unquestionably, you

may accomplish more for the intellectual and moral redemption of our common nature—and that, with less outlay of toil, and time, and treasure—than by any other human expedient.

I speak not at random. I advance no theoretical vagary. I state a great fact, which, with little observation, may be known and read of all men. That girls usually excel boys in the facility of acquiring knowledge, is a proposition easy of proof. That females are more apt to teach, as well as to learn—that they are the Divinely appointed tutors of childhood, and peculiarly qualified by the gentleness of their nature for the work—are propositions which need no proof. Nor can it be questioned, that woman possesses a power of moral control, to which we of the sterner sex in vain aspire. In the various relations of life—as teacher, mother, sister, daughter, wife—she throws around the heart of man a spell, which he could not break if he would, and would not break if he could. In her arms repose the future agencies of the world's destiny. She gives the first lesson; she preaches the first sermon; she moulds the immortal in the cradle—

“She plays the harp whose living tones
Are left forever in the strings!”

Baron Cuvier, the great and good naturalist, had an eminently intelligent, accomplished and pious mother. Lord Bacon, the reformer of our philosophy, was the son of the most learned woman that England ever produced. Think of Jezabel and Herodius, and then of Hannah and Mary. Think of the mothers of Washington and Wesley, and then of the mothers of Bonaparte and Byron. Contrast the calm intelligence and judicious piety of the former, with the uncurbed ambition

and imperious passions of the latter. Contrast the results in the characters of their sons—in the influence those sons have exerted upon the moral, social and political aspects of the world—an influence yet operating, and destined to descend through a thousand channels to the remotest posterity. Who, after such a contrast, can question the importance of female education, or fail to admire its multiplying facilities, as constituting one of the most encouraging indications of the age, and one of the brightest gems in Columbia's coronal?

If we compare the present with the past—our own country with others—with reference to the mental culture and social position of the better half of humanity, we cannot help feeling a proud gratification at the result. From the comparative feebleness of the *physique*, has frequently been inferred the inferiority of the *spirituelle*. Woman's domestic authority has been questioned, her social prerogatives depreciated, her influence practically ignored. Paganism has withheld from her the book of knowledge. Moham-medism has denied her an immortal soul. In the most polished nations of antiquity, she was uniformly degraded, and systematically oppressed. Her mental obscuration was the means of her physical enslavement. Sages and senators—the wisest of men, and revered teachers of the multitude—doomed her to perpetual ignorance and imbecility. Retirement and tame servility were inculcated as her greatest virtues. Love sought in her neither intellectual nor moral worth. Marriage was a mere political relation—frequently a monied contract between the bridegroom and the parents of the bride. There was no mutual interest of

the sexes, nothing worthy of the name of friendship, scarcely anything that could be called social intercourse. The finest lady was a timid and crouching thing, who seldom presumed to speak to her lord in company, and to whom it was a condescension in her lord to speak. Women were generally restricted to their own apartments, and fed at their own tables. Frequently they toiled in the fields, took care of the flocks and herds, and performed all the laborious duties of the household. Into the schools of the philosophers and sophists, they were seldom admitted—perhaps seldom sought admittance. Literary and scientific pursuits were regarded as beyond their province, and above their capacity. If Aspasia became the companion of sages, and the counsellor of statesmen; if Sappho rivalled the most renowned bards of her country, and Corrinna took the prize from the immortal Pindar—these were solitary exceptions, admired as prodigies, but not proposed as models—rare instances of genius, struggling up through superincumbent mountains of prejudice, into its native ascendancy among the sons of science and of song.

Such was woman in the most illustrious nation of antiquity. Thucydides has represented Pericles, addressing the widows of Grecian warriors fallen, counselling them to silence and seclusion as the first duty and chief glory of their sex; exhorting them to give the men as little occasion as possible, to say either good or ill of them. Euripides has furnished us a similar account of female privilege and prerogative:

“Silence and chaste reserve
Are woman's genuine praise, and to remain
Quiet within the house.”

And how does he appreciate female intelligence?

“I hate the knowing dame, nor in my house
Be one more wise than woman ought to be.”

And what is his estimate of female worth?

“More than a thousand women, is one man,
Worthy to see the light of life.”

These were the sentiments of all Greece. The historian and the poet spoke for their country.

In other nations, the condition of the sex was similar. In the land of the Nile, under the powerful dynasty of the Pharaohs, she was treated as a mindless toy; and amid the waning splendors of Egyptian civilization, she became an abject slave. The Assyrian and Babylonian women were sold in marriage to the highest bidder; and their noblest occupations were the adornment of their persons, and the pursuit of pleasures. The Persian had as many wives as he could purchase, and dismissed them when he pleased; and the monarch's seraglio of a thousand maidens was only a collection of beautiful ignorance, an assemblage of decorated slaves. Even in Rome, where she enjoyed a greater freedom, commanded a higher respect, and wielded a wider influence, woman was far from being man's companion and equal—furnished with very slender means of mental culture—the mere tinsel of education.

Nor is modern paganism more favorable to the claims and interests of the sex. In many a land, blooming with tropical beauty, woman is doomed to the most menial services, and deemed unfit for any nobler employment. Take, as the most favorable type,

the *soi-disant* Celestial Empire. The Chinese pretend to derive, from their fantastic cosmogony, proof of female inferiority. Heaven, say they, is masculine; earth, feminine; therefore man is as much superior to woman, as heaven is higher than earth. It is a common maxim among them, that to renounce science is the virtue of woman. Even that anomaly in Chinese history—the learned Chinese lady—inculcates upon her sex the doctrine of their inferiority; tells them that they occupy the lowest rank in the human species, and ought to be satisfied with the lowest privileges. This opinion seems to be as old as Confucius, who speaks of women and slaves as bearing the same relation to society, and complains of equal difficulty in the management of the one and the other. A Chinese poet, translated by Dr. Morrison, compares “a beautiful and clever woman,” to “a hoarse and hateful bird;” and attributes to “women with long tongues,” most of the evils of society, and most of the troubles of the state. A female child in China is regarded as an unfortunate incumbrance; and either killed in infancy, or suffered to grow up without care or culture. The Chinese bride, affianced by her friends, without any agency of her own—frequently, without her knowledge, or against her will—never sees her intended till the day of her marriage, when she sups with him for the first time and the last in her life. Her new relation only embitters her bondage; giving her a new mistress in her mother-in-law, and a new tyrant in her spouse. The Chinese lady of rank is a hot-house plant, whose color proves its concealment in the shade—an imprisoned mantua-maker, whose loftiest genius is occupied with the in-

vention of frivolous fashions—whose deepest study is to outvie her neighbors in beauty of attire—making herself a mass of living artifice—taking infinite pains with the casket, while the jewel lies neglected and forgotten. Such is the sex in the most civilized and literary nation of the pagan world.

If we look at Europe in the feudal period, we see a practical illustration of the opposite extreme; a peculiar respect and reverence for woman, of an influence so pervading and powerful as to revolutionize the customs and institutions of the civilized world. She is surrounded with an atmosphere of celestial sacredness—

“An angel called, and angel-like adored.”

The slave becomes a goddess, and love is a complete delirium. But there is no proper culture of the female mind; no proper discipline of the female heart. Consequently, woman grows frivolous and vain, conceives extravagant notions of her own personal charms, acquires great fondness for empty blandishment and gaudy decoration—a mere thing of fashion and folly, whom to describe, as Byron says, one must needs dip his pen in the rainbow, and dry his paper with dust from the wings of butterflies. This undue elevation was scarcely less pernicious than the former undue depression. Chivalry had in it too much of romance, with too little of reason to restrain its vagaries; too much of superstition, with too little of Christianity to correct its extravagances. Here is the true reason of the failure. The sunrise of the reformation had not yet dissipated the moral night of the nations. The church had not yet broken the fetters of her long

enslavement to the "man of sin." The "two wifenesses" still prophecied in sackcloth. The Bible was still chained.

And why do you now see the fragile creature—in France, Spain, Italy, Austria—degraded from her social position, spurned from the side of man, and trampled beneath his feet? Why do you see her suffering offices of hardship and notoriety with her tender and shrinking nature seems wholly incompatible? Why did one of our tourists in continental Europe find her "mixing mortar, carrying hods, digging cellars, and wheeling forth the clay?" Why did he find her "harnessed with a man, with a dog, and once even with a donkey, dragging a cart through the most public streets of the metropolis?" Why did he find her "doing the work of an apprentice in a printing office, saving and splitting wood at the door, drawing coal about the city in a little wagon, and wheeling eatables for miles through the highways to market?" Because of these countries Gregory was the God, and the Bible was under his ban. Popery never acknowledged the true rights of woman, nor accorded to her an appropriate relative position. The beast of Rome, wherever he treads, tramples the female intellect, and crushes the female heart!

No false religion ever did justice to woman. No degree of civilization—no glitter of wealth, or garnitures of taste—nothing but "the truth as it is in Jesus"—can effectually free the sex from their disabillities, and raise them to their native position in the great family of the Infinite Father. Man may throw off the bearskin covering, and clothe himself with wool of snowy whiteness, and silk of Tyrian dye; and

philosophy with all its revelations, and literature with all its acquisitions, and art with all its embellishments, may bless his habitation, and wait upon his footsteps; yet woman's nobler nature remain undeveloped, and all her beneficent faculties banned by his indifference, or embargoed by his despotism. Christianity enters, and she is "free indeed." Christianity unbars her dungeon, leads her out into the sunlight, opens her angel eyes, and unbinds her angel wings. Christianity restores her plundered rights, and resets the jewels in her rifled crown.

The Gospel has descended into the neglected mine, for ages deemed not worth the working; and brought up starry gems, flashing with the many-hued refulgence of heaven. Man has learned, at length, that he is "allied to angels on his better side;" that woman is indeed "an help meet for him," without whose mental and spiritual co-operation he were equally inefficient and unhappy—

"A boat at midnight sent alone
To drift upon a moonless sea."

He is endeavoring to redeem his long delinquency to the sex. Woman is becoming what "she should be"—what her Creator intended her to be—

"A meditative author of delight
And happiness, which to the end of time
Shall live, and spread, and kindle."

Our own land can boast of ladies who have risen to a proud eminence in the several departments of knowledge; lifting melodious cadenzas amid the many-voiced dissonances of the world, and charming the ear

of nations with the seraph-minstrelsy of truth—ladies scarcely surpassed for mental force and penetration in the ranks of philosophy and authorship, who wield the goose-quill wand with all the power of enchantresses, whose *ardentia verba* burn into the reader's heart like the brand of God, and whose names will long stand, as triumphal pyramids, festooned and garlanded, in the history of the female mind—"doers of illimitable good, gainers of inestimable glory!"

There is a theory of female education extant in Georgia, which I hope may never obtain in any other state, nor live very long in this. It is said that no effort should be made "to tax the mind" of a young lady in her studies, or "secure severe and protracted mental application"—that "studies of an abstract character, such as the higher mathematics and pure metaphysics, are entirely out of place" in a female institute; and "ought to be discarded," as "unsuitable" and "positively injurious" to the female intellect.

All will agree that practical education should be adjusted, as nearly as possible, to the difference between the mental character of the sexes. But is it certain that this difference is correctly understood? Who that has had any experience in teaching—who that has witnessed the commencement exercises of such a seminary as this—will presume to affirm the inferiority of the female mind? Whoever he might be, most of the present audience, I am persuaded, would think they had good reason to question the superiority of his own. My old preceptor, in a recent address, testifies that for twenty years he has presided over large seminaries, frequented by young men and maidens indiscriminately; that during that time, some

three or four thousand individuals, of both sexes, must have passed under his personal instruction; that he has had female students, who, with only equal opportunities, outstripped their male classmates in every department of science; that the best linguists and mathematicians he ever knew were young ladies, and these not remarkable exceptions, only the better among the good. I was glad when I read the statement. Few men have had better opportunity of forming a correct judgment in the case than Professor Larabee, and few make up their minds with greater deliberation and care. My own experience and observation, though more limited, harmonize with his. I cannot accord to woman, the angel's heart, without the angel's intellect.

True, there is a characteristic mental difference between the sexes, corresponding to the difference of physical conformation—perhaps a philosophical result of that difference. Man is strong; woman is beautiful. Man possesses more of the muscular power of the brute; woman, more of the spiritual energy of the angel. Man is the hero of the battle-field; woman, the guardian of the hearth-stone. Man is made for achievements of the arm and the will; woman, for the milder conquests of the eye and the soul. Man surmounts obstacles by policy and intrepidity; woman weeps over the Alpine barrier, and dissolves the granite with her tears. Man is strong to do, and the secret of his success is courage; woman is patient to endure, and "her might is gentleness." Man influences by argument and eloquence, and governs with the sceptre or the sword;

"But woman commands with a milder control;
She rules by enchantment the realm of the soul;
And tear-drops and smiles on her countenance play,
Like sunshine and showers in a morning of May!"

It has been beautifully observed, that he who formed the oak to brave the fury of the tempest, constructed the Alpine flower to lean its modest cheek upon the bosom of the eternal snow. The same benign Providence has adapted the mental faculties of the sexes to their respective spheres of action and influence. This is proof of the Creator's wisdom; but no argument of woman's inferiority. Mind operates through material organism, and a difference of physical constitution produces a difference of mental development. It is a difference in kind, not in quantity. The female intellect seems formed of finer material, and cast in a more beautiful mould. The frailer casket contains the fairer jewel. The comparative feebleness of one faculty is compensated by the superior energy of another. If she has less of the inductive, she has more of the intuitive. If she affects not the slow syllogistic method, it is because she finds in poetic forms more rapid vehicles of thought. Why should she dig the stony earth for diamonds, or dredge the turbid sea for pearls, whom God has gifted with wings of light for soaring to the stars? The lines of the Great German are especially applicable to woman:—

"Only through beauty's morning gate,
Canst thou to knowledge penetrate;
The mind, to face truth's higher glances,
Must swim some time in beauty's trances;
The heavenly harping of the muses,
Whose sweetest trembling through thee rings,
A higher life into thy soul infuses,
And wings it upward to the soul of things!"

A good mental education consists in the symmetrical development and harmonious discipline of all the mental powers. Now some of the mental powers may be well educated, while others are entirely neglected, or even suppressed and impaired. The memory may be cultivated at the expense of the reasoning faculty; the fancy may be stimulated to insanity, by incessant draughts from Helicon; the imagination may be fostered and pampered into a tyrant, by an exclusive devotion to fiction and poesy; or everything else may be sacrificed to the culture of pure intellect, by the abtruser studies and the severer discipline. Nothing can be more important than a judicious selection of the exercises which are to become the instruments and the media of education. The work requires great experience, superior discrimination, and a thorough knowledge of mind. The teacher must regard, with a comprehensive and impartial eye, the several mental faculties; and select, arrange and combine, with a skilful hand, the various studies by which they are to be unfolded and strengthened.

Education is accomplished, not so much by the knowledge acquired, as by the effort put forth in its acquisition. "The porter grows strong," says the late Dr. Olin, "from the frequent use of the muscles employed in bearing burdens, though he may not retain any of the precious merchandize which gives him such invigorating exercise." The mind may be stored with knowledge—crammed with knowledge, yet not educated at all. The memory may teem with science and literature; yet the intellect be so wanting in method, in clearness, in vigor, as to render the crude mass utterly useless to its possessor. On the other hand, the mind may be comparatively destitute of

facts, and dates, and terms, and propositions, and scholastic formulas; yet so well trained, so accustomed to accurate definition, and so skilled in the work of discrimination, as to be capable of appreciating all evidence, appropriating all science, and digesting all truth.

The teacher's business, then, is not merely, nor chiefly, the impartation of knowledge. It is the preparation of the student for the acquisition of knowledge, and the use of knowledge acquired. It is the awakening of thought; the evolution and invigoration of the faculty of thinking. He is to measure his success, not by the number of rules he has impressed upon the memory, nor by the quantity of truth he has instilled into the soul; but by the mental power and independence he has given to the pupil. True, in educating the mind, knowledge must be acquired; but the thoroughness of the education no more depends upon the amount of the acquisition, than the health of the guest upon the abundance of the banquet. It follows, then, that those exercises which accustom the student to close and consecutive reasoning are best adapted to evolve the nobler faculties, and therefore constitute the most efficient media of education.

Is it thought that such a training would render young ladies too masculine in their mental tastes and habits, and disqualify them for the more delicate relations and offices of life? But who is prepared to symbolize with Rosseau in the sentiment, that "all the education of women should have reference to men—should aim to make them pleasing and useful to men?" Who can subscribe to the creed of one of Miss Birney's characters in *Evelina*—that "a woman wants nothing to recommend her, but beauty and good na-

ture"—that "in every thing else she is impertinent or unnatural?" Why does not woman need the same intellectual accumen as man, the same power of analysis, maturity of judgment, and perfection of taste? How can she acquire the same qualities, without similar culture? What are mere accomplishments, to qualify a lady for the domestic and social relations? The eloquent Aimè Martin has justly said, that "the education of woman is more important than that of man, since man's education is woman's work." Can she impart what she does not possess? Who seeks to build a granite cathedral on a gilded cloud? and does not the mental structure need a solid basis? Who seeks to sustain the vigor of the human body with the fragrance of the jessamine and the honeysuckle? and does not the soul require substantial pabulum? Oh! it is pitiful,

"When education in its noblest sense,
Gives place to learning's shallowest pretense!"

Well did the venerable President Dwight exclaim, "I cannot think of this subject without sorrow and shame for my country?" Would you array the dwarf in the robes of the giant? Would you adorn the chimney-sweep with a diamond necklace? Would you decorate the mud-hovel with Corinthian column and cornice? What is your finished lady, too often, but an *ame de bue*, whose only glory is the gilding?

"See Bulwer and Byron laid out on the lap;
Then dancing springs up, and skips into a gap;
Next drawing, and painting, and needlework come,
Laid down in their place with the finger and thumb;

And then, for completing her magical robes,
 Geography, music, a look at the globes;
 And so forth, and so forth; which, match as they will,
 Are sewn into shape, and set down in the bill.
 Thus science, distorted and torn into bits;
 Art, tortured and frightened half out of her wits;
 In portions and patches—some light, and some shady—
 Are stitched up together, and make a fine lady!"

What is more lamentable, than to see a young lady neglecting all that is solid and useful in science and letters, and dreaming in delirious abstraction over the miserable puerilities of some amorous poet, or lovesick novelist? Is that the appropriate instrument of female culture? Is that the nourishment you furnish the female intellect? Is that the means by which you propose to make the grand experiment of female power? Is it thus you would work out the demonstration of "woman's mission?" Is it thus you would mock the anxious and unresting soul? Oh! it is lighter than vanity—pernicious as hell! Fain would I swell my voice to a tone of remonstrance, that should reach the remotest hamlet, and rouse the profoundest sleeper! Away with your Sues and Dumas—your Byrons, Bulwers and Curren Bells—paid panders to human depravity, degrading the noblest powers of the mind to the meanest work of the devil, and living by the gain of their ungodliness! Away with the whole Gipsy tribe of literary wizzards and witches; beguiling the fancy, beclouding the reason, and blighting the budding hopes of an incipient immortality! "What is the chaff to the wheat?" Shall such delusive frivolities detain the heavenly spirit in eternal inferiority? Must a being, allied to all that is

lovely and celestial, forever sport on gossamer wings in these putrid under-currents of literature? Oh! give her the strong and steady pinion, that shall bear her away to her destined altitude! Give her such an education as shall render disgusting to her the morbid imaginings of distempered minds—the worthless caricatures of human frailty and folly! Cultivate her taste for the intellectual and the utile! Encourage her in the profound philosophical research, and the bold discursive thought! Let her thread the labyrinths of science, fathom its abysmal depths, and soar into its flaming empyrean! Give her languages, and make her familiar with the best literature of antiquity! Infuse into her ardent soul a love of what ever is rich in conception, chaste in imagery, classical in diction; with all that is just in sentiment, pure in principle, and sublime in hope! Elevate her aspirations to the loftiest standard of possible attainment,

"And show us how divine a thing
 A woman may be made!"

If you would accomplish such an education, knowledge must not be divorced from religion. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." If woman is only the beautiful mould of clay, made to be dashed in pieces—the gay insect of an hour, destined to flutter, and dazzle, and die—the weed upon the fluctuating wave, soon to be swallowed up, and seen no more—then educate her for her element—educate her for earth and time alone. But if, with all her weakness, she has a lofty descent; and with all her calamities, an illustrious inheritance—if hers is a birthright which she may barter, but which cannot be

wrested from her, the birthright of a blessed immortality—if she shares our sinfulness, our redemption, and our destiny—then educate her for the future world, as well as for the present.

Is religion hostile to knowledge? Is it unfavorable to the most thorough mental discipline, and the broadest mental development? No. It calls into exercise every faculty of the soul. It urges and promotes the augmentation of every intellectual and moral trust we hold—whether the one talent, or the ten. It stimulates the mind to struggle against the obstacles to its improvement, and ennobles the struggle by investing it with the dignity of a duty. It cools the fever of ambition, without relaxing its force; and relieves the perplexities of earthly disappointment, without enfeebling the hope of a heavenly reward. It imparts that knowledge which is most important, and furnishes that discipline which is most effectual—the knowledge of ourselves and God, of our duty and redemption—the discipline which refines our fallen nature, and purges away its grossness, and quickens its better sensibilities, and awakens its nobler aspirations. It closes the ear to the clamorous solicitations of evil, and directs the eye to bright objects beyond the grave; and in whatever obscurity of condition, or adversity of fortune, or thanklessness of toil, or malevolence of man, reminds us that there is a world where virtue shall triumph, and humble fidelity shall be duly honored. Religion, therefore, is the most powerful auxiliary of mental culture, and should never be discarded in the school.

There is another danger which I cannot forbear to mention. Popery, ever active and vigilant, with a

policy peculiarly its own, is seeking to undermine the government and the religion of the country, by controlling—monopolizing, if possible—the education of the country. The minions of Gregory are found in every town, village, hamlet, highway and by-way, from the Lakes to the Gulf, from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains. They are come up over the face of the land, like the frogs of Egypt. Our fair heritage is full of them—men consecrated to holy falsehood, and women trained to “pious fraud.” They are hostile alike to our faith and our freedom—to all that is dear to the protestant, or precious to the republican. And they begin their work, wisely, at the foundation—erecting schools, convents, colleges; gathering the young under the shadow of the outraged cross; and instilling into their susceptible minds the principles and maxims of the most seductive and demoralizing system ever invented by “the prince of darkness and lies.” Unquestionably, their aim is to establish a governing influence over the mind of the country. They know too well that the way to accomplish this, is by the education of the young—especially the education of young ladies. Fain would they take this work entirely out of our hands. They have the funds; they have the agents; they want only the opportunity. That opportunity they are toiling to create. They long to become the educators of America, and to this object all parts of their policy and their enterprise converge. They understand something of the relations of this vast country to the rest of the world; and the influence it is hereafter to exert—is even now exerting—upon the world’s destinies. They seek to entrench themselves, by their educational operations, in the very heart of our insti-

tutions; and already they are wielding a power which ought to alarm every patriot and christian in the land. The Jesuit professor and the Sister of Charity are the most potent emissaries of Satan, in undoing all that liberty and true evangelism have done for us and our children. Are these to educate "Young America?" Will old America permit them—accord to them the prerogative—place her sons and daughters in their hands, to be trained in their system, and moulded to their purpose?

What is a papal school in a protestant country? It is a proselyting institution, pledged to the interests of popery; and all its pretended catholicity is a mere heartless expedient. It is a foreign institution—governed by foreign laws, sustained often by foreign gold; and all its operations and influences are under the direction of foreigners, who have sworn allegiance to Antichrist. It is an institution devoted to the cause of civil and ecclesiastical despotism—its studies adjusted immutably to the infallible dogmas of the Roman see—its text-books carefully expurgated of every fact, doctrine, sentiment, favorable to liberty and true religion—its teachers forbidden to adapt themselves, disinclined to adapt themselves, incapable of adapting themselves, to the progress of science, the improvement of society, and the actual demands of the age—groping in mediæval darkness and semi-barbarism, amidst the blessed light of the nineteenth century—obliged to conceal, disguise, or repudiate, some of the most obvious maxims of the modern philosophy, and some of the most important truths of the Christian Revelation, lest they should compromise the interests of His Holiness, and ruin their own cause

with their pupils. Their one great aim is to bring the intellect into bondage—to enslave the soul to the man of sin; and therefore they are hostile to every science that tends to enlarge the mind, to develop the logical faculty, to awaken the love of truth, and form the young to habits of bold thought and free inquiry. They may be skilled in languages; they may be accomplished in the arts of music, drawing, painting and embroidery; they may be familiar with the legendary lives of Saint Ignatius, Saint Dominic, and the rest; but what can they teach of history, of geography, of philosophy, of Christianity, without neutralizing its influence by papal comments and qualifications—corrupting the truth, poisoning the fountains of knowledge, and giving the young mind a bias to error and superstition?

In a late memorial to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by the Romish bishops of that country, remonstrating against the establishment of certain colleges proposed, it is said in so many words, that the Roman Catholic pupils could not attend the lectures on history, logic, metaphysics, moral philosophy, geology or anatomy, without imminent danger to their faith, unless a Roman Catholic professor were appointed to each of the chairs. An inspector of schools in France, recently published, for the benefit of the school masters of his department, his intention of visiting all the schools in company with a priest, and his determination to burn all the Bibles and Testaments he might find in them, and suppress all books, except the catechism of the diocese, a book of easy moral lessons, and a book of arithmetic.

Thus you have it from their own mouths. Ladies

and gentlemen, are these the agencies to which shall be committed the training of protestant American youth? Oh! it is pitiful, to see protestant American parents sending their children to such institutions! It is a shame to humanity, and a sin in the sight of Heaven, that from mere indifference, or for the paltry consideration of the comparative cheapness of the system, they will patronize the most despicable of foreign despotisms on the very soil consecrated to freedom by the blood of their forefathers; and bury the noble intellects of their sons, and barter the priceless souls of their daughters, to prop the tottering throne of Rome, and in their very midst erect the papal cross for the crucifixion of protestant Christianity!

The question is now fairly before the country—a momentous and solemn question; and the country is preparing to answer it—to answer at the ballot-box, and elsewhere: What kind of a religion shall we have in America? a false religion, or a true? a religion of superstition, or of rational principles? a religion of tradition, or of Revelation—of Gregory, or of God? a religion depending upon sham relics, and solemn fooleries, and the mockery of miracle, or deriving its efficiency from the power of the Gospel? a religion which makes “ignorance the mother of devotion,” or which forms the character by enlightening the conscience? an Avernian pool over which the wing of every virtue droops, or a Bethesda for the moral healing of humanity? If the character of a people depends upon their religion, and if the religion of a people depends upon their education, no question is more important than this—none demands a more prompt and decisive answer—none involves a greater amount of parental responsibility. I believe the last battle be-

tween popery and Christianity is to be fought upon American soil. The struggle will be desperate, but the issue is not doubtful. The beast is doomed; and whether it be by consumption or by apoplexy, these female colleges are hastening the result. Let the cause of Christian education continue to advance, as it has recently advanced in Georgia—let the blessed contagion spread, till the divine enthusiasm prevails in every Christian land; and “Babylon the great” shall gradually become an utter desolation, or suddenly go down in an earthquake that rocks the world.

These remarks are prompted by no sectarian bigotry or bitterness, but by the fear that we are not sufficiently awake to the interests of a country whose future history is to be the history of the world; and if they shall have aroused any present to a salutary apprehension of danger, or suggested a duty which he owes to posterity, or furnished an additional incentive to vigilance and effort, I shall have no reason to regret the moments thus employed.

Friends and fellow citizens: Your daughters here are safe. Their minds and hearts are in the hands of those who understand the secret of their best development and discipline, and have the virtue to prosecute their work with a fidelity equal to their responsibility. Laboring *pro aris et focis*, they claim your sympathy and challenge your gratitude. Educating the educators of the world, the impress of their intellectuality and goodness upon these plastic natures, will bless mankind for a hundred generations to come; and what they now impart will flow back upon them in endless revenues of love and joy amid the scenes and the songs of eternity.

To you, Reverend Sir, and those who are associated with you in the work of instruction, it must be gratifying to know that your efforts are not unappreciated or fruitless. You are gathering to yourselves the love and the confidence of many a gentle heart. You are taking a position among those "who are precious in the retrospect of memory, and walk among the visions of hope." Your works praise you in the gates. Your influence is unlimited by earth and time. You are educating the denizens of one world and the candidates for another. You are imaging yourselves in light upon a thousand mirrors, which go forth to reflect that image forever. You are building monuments to your fame, which shall outlast the chiselled marble, and tower in triumph over the chaos of demolished worlds. You are stamping characters upon the quick and conscious soul, which shall be read by the light of the New Jerusalem; and inspiring it with sentiments which shall swell the thunder-chant of the great multitude before the throne of God and the Lamb! Go forward, then, in your noble and blessed work; and let the hopes of harvest animate the toils of tillage.

A word to you, Young Ladies, who resort hither for mental improvement. In the whole process of your education, and in all its various details, aim at the solid rather than the showy. Accustom yourselves to those exercises which are best adapted to strengthen the mind, to call forth its latent energies, and bring into requisition its loftiest faculties. If you seek the thorough development and discipline of all your mental powers, the requisite adornments to render you attractive and amiable will follow in due order; but if you

confine yourselves chiefly to what are commonly called accomplishments, the better faculties remain uncultivated, and all your shallow acquisitions fail to make you either interesting or useful. You may polish the marble, but you cannot polish the sponge. But why these remarks? Need you the counsel of a stranger? I refer you to your teachers. If ineffectual their efforts, what else can avail? But their labors are not in vain. Their precepts fall not on heedless ears. To their fostering care I confidently commend you. Sit reverently at their feet, and receive their gentle wisdom. It is a privilege to be prized above rubies, but not long to be enjoyed—a privilege which millions of your sex urge you to improve, by the melancholy appeal of all their sins and sorrows. Your work will not be irksome. Every new discovery made, every new principle evolved, will prove an additional source of happiness; and fresh delights will develop themselves at every stage of your progress, to fill your path with flowers, people your sky with singing birds,

"And give bright plumage to the heavy wing
Of time!"

And you who have this day received the honors of your *Alma Mater*, and go to gladden once more the home-circle with your smiles, I cordially congratulate—not on the conclusion of your studies, but on the brilliant and successful commencement of your career. You are still to study and improve, and your studies and improvement are not to terminate even at the tomb. Truth is infinite, and new revelations and acquisitions will probably contribute to the blessedness of a ransomed immortality. The impulse you have

here received shall carry you forward forever. Remember that, in every situation and duty of life, wisdom is more important than knowledge; and no other wisdom is comparable to that "which is from above." Sit meekly, with Mary, at the feet of Jesus; and learn the history of redemption—the philosophy of grace Divine—the only scholarship that can secure you a diploma at the great commencement day of the universe! The times are ominous; the earth trembles with the tread of armies; and God only knows how soon every breeze from the East shall bring to our ears "the wail of a fallen people, or the crash of a trampled throne;" but intelligent, accomplished and virtuous woman—"by her good works exalted"—is silently exerting an influence, which shall bless the world when tyranny is numbered among the things that were, and discord dies in eternal harmony, and "*Vive l'Empereur!*" and "God save the Queen!" gives place to the universal—"Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" Young Ladies, I commend you to that Providence, which guides alike the march of planets and the flight of sparrows—to that Mercy, whose angel ministries have hitherto attended your path, and guarded your pillow—to that Love, whose suffering embodiment on Mount Cavalry has opened paradise to the obedient and believing soul! Go forth, each of you, with the blessing of God upon you—with the blessing of your teachers, your fellow students, and this large assembly—

"A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to counsel and command;
And yet a spirit still and bright,
With something of an angel's light!"

Go to greet the loving hearts that await you at the hearth-stone—to shed knowledge like sunbeams, and virtue like dew-drops, over the face of society; and elicit from a thousand voices the appropriate tribute to your worth—

"Honored be woman! she beams on the sight—
Graceful and fair—like a being of light;
Scatters around her, wherever she strays,
Roses of bliss o'er our thorn-covered ways—
Roses of paradise, sent from above,
To be gathered and twined in a garland of love!"