

A sermon : preached before the students of the several medical colleges of the city of Philadelphia / by Wm. Bacon Stevens.

Contributors

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Stevens W. B.

A

SERMON:

PREACHED BEFORE

THE SENATORS

OF THE SEVERAL

Box 6

MEDICAL COLLEGES

OF THE

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.

✓ BY

WM. BACON STEVENS, M. D., D. D., RECTOR.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY KING & BAIRD, SANSON ST.

1852.

A

SERMON:

Box 6

PREACHED BEFORE

THE STUDENTS

OF THE SEVERAL

MEDICAL COLLEGES

OF THE

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,

ON SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 5, 1852.

IN ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH.

BY

WM. BACON STEVENS, M. D., D.D., RECTOR.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED BY KING & BAIRD, Sansom St.

1852.

ALMIGHTY God, who calledst Luke
the Physician, whose praise is in the
Gospel, to be an Evangelist and Physi-
cian of the soul; may it please thee that
by the wholesome medicines of the doc-
trine delivered by him, all the diseases
of our souls may be healed, through the
merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Collect for Festival of St Luke the Evangelist.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Philadelphia, Dec. 14th, 1852.

REV. SIR :

We the undersigned students of the Medical Colleges of this City, having listened with much interest, (and we hope profit,) to your eloquent and instructive sermon, delivered to us on the evening of the first Sunday in December, respectfully request the favor of a copy for publication; and we earnestly solicit your compliance with our wishes, in the full assurance that hereafter it will not only prove a cherished memento of the pastoral care of the Church for us during our collegiate career in this city, but will also be instrumental in persuading many among us to apply for relief to the True Physician of souls.

With much respect
your obedient servants,

ALBERT L. GIHON, Pa.,
SAMUEL L. LOVE, N. C.,
A. J. HAY, N. J., *and others,*
of Philadelphia College of Med.

GEO. SUMMER, JR., Conn.,
JOHN K. COX, Miss.,
RICHARD N. PRICE, Va., *and others.*
of Jefferson Medical College.

S. B. WYLIE MITCHELL, Pa.,
ALEX. I. SANDERSON, Alaba.,
EDWIN T. BROWN, Ca. *and others.*
of University of Pennsylvania.

R. B. HARRIS, Miss.,
C. W. H. MOORE, Pa.,
W. T. BLADEN, Pa. *and others.*
of Pennsylvania Medical College.

To Messrs. Geo. Summer, Jr., Albert L. Gihon, S. B. Wylie Mitchell, R. B. Harris, and others.

GENTLEMEN ;

The sermon which you ask for was prepared expressly for the Medical Students, and as they have solicited a copy for the press, I cannot deny a request so earnestly and kindly presented.

I am, gentlemen,
your obedient servant,

WM. BACON STEVENS.

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all
holy Scriptures to be written for our
learning; Grant that we may in such
wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and
inwardly digest them, that by patience,
and comfort of thy holy Word, we may
embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed
hope of everlasting life, which thou hast
given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Collect for 2d Sunday in Advent.

S E R M O N .

Ye are all Physicians of no Value.

Job, xiii. part of 4th verse.

MAN is a fallen being; it matters not where he dwells, what the government under which he lives, what his occupation, his intelligence, or his religion, wherever found, he exhibits a ruined nature, and a sinful heart.

From whatever point our race is viewed, we cannot fail to observe that it is, even in its best estate, a blighted humanity; that has not, and cannot on this earth, come to perfection; giving promise, indeed, of something great and good, in the occasional power and glory which it exhibits, but never realizing that promise in a full, developed, and sinless perfection.

The universal aspect of mankind is that of suffering and disorder. Under these the world "groans, being burdened;" and such have been its yearnings after relief, that in every age, men of the largest minds have labored diligently to cure the ills of life, and restore the joys which were lost in Eden.

Every ancient system of Philosophy which Asia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome have furnished, is but an attempt to unfold the pathology of our diseased na-

ture, and to prescribe for it a therapeutical treatment that shall restore its native health and vigor. To this end, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Seneca, and others of great name, laboured with devoted zeal; and they proclaimed through their various schools and systems, many remedies of most boastful pretensions, but each failed to effect a cure, so that of the whole body of heathen Philosophers, we are constrained to say, "Ye are all Physicians of no value."

In the just and expressive criticism of Sir James Mackintosh, "The practical Philosophy of Greece, though it was rich in rules for the conduct of life, and in exhibitions of the beauty of virtue, and though it contains glimpses of just theory, and fragments of perhaps every moral truth, yet it did not leave behind any precise and coherent system; unless we except that of Epicurus, who purchased consistency, method, and perspicuity too dearly by the sacrifice of truth, and by narrowing and lowering his view of human nature, so as to enfeeble, if not extinguish all the vigorous motives to arduous virtue." From the days of Boethius, "the last of the Ancients," and the shutting up of the Athenian Schools by Justinian, to the time of John Scotus Erigena, a darkness that might be felt, brooded over Europe. The Scholastic Philosophy of the middle ages occupied principally by the fierce contest of the Nominalists, and the Realists, the Thomists and the Scotists, was almost powerless for good in consequence of the theological

charlatanism of its disciples, and the gross empiricism which marked the writings of its leading advocates; so that for all practical relief bestowed upon man by the Schoolmen, we must say of them as of the great teachers of Eastern Philosophy, "Ye are all Physicians of no value."

Undeterred by the fruitless efforts of former ages, the restless minds of still later Philosophers have sought to achieve a conquest where the united wisdom of the past has suffered defeat, and new speculations rose upon the ruins of effete dogmas, Mysticism, Idealism, Rationalism, and just now through the glowing pages of Royer-Collard, and Cousin; Eclecticism, have been put forward as so many healing systems, promising the long desired restoration to pristine purity and glory; but of Fichte and Kant, and Condillac, and Destutt de Tracy and Cousin as of Aquinas, Roscellin, Ockham, and Peter of Lombardy, we are forced to exclaim "Ye are all Physicians of no value."

The Nineteenth century beholds humanity as diseased as the first; and we find that men of learning and intellect are striving as much now, to heal the moral evils of the world by the nostrums of a vain philosophy, as did the Empirics of the Porch, the Grove and Cloister. Let us then fix our eyes for a little while on the prominent schemes of Philosophy now at work for reforming the condition of mankind, that we may see the moral quackeries of the age, and

unmask the pretensions of those self-anointed healers, to whom we may say, in the language of Jeremiah, "Thou hast no healing medicines," and of whom we freely declare, in the words of Job, "Ye are all Physicians of no value."

In pursuing this design, I purpose to note—1. The Social Diseases of Humanity. 2. The Remedies by which men propose to heal them; and then, pointing out why these have failed, show you the true and only remedial, and lead you to the true and Divine Physician.

The diseases of society which it is the professed aim of the reformers of the day to heal, are many and complicated; yet, like the diseases of the human body, may, by a comprehensive generalization, be reduced to a few prominent heads.

There is, first, the whole class of Suffering, mental and physical; personal, domestic, and social. Sufferings incident to infancy, youth, maturity, and age; arising from disease, want, oppression, and crime; a class embracing all the pains and sorrows which from any cause afflict us in mind, body, or estate.

There is, secondly, Ignorance in its various forms and grades, from illiterate barbarism to the acknowledged deficiencies of broadly expanded and richly furnished minds; in every instance, however, affecting our comfort, subtracting from our happiness, and adding to the burden of human wants and woes.

There is thirdly, Poverty. This wide-spread ill

does not bear only upon the ignorant and the wicked, but is felt by the educated, the sensitive, the refined, the pure, the eminently intellectual. In each case, however, it is a crushing evil, weighing down the soul with care, unnerving the mind with want, reducing honesty to crime and shame, and almost unhumanizing its wretched victims.

There is fourthly, Oppression, rising in gradation, and extending in influence, from the petty tyrant of a family circle, to the crowned despot whose will is law, and whose foot-stool is the bent neck of a dust-licking people. But wherever found, in social, civil, or religious circles, it always begets misery; for it is the enemy of every healthful virtue, the nurse of every baneful crime, has stained every land with blood, and empurpled every sea with slaughter.

There is fifthly, Crime; dark, stealthy, gory, fiendish crime; ravening like an evening wolf on the bowels of every social circle, and leaving broad tracks of desolation to mark its ruthless deeds. Crime is the outward and visible sign of inward evil, the "bright spot" and "burning boil" of leprosy manifesting the deep plague within, and, unless arrested, will make a whole community loathsome with guilt.

There is lastly Superstition. This we no more hesitate to term a disease of our race as a race, than we demur at calling deranged mental action a disease of individual man. Superstition is an unhealthy

working of mind; it could have no place in a well-balanced, well-governed and perfectly right acting intellect; but because the large majority of men have lost the poise of truth, and are governed by self-will and ignorance, hence superstition, by which I mean not only all kind of paganism, but also all systems of nominal Christianity, which substitute the false for the real—the material for the spiritual, sways nearly all the world, so that it may be said of each one under its influence, as the prophet Isaiah said of the idolater of his day, “He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand.”

These are the general characteristics of that disorder, which every where ravages the family of man: for under some one or other of these heads, may be classed all the woes that sin has introduced to earth. Notwithstanding the desperate character of these diseases, there are not wanting those who boldly set forth remedies which they blaze abroad, as sure panaceas, certain specifics, unfailing catholicons, and they call upon all to come and be healed.

The boldness of many of these schemes, the confidence with which they are proposed, the readiness with which they are embraced, and the vaunting triumphs they proclaim, demand some examination, that we may ascertain whether they have or have not healing medicines, and whether they be genuine

restorers of moral health, or "physicians of no value."

The leading remedies which are proposed by the reformers and philosophers of the age, are Socialism, Communism, Abolitionism, Pantheism, Progressionism, and a series of moral reforms, as variable as the changing hues of the chameleon, and as wise as the phantasies of a mumbling maniac.

We have not time to follow out these proposed remedies in detail, nor indeed is it necessary, as our object is not so much to combat these, as to declare certain eternal principles of truth, and to establish your minds on them as on the "Rock of Ages."

The Professor who lectures to you upon the Institutes and Practice of Medicine, does not think it necessary to analyze every system of quackery, and expose each trick of the wily empiric; he seeks to put the science of medicine on true foundations, to unfold its established principles, and to show the general application of these to the diseases of the human system; well knowing that if you are thoroughly grounded in the elements of the science, you will abhor every false system, and guard against every irregular practitioner. And so in Divine truth; the forms of error are numerous, they meet us at every turn, attack every point of Christianity, assail each believer, and no one mind can track out their windings or follow them to their legitimate results. Hence the Minister of Christ does not, and

cannot stop to combat every error—to measure his polemical sword with every Quixotic reformer; but, like the medical professor, he lays down a broad basis of established and recognized truths, and upon this, builds up his religious structure, heedless of the wagging heads and carping tongues of the enemies of the Cross.

Now if we examine these proposed remedies, we shall find that each starts on the acknowledged principle, that there is a vast and grievous disorder at work in the family of man; but each aims to heal it by ways and means peculiar to itself.

The starting point, is a truth; the diverging schemes are erroneous.

Socialism, proposes the re-organization of society; recasting the family, the community, the state; on the basis of a common equality, and on principles, which, if carried out, would overturn the domestic, social and political order of the world. Having worked out for himself a metaphysical scheme, at once ingenious and untenable; Fourier proceeds to illustrate his view, by portioning off communities into bands of four hundred families, which are to dwell together in one edifice, and form a complete society in itself. Each Phalange (or community,) has a Phalanstere (or dwelling,) situated in the centre of a large area, and it is to be so conducted, that the twelve radical passions which he speaks of in his metaphysical works, shall be fully exercised;

so that unity or harmony, shall prevail, and each Phalanstere become an Eden of innocence and joy. We should scarcely suppose that such an Utopian scheme could find any advocates outside the walls of a Lunatic asylum; but such are the pantings of humanity after change and relief, that it grasps the most moon-struck theory with convulsive energy, and relaxes its hold only to seize new and equally preposterous devices. In the language of Guizot, "The social republic is at once odious and impossible. It is the most absurd and at the same time the most mischievous of all chimeras. But we must not presume on that; nothing is more dangerous than that which has strength to reach, what it is impossible to hold."

Communism, which is but a legitimate inference from the doctrines of Socialism; and varies essentially from the "*Agrariæ Leges*" of the Romans, boldly proclaims that all private property is theft, or to use the words of its great advocate, Proudhon, "that he who takes a larger share than his neighbour, defrauds that neighbour, and must be compelled to restore what does not belong to him." Hence it seeks to cure the diseased body politic, by wrenching property from private hands, throwing it into a common stock, and then parcelling it out anew, according to some, or living in associations, according to others; where wives and children, and houses and lands, and money and power, should be for common use and enjoy-

ment; an aim unblushingly indicated by the inscriptions on some of the flags borne by these men in a late procession in Paris. "A bas la famille." "La propriete est un vol." "Down with the family." "Property is robbery." How much of remedial power exist in such unhallowed plans I leave to the decision of your common sense and reason.

Abolitionism, in its ultra form, seeks to cure the specific ills of slavery; as if in this, was concentrated all the moral evil of the world. To set free the enslaved is with the ruthless advocates of this scheme, to give to earth a millenium; and in order to effect their design, they break through every white man's right, spurn legislative enactments, trample under foot constitutional pledges, excommunicate every church that will not pander to its cause, and brand with odium every political party which they cannot use to forward their unhallowed ends. If at one point they are met by the lofty spirit of the American Union, holding in her right hand the *Ægis* of the Constitution; they seek to beat down this thirty plated shield, and would see her who holds it hewn in pieces by the sword of civil war, and cast out a mangled corpse of liberty, before the gloating eyes of European despots, rather than not gain their avowed design. If at another they are still further impeded in their course, and sternly rebuked by the precepts and spirit of the Bible, they hesitate not to cast it away also, and to defame the God of the Bible in lan-

guage which even demons of the pit would tremble to employ.

Pantheism, both in its material and ideal schools, aims at reforming the religious opinions of the world, and thus cure it of priestcraft and superstition. This it would do by abolishing the idea of a personal God, by maintaining "that nothing exists but *power*; that this *divine, eternal, self-developing power*, is not inherent in any *Being or Person*; is not an attribute of some other existing being or thing, but exists alone independent, uncontrolled, and uncontrollable. And it *developes* or unfolds itself, according to laws inherent necessarily in it. Of course nothing is to be met with in all the universe but the *one eternal self-developing Power*. There is no personal God; no Creator; no moral Governor of the universe; and no angelic beings; no infernal spirits: and no fallen, sinful men; and of course no Redeemer, no Sanctifier, no Justifier of repenting sinners. Indeed, we are ourselves nothing but the partial development of the one existing power; and our acts are only the actings of that power." But as the originators and maintainers of this Pantheistic movement well know, that no mortal power can pluck up every fibre of religious sensibility, they therefore swing the pendulum of their arc-sweeping creed to the other extreme, and propose, in the words of Ledru Rollin, to erect a Pantheon "where men of all ages may enter that temple and find there the object of their worship; the Chaldean

his stars; the Egyptian his Osiris, Iris, and Typhon; the Indian his Brahma, with all his Avatars; the Hebrew his Jehovah; the Persian, his Ormuzed and Ahirim; the Greek and Roman, their Olympus, with its full complement of gods; the Christian his Christ eighteen times glorified; the northern barbarian his gods, shivering beneath polar snow; the Moham-
medan, who hates images, his prophet, with his face veiled by a flame; the Druse his calf Hakem, with his azure eyes and lion mask, every one will be able to say his prayers in that universal Church, the true metropolis of the human race."

This truly is a strange cure for superstition, and a curious destroyer of a much dreaded priestcraft!

The human Progressionist, for I hardly know by what other name to call them, though their doctrines as enunciated by Compté, Constant, and Strauss, are but an offshoot of Pantheism; seek to avert the manifold diseases of our race, by so cultivating the intellectual and sensational faculties, that man shall evolve out of his own being new and glorious principles of life and action, which as they rise in the scale of excellence, shall do away the evils beneath them, and gradually usher humanity by a self-evolved power into a state of innocence and bliss.

According to this view, Jesus Christ was but the perfect development of a man, the ideal of humanity, and never shall I forget the cold shudder that chilled my heart as I recently read in the writings of one of these

American Progressionists, that it is probable that there will be better and greater men than Jesus of Nazareth, because the conditions of society are constantly improving, and consequently could develop better incarnations now than it did two thousand years ago.

Such views, and they are much more widely spread than might at first be supposed, undermine the foundation of Christianity, destroy the credibility of Revelation, and cast man adrift upon a death-ward current, with no better hopes to cheer him here, and no better anticipations beyond the grave, than are possessed by the transmigrator of Eastern Asia or by the wild Indians of America.

As to the manifold systems of moral reform at work in the community, they are too ephemeral or too ridiculous to be noticed; yet their number and variety, indicate the yearning of the popular heart for something better and sounder in society; something elevating and redeeming in humanity.

Such, in brief and imperfect outline, are the leading remedies proposed by "Physicians of no value" for the healing of the nations. The reasons why they will and must fail are few and simple. 1st. They leave out of view the fundamental fact, that the moral diseases of the world are the result of sin, and that any effort to heal them that strikes not at the origin of the evil, an unrenowned heart; is only cutting off the

outer branches of the Upas tree, and not laying the axe at its root.

2dly. They overlook the fact that man by his fall in Adam has completely lost all power of self-recovery, that in the language of the ninth article he "is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit." And hence every theory based on his supposed inherent ability to reform himself, without Divine aid, must fail, because it has not the slightest foundation.

3dly. They set aside the agency of conscience, and conscience silenced or removed, man is deprived of all moral sense and has no monitor of right and truth : as well might you expect to steer a ship by a compass that had in it no magnetic needle, as to guide life aright by a mind void of conscience ; and every scheme that overlooks this essential agent, and turns aside its directing finger, will be inevitably wrecked.

The last reason which time will permit me to give is, that they virtually discard the Bible, or use it only so far as suits their views ; resorting to it as an ally, where they can press it into their service, but throwing off its authority whenever it rebukes their evil designs, or warns them of a wrath to come.

How insane then, to expect to cure the ills of this mortal life by remedial schemes which are totally deficient in a sin-expelling, heart-renewing, conscience-guiding power ! As well might a body of Astrono-

mers, set aside the law of gravitation which binds all the planets to the sun, and the centrifugal and centripetal forces which preserve them in their several orbits, and expect to re-construct the solar system, without these laws, as for so-called philosophers and reformers to set aside the moral sense which binds all hearts to God, and the family and social ties which keep man in his proper orbit, and then expect to re-construct a better world without the agency of either. The latter is as much a moral, as the other is, a physical, impossibility.

Having looked at the moral disorders incident to our fallen state, the remedies proposed by the "Physicians of no value" and the causes of their failure, let us now in conclusion, examine the sure remedy, and behold the true physician.

That sure remedy is the Gospel; that true physician is Jesus Christ. In a most emphatic manner did our Saviour illustrate his healing power when on earth by curing every sickness and disease brought to him for relief; no case was too malignant, too contagious, too chronic, too obstinate for him. "Healing the sick" was one of the special characteristics that marked his ministry. Prophecy foretold it, his daily life fulfilled it; and to thousands of those who saw and heard him as he went up and down the Holy land, on his tours of grace and mercy, did he prove a physician of inestimable value; and yet the healing which he administered to the body, was only typical

of the greater and more important healing which he offered to the soul; for every manifestation of his physical power, was but a faint adumbration of his moral might, telling the gazing world, as diseases depart at my bidding from the body, so shall the evils that sicken the soul flee away before the power of my sin-cleansing blood, and my soul-renewing spirit. Hence it is in the moral healings of Jesus, that we see his grandest triumphs and behold him as the Great Physician. He indeed in bodily form has ascended on high, but he has left his remedial system in the Gospel, and to this, therefore, we look for the cure which Jesus offers for all the ills of what ever name that afflict our race.

I spoke of Suffering in all its forms as one of the dire diseases of humanity, but bring to it the Gospel of Christ and mark the result! wherever that word of truth is received, it will remove and prevent the larger proportion of the suffering of the world; because the Gospel requires us to mortify our evil propensities, to slay our lust, to control our passions; and the unbridled exercise of these, is the chief cause of human woe. In the terse language of Dr. Chalmers, "The world is so constituted, that if we were morally right, we should be physically happy." If the Gospel of peace prevailed throughout the world, would there be war any more? No! for prophecy declares that in the times of the Messiah the "nations shall not learn war any more;" and strike out from the catalogue of human suffering the

woes caused by war, and you have done much to heal the afflicted bosom of society. If the principles of temperance enjoined by the word of God obtained in every heart, would drunkenness and its associate vices ever be seen? No! And erase from the list of earthly sorrows, the loss of health, friends, property and reputation; the misery induced in mind, in body, and in soul; the woe at home, in society and in the state, produced by the use of intoxicating drinks, and you have removed another vast class of suffering that nothing but the Gospel can effectually reach and radically cure. And so I might consume the evening in specifying the various causes of suffering, and then show the perfect adaptation of the Gospel to remedy every ill, and give it health and cure; and those sufferings which are inseparable from our earthly probation, it would modify and make bearable, for what religion cannot remove, it sanctifies; what it cannot cure, it converts into a blessing; so that even suffering, becomes a source of joy on earth, and a cause of greater glory in Heaven.

I mentioned Ignorance as another of the great ills of the family of man; but apply to this the remedy of the Gospel and observe its effect! Nay, the effect is already marked out for you in the great historic fact that education, is most advanced and diffused, where the Gospel is most fully known, as in England, Scotland, Germany, and the United States. Nothing so stimulates exertion, or so rouses up the

dormant energies of the intellect, as the truths of revelation. Spiritual light, is invariably the precursor of mental light; and ignorance, as surely vanishes before the Bible, as darkness, before the rising sun. Education always follows in the train of religion, because religion teaches the true use and responsibility of the mind, points to its high origin and future destiny, calls out its noblest powers, and gives them symmetry and strength. It has ever been found to be true, mentally, as well as spiritually, that "the entrance of God's word giveth light." Put the Gospel in a family, it will rouse up the mind of that family; do the same thing in every family, in every town, in every state, in every nation, and you have awakened intellectual desires that will not rest satisfied until knowledge shall diffuse its full blessings, and ignorance be driven into its native darkness. Hence the uniform testimony of man proves that the surest destroyer of ignorance and the truest healer of its manifold evils, is the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Poverty was stated to be another disease of our race, and one which Socialists of all creeds and names have been vainly labouring to remove. But there is a remedy for it in the gospel. Nearly all poverty arises from ignorance, intemperance, prodigality, covetousness, or idleness. Take any case of pauperism that comes under your notice, and carefully trace it to its source, you will find it to be produced, directly

or indirectly, by one or other of these causes. Now against each one of these originating causes of poverty the Gospel arrays itself in the majesty of eternal truth. It rebukes ignorance, and stimulates to industry and knowledge; it condemns intemperance, and urges to sobriety; it reproves prodigality, and cultivates a prudent care; it denounces covetousness, and teaches an open handed charity and a loving heart; it reprehends idleness, and exhorts to diligence in business: so that it may safely be affirmed that if these evils which the Gospel so sternly condemns, were abolished, and these virtues which it so urgently enforces, were practised, poverty would cease, and with it the doleful evils that ever cluster around the haggard form of penury and want. There is not a cause of indigence operating in any society, for which the religion of Jesus Christ does not furnish a remedy; and though the Saviour says, "The poor ye have always with you," yet that "always" is restricted to a sinful state, for in those promised times of bliss, which await the full triumph of the Church on Earth, there will be no suffering poor, for every one shall rejoice in the fruit of his labour, and want shall be unknown. It is the natural and inevitable working of divine truth to secure this end; and is it not the fact, that there is more thrift and enterprise, and mercantile, and industrial advancement, and less squalid poverty and degradation in those countries where the Bible is freely circulated, than in those where it is a closed or

an unknown book? The precepts of the Bible furnish the only sound code of Poor Laws, and the only true principles of Pauper Legislation; and just in proportion as these precepts and principles have operated in a community, to that extent poverty has been prevented, industry increased, and private wealth and public prosperity enlarged.

Oppression also was instanced as one of the widespread ills of the world; and a Red Republicanism and rabid Abolitionism seek to heal it by revolutions and emancipations, that would shake with earthquake throes, every pillar of government, and every foundation of society.

In striking, but glorious contrast with these wild schemes of reckless reformers, the gospel proposes a remedy for the evils of oppression and slavery, not by bidding you overturn thrones, for it says, "Honour the king," and "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers;" not by a ruthless emancipation which would set free the slave at all hazards, for it says, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed," but by showing that mankind is one in the brotherhood of Adam's blood, that God is "no respecter of persons," and that the binding command upon all, enjoined by Christ himself, is "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." If each man should act upon these principles towards his fellow man, could he oppress him?

If these governed the conduct of each family, and state and nation, each person in authority, from the master of a single apprentice to the monarch of a kingdom, would not tyranny in every one of its forms cease? I look upon Christ's second great command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," as the mighty lever, which in process of time will upheave every thing that now presses down the children of men. But the power, which is to move this lever, is not popular fury, or hot-brained fanaticism, but the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to implant this truth in the heart, to give it growth and strength; and when this love to God and love to man shall, by this blessed spirit, rule in all hearts, then will oppression cease, and humanity every where stand up erect and unfettered, in the liberty wherewith Christ shall make it free.

I still further mentioned Crime as one of the disorders, the malignant fungus of the body politic. The name of those who set themselves up as healers of this disease is "Legion," and the variety of remedials suggested baffles enumeration. At this sore evil Political Economists and Philanthropic Legislators and Humane Jurists have been labouring from the first ages of Social Organization, but their efforts, are like so many attempts to dispel the darkness of a starless night by lanterns lit up with glow-worms. That which all human systems lack, a heart-renewing power, the Gospel possesses; and now apply to this

noisome disorder the prescription of the Great Physician as found in that Gospel, and see how simple, how effectual, how sublime the remedy ! The direction occupies but two verses and contains only twenty eight words, yet it is destined to abolish away crime, to bring in every virtue, and to make this world a miniature of Heaven. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

"On these two commandments," says Jesus, "hang all the law and the prophets," and the adoption of these, as principles of daily life, will infallibly destroy crime, because no one will willingly sin against God who really loves God, and no one will do an injury to his neighbour who loves him as himself. Every crime on the statute book of God and man, must fall before the advance of the one single principle of love to God and love to man. Hence, St. Paul declares, "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." And where the Law is fulfilled crime ceases to exist, for crime is a transgression of Law. When all shall love the Lord, and love their neighbour, then will criminal courts and prisons and the gallows be no more seen ; then the uproar of the unleashed hounds of Hell rioting in arson and blood will be no more heard ; then will the record of human guilt no more pollute the statute book ; then will fraud and perjury and injustice and their kindred evils slink away, abashed with their own shame ; and

a love that "worketh no ill to its neighbour" or to God, will rule in every heart, and make this earth "Emmanuel's Land, a mountain of Holiness, a dwelling place of righteousness."

And yet once more I declared of Superstition that it was a disease of our race, which Infidelity and Pantheism were alike labouring to destroy. But it may be clearly shown, both from history and the laws of mental science, that Infidelity fosters, rather than destroys, superstition; while Pantheism, in all its branches, only makes credulity more credulous still.

The religious sentiment is an universal one. It springs from that moral sense or conscience which God has implanted in every rational being, and it will manifest itself in some way, either in the grovelling delusions of superstition, or in adoring the one true and living God. Yet this one living and true God, man could never have known, but for revelation, and even where known he is ignorant of the true way to worship Him until taught by that same holy word; so that there can never be any thing else than drivelling superstition where the Bible is not seen. The Gospel levels against superstition of every shade, the one only principle that can or will eradicate it; and it is lodged in those simple words of the Great Physician, "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." A spiritual God and a spiritual worship are those elements of

true religion, before which superstition is necessarily expelled and rooted out.

Paul preached this doctrine on Mars Hill, surrounded by the thirty thousand material gods of Athens, and they fell before its power. Rome heard it from Apostolic lips, and shutting up the temples of earth-born divinities, bowed its imperial crown in Christian adoration. Britain heard of this spiritual God worship, and Druidical rites, and Saxon idols, were banished from the land. Germany heard it, and the gross gods of Teutonic Mythology were expelled from middle Europe. The South Sea Islander heard it, and cast his graven images to the moles and to the bats, and knelt before the God of Revelation ; and as the truth circles outward, so will it win still greater triumphs until the now stupendous idolatries of Asia, which like its own many trunked Banyan tree strikes down branching roots of Buddhism and Brahminism and Soofeism shall be rooted up, and the Tree of Life, as in the world's morning hour, again stretch out its branches and shed its leaves "for the healing of the nations;" until long benighted Africa shall "stretch forth her hands" of praise to God ; until Australia, from all its now debased villages and pathless forests, shall send up hymns of holy thanksgiving ; until along the slopes of the Andes and the swift rolling waters of the Orinoco and the Amazon the Christian faith shall rear its temples of Prayer ; until in fine, one song shall "employ all nations,"

and all cry, "worthy the Lamb, for He was slain for us."

We see, then, from a rapid survey of the acknowledged evils of the world, that there are no means of man's device adequate to their removal, and that the abortive attempts made by persons even of commanding powers to extirpate them, have only proved that they were "all Physicians of no value." We have also seen from the very brief synopsis of the remedial powers of the Gospel, that it is fitted and designed to cure all the evils complained of, and to impart moral health and soundness to our sin disordered race.

And now I appeal to you, and ask, which class of remedies is best? and who should be considered the true Physician?

No body of men are better qualified to judge of medical schemes and practitioners than yourselves; you are keen to detect, and quick to expose quackery; and also prompt to perceive, and ready to acknowledge real merit. If you saw one man attending a case of raging fever and prescribing only external palliatives, while the febrile fires were left unsubdued within; if you saw another attempt to heal a fungus hæmatodes, by washes of rose water; and another, aim to cure hypertrophy of the heart by administering pills of bread; you would at once pronounce such men quacks, "Physicians of no value." Your common sense, as well as your medical knowledge tells you, that disease, to be truly cured, must be radically,

not superficially healed; that the remedials must reach the seat of the disorder, that no case can be relieved until you have learned its true pathology, obtained an accurate diagnosis, and directed your therapeutic agents to the source of the evil.

Apply these principles to the human remedies proposed for moral evils; they are superficial; they do not grapple with the first elements of the disease; they fail to reach the conscience; they cannot get at the morbid heart; they are soothing, not remedial; opiates productive of false security and seeming peace, but only stifling the disease now, to break out in tenfold more virulence hereafter. On the other hand, the doctrines of the Gospel strike at the roots of evil; heal the noisome wounds of society from the bottom; effect a perfect cure; and secure perpetual health. Which of these two systems, I again ask, is best? and to whom will you apply the language of the text "Ye are all Physicians of no value?"

I have argued the question thus far simply on medical principles, and in its worldly aspects. But there is one point demanding consideration which infinitely transcends anything previously discussed. It is, what can these "Physicians of no value" do towards saving the soul from eternal death, and providing for its interest beyond the grave?

Admit for a moment that they could effect all they promise, what then? The great wants of our spiritual nature would after all be uncared for, because all their promises are bounded by this life,

and not one provides for the immortal soul in eternity. And what is life here, compared with life beyond the grave! what is time when placed beside eternity! what are the interests of the body in its manifold states and relations, in comparison with the undying wants of the soul! yet these "undying wants" are not satisfied, this 'eternity' is unprovided for, this 'grave' is left untenanted by a single hope. Here all schemes of men fail; they reach as far as the tomb, but go not beyond; they hold out golden promises for time, but can give only doubt and darkness for eternity. But at this most important of all points, where the physicians of no value fail, Jesus, the great Physician, comes in with divine power and glory. Is the soul sick, "grievously tormented" with sin! He only can heal it. Must it pass through the dark valley! He only can support it. Must it appear before the judgment seat on high! He only can defend and acquit it. Must it dwell forever in the unseen world! He only can save it from eternal woe, and give to it eternal joy. Mark this sublime ascendancy, all ye who boast of human remedials, and tell me where is the earthly philosophy, and where the earthly teacher, that can save the soul, that can redeem from sin, and that can raise fallen man to a throne of glory? Alas! there is not one! Where man most needs help, earth most signally fails; and where the wisdom of the world most signally fails, Christ most triumph-

antly succeeds; for in him alone is salvation, and "there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Thus it appears that for every evil under which the world groans, every disorder that afflicts the soul, every want of our spiritual nature, for time and eternity, the Gospel furnishes the true, the only, the eternal remedy, and that Jesus Christ is the true, the glorious, the Divine Physician. What a blessing, then, is this precious Gospel! It ennobles man wherever it finds him; lifts up the fallen, enriches the poor, comforts the mourner, enlightens the ignorant, and makes the desert heart and homes of earth to blossom as the garden of the Lord. Would you strip man of everything that is vile, and clothe him with everything that is morally lovely; give him the Gospel: would you expel from a family every source of sorrow, and make it a home of love; let the principles of the Bible find lodgment under that roof: would you purify society and make it orderly and peaceful; let the Holy Scriptures rule in every heart: would you raise a nation to its highest glory; righteousness can alone exalt it: and would you drive out sin from this world, uproot its idolatries, cast down its paganism, break every yoke of oppression, exterminate crime, remove suffering, diffuse education, evoke the highest efforts of mind and body, and make the world holy, happy, heavenly; let the word of God have "free course, and be glori-

fied," let it be scattered to the four winds of heaven, let it be translated into every tongue, let it be heard in every dwelling, let it sink deep into every soul, and the grand result will be accomplished.

What a glory surrounds the great Physician, Jesus Christ. We honor an earthly physician in proportion to the greatness of his skill, the extent of his acquirements, the number, variety and completeness of his cures; and as you read of those great lights of your profession which tower up here and there above other minds, like some tall Pharos, throwing out the beams of a far-reaching genius, how your heart swells with pride, that such men adorn the healing art, and how your ambition is stimulated to rise like them in greatness, and leave your name, also, as one of the landmarks of the world. What honor then ought you not to give to the Great Physician, Jesus Christ. He has a skill, that no disease baffles; a knowledge that compasses every event; and a mind, radiant with divinity. He passes through the world, and blessings mark his every footstep. Before his goings, sin vanishes; around his form virtues cluster; his lips drop wisdom; his eye beams mercy; his hands minister kindness, and life-giving power goes out from the very "hem of his garment." He is indeed "the chiefest among ten thousand," "Yea, he is altogether lovely!" But oh! I want an angel's tongue to speak the praises of Jesus; I

want a pencil dipped in heavenly colours to paint his majestic features; I want a far-reaching knowledge, such as even the six-winged seraphs before the throne have not, to unfold his greatness. Man may scorn Him, but angels cast their crowns at his feet. Man may blaspheme his holy name, but the spirits in glory "veil their faces as they worship" before him. Man may refuse his offered grace, but it is the theme of endless songs in glory. Oh, sin-sick brother, cast not from thee the only healer of your soul; but, looking at your disease, observing its deadliness, marking its incurability by any of the nostrums and empirics of earth, and knowing, that unless cured, you will be lost forever, go to the Great Physician, tell him your wants and woes, give him the unreserved homage of your hearts, cling to his blood-oozing side by a living faith, apply the balms of the Gospel to your soul, and you shall find a "peace that passeth understanding" now, and hereafter "a crown of glory that fadeth not away."



