

**A sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, June 29, 1806,  
being Commencement Sunday / [Edward Maltby].**

**Contributors**

Maltby, Edward, 1770-1859.  
University of Cambridge.

**Publication/Creation**

Cambridge : R. Watts for Cadell & Davies, London, etc., 1806.

**Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/ntu37r49>

**License and attribution**

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

4

A

# S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

*JUNE* 29, 1806,

BEING

COMMENCEMENT SUNDAY,

---

BY

EDWARD MALTBY, D.D.

---

CAMBRIDGE:

*Printed by R. Watts, at the University Press,*

FOR CADELL AND DAVIES, STRAND; RIVINGTONS, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD;

AND LUNN, SOHO SQUARE, LONDON:

AND FOR DEIGHTON, AND BARRETT, CAMBRIDGE.

1806.

S E R M O N

PUBLISHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

M. D. CC. LXX. 1870

PRINTED

COMMENCEMENT SUNDAY

BY

EDWARD MATHY, D.D.

CAMBRIDGE

Printed and Sold by the University Press, Cambridge.  
For the University of Cambridge, by the University Press, Cambridge.  
And for the University of Cambridge, by the University Press, Cambridge.

1870

TO

THE REVEREND AND RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

JOSEPH TURNER, D.D. F.A.S.

VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

DEAN OF NORWICH,

AND

MASTER OF PEMBROKE HALL,

THIS DISCOURSE IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS MUCH OBLIGED AND FAITHFUL FRIEND

AND SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

TO  
THE REVEREND AND RIGHT WORSHIPFUL  
JOSEPH TURNER, D.D. F.R.S.  
VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
DEAN OF NORWICH  
AND  
MASTER OF PEMBROKE HALL  
Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2020 with funding from  
Wellcome Library  
HIS MUCH OBLIGED AND FAITHFUL FRIEND  
AND SERVANT  
THE AUTHOR

<https://archive.org/details/b31905134>

## JOHN IX. 4.

**I MUST WORK THE WORKS OF HIM THAT SENT ME, WHILE IT IS DAY:  
THE NIGHT COMETH, WHEN NO MAN CAN WORK.**

AMONG the various excellencies, which are observable in the precepts delivered by our Blessed Lord, every reader of taste must remark with delight the peculiar ease and propriety, with which he made a transition from the conversation or incidents of the moment\* into subjects, calculated at once to inform the understanding and to purify the heart. While he replies to the question proposed to him with a precision and solemnity suited to the occasion, he seizes an opportunity to explain the moral obligations connected with it, to mark their bearings and dependencies, and to supply powerful motives to their observance:—While the attention of those around him was fixed upon local or temporary circumstances, he was careful to suggest observations, which can never cease to be interesting, and which may be universally applied.

The passage before us is a striking instance of the happy method, in which our Saviour conveyed his instructions. A calamity, distinguished by peculiar aggravations, presented itself to his notice, and claimed his benevolent interposition. Upon this occasion the disciples appear to have intimated a wish, that their Master should decline the opportunity of restoring to his sight a man, that was born blind. They profess indeed merely to inquire, whether the blindness was caused

\* See Bp. Law on the Life and Character of Christ, pp. 314, &c. 7th edit. And Dr. Townson's Sermon on the Manner of our Saviour's Teaching.

by his parents' sin, or the sin of the individual in a state of pre-existence\*: but the sequel of the narrative seems to justify a conclusion, that the inquiry rather tended to suggest a doubt concerning the worthiness of the unhappy sufferer, than to satisfy the reasonable curiosity of the inquirers. So far however as the question was designed for the purpose of information, it obtained a decisive and satisfactory reply. But our Saviour immediately added, in answer, as it should seem, to the thought which they entertained, but which they were unwilling to express; "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night † cometh, when no man can work." As if he had said; "Hinder me not in the exercise of the important commission, entrusted to me by my Father. Here is an opportunity of doing good; of discharging that duty, which is especially assigned to me to perform. If I neglect it now, a similar opportunity may not recur: for there is a certain time appointed, of which I must make the best use in my power. Nor is the principle of this reply applicable to myself only, or merely to the present occasion. It is the principle, by which all the actions of man should be guided; and by which the proper employment of time must be determined. It holds out therefore a most salutary lesson to each of you, my disciples, and to every individual of the human race.— To borrow an allusion from the most necessary labours of man.— Day is the allotted time for work: when night cometh, no man *can* work. It behoves him, who subsists by labour, to take care that he wastes no part of the hours, set apart for industry, in frivolous occupation or in complete vacuity. The period of darkness *will* come; and then, no wishes, however ardent, no exertions, however painful, can possibly recall the light or the time that is fled. In like manner it becomes you, and equally too does it become all mankind, to avail

\* The question may refer to an opinion of a different nature, which certainly was entertained among the Jews, and which the learned Reader will find sufficiently explained in Lightfoot, Opp. Tom. II, p. 639.

† "Illic, ut perhibent, aut *intempesta silet nox.*" Georg. I. 247.  
"Cum tempus agendi est nullum." Varr. de Ling. Lat. lib. V. "*Intempesta nox, quo tempore nihil agitur.*" Ib. lib. VI.

"Et Lunam in nimbo *nox intempesta tenebat.*" Æn. III. 587.  
"*Intempesta, quasi intempesta, inactuosa, carens actibus, per quos tempora dignoscimus.*" Servius in loc. See the Note of Hemsterh. upon Thom. Mag. in γ. ἀσφί.

“ yourselves of the proper season for occupation;—to perform your  
 “ appointed task at the appointed time. When once the precious  
 “ hours of opportunity shall have gone by, fruitless will be your re-  
 “ morse, and utterly unavailing will be your lamentation. Night will  
 “ have arrived, cheerless and dreary to those, who have been remiss  
 “ in the labours of the day ;—cheerless and dreary to those, whose  
 “ minds are oppressed with the recollection of powers enfeebled by  
 “ sloth; of habits relaxed or perverted; of time improvidently wasted;  
 “ of duties reluctantly and imperfectly performed, or deliberately and  
 “ totally neglected.”

The principles, upon which I conceive the reply of our Saviour to have been founded, and which I have thus endeavoured to elucidate, may suggest to us some observations, not unsuitable to the occasion\* upon which we are assembled,—observations, evidently applicable to the younger part of this audience, and, perhaps, not wholly without their use to the hearers of every age and every description.

In the further progress of my remarks upon the important lesson, contained in the words of the text, I shall endeavour to shew,

First, That to every individual is allotted the performance of his peculiar work or employment.

Secondly, That a distinct and proper season is assigned to each individual for his work. And,

Thirdly, I shall insist on the fatal error committed by those, who fail to improve the opportunities they enjoy of gaining the knowledge, and discharging the duties, suited to their respective stations.

First; As society can scarcely be held together without a gradation of ranks, so neither can it subsist without a variety of employments, adapted to the different situations and different abilities of individuals. While some are administering to the necessities of Man by multiplying the productions of Nature, others have their ingenuity exercised in order to increase his comforts by the refinements of Art. To others again is consigned the more important business of storing their minds with knowledge for the promotion of general good. Without a classification of its members for these distinct purposes,

\* The Commemoration of the Benefactors of the University takes place in the morning of every Commencement Sunday.



it is evident that society must cease to exist; or, at least, to exist happily. Each of these orders is in its turn divided and subdivided; and from the endless variety of employments and of duties which are required to make up the general mass of convenience, knowledge, and happiness, the individual, whatsoever be his capacity, or strength, or age, cannot fail to discover some occupation suited to his powers of action.—It may indeed seem, from a superficial view of the subject, that the duty of performing an appointed task is more binding upon some classes, than upon others: because the necessity for exertion is created by wants, which must be supplied; and by demands, which cannot be evaded. This difference however exists in appearance only; for where all partake in common of the varied and multiplied benefits, arising from society, all are required to contribute their respective proportions to the aggregate of those benefits. The advantages arising from a state of society, consist in their being reciprocal; nor in fact is it more reasonable that the poor should toil with their hands, in order to supply the natural or artificial wants of the wealthy, than it is incumbent upon the rich to labour in the distribution and employment of their substance, and in the cultivation of their intellectual powers, for the protection and support of the lower orders.

Thus far we may argue from what passes every day before our eyes, considering man only in his relation to society. But the argument receives additional strength, as we pursue the investigation, and consider the duties and interests of Human Beings, as they stand related to the Father of the Universe. Aided in our researches by the discoveries of Revelation, we regard this life as a state of trial, in which all rational creatures are entrusted with capacities, and furnished with opportunities for exercising them, under the awful consciousness that they must render an account to an infinitely Wise, Good, and Powerful Master.

Here the subject becomes more seriously interesting, and here it may be argued upon principles, which can neither mislead nor be controverted. If we trace the duty of man to its proper origin, no Sophist, however speciously he may argue, can fairly deny that every individual has an appointed office and employment; nor can any one

Human Being, however exalted in situation, presume to call in question that authority by which the labour is enjoined.—We are placed in this world with the express and avowed intent, that our conduct in it shall determine our fitness for another state of existence. Now every trial implies the performance of some work, or the execution of some trust. The office or trust confided to us by our Almighty Master is our station in life: and the duties of it necessarily vary with our abilities and opportunities. But although the *objects*, to which our attention should be directed, *vary* so materially in *different* individuals, yet surely it is fit that the *quantity* of time bestowed upon some useful and proper object should be nearly *the same* in all. For when once we have attained the power of thinking as well as acting, we may *always* be employed in performing some part of our appointed work. Heedless must he be of the value of time, and grossly deficient in the knowledge of duty, who does not mark the unceasing recurrence of opportunities, in which the virtues of industry, patience, temperance, or brotherly kindness may be exercised. Every hour that passes on, oppressive as it is to the indolent, unimproved by the rash, or abused by the vicious, may, and ought to supply to the disciple of Christ some means of distinguishing himself as a faithful servant, who shall in due time “enter into the joy of his Lord.” Every such hour may be employed in acquiring knowledge; in strengthening good, in correcting irregular, or in reforming bad habits; in restraining licentious inclinations, in subduing violent passions; or, finally, in performing an act of good-will to some one of the great family of Mankind.

The work, appointed to us, will moreover not only be different in individuals according to their respective condition and capacity, but also in the same individual according to his age. The body must be *gradually* inured to labour;—the mind must be regularly trained to knowledge. Habits of every kind are the growth of time; and those perhaps, which are connected with our intellectual pursuits, the most difficult of all to be acquired. In all cases therefore, *some* regular training,—and, in many cases, *much* previous discipline—is necessary, before we arrive at that period of human life, in which our powers can be put forth with their full effect upon the interests

of the community. But then this preparatory occupation constitutes, as it were, an act in the great drama of existence ;—and carefully must we remember, that an Invisible Spectator sits in awful and supreme judgment upon every part of our probation for eternity.

Hence it is that the proper use of opportunities, supplied in the progress of education, forms a most important part of our moral obligations here, and will add materially indeed to the amount of our responsibility hereafter. More particularly is this conclusion applicable to the opportunities, which are incident to the preparation for a learned profession. For not only is that preparation continued far beyond the age, when the knowledge of duty may be supposed to commence; but the proper and usual direction of those studies leads the mind to explore with greater care the sources from which that knowledge is derived.—All, undoubtedly, that it is *essential* for a Christian to learn in the theory and practice of Ethics, is contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament: But surely the topics of moral science may be enlarged and elucidated by the writings of philosophers in every clime and of every religion. And as this study was no where pursued to such an extent, or with so much success, as by the sages of Greece and Rome, skill in these languages will at least discover much elaborate reasoning, much curious distinction, much scientific arrangement. Our researches into this important subject will be invited and rewarded by the rich variety of their matter, if not by the infallible truth of their speculations; by the splendour and beauty of their language, if not by the irresistible cogency of their arguments. Doubtless it were superfluous to prove that none can apprehend so accurately and completely the contents of the sacred volumes themselves, as those, who have stored their minds with habits of critical investigation, derived from an early and intimate acquaintance with profane literature. —

Whether therefore we consider Man as a Being connected by the ties of Society with his fellow-creatures, or view him under the more solemn character of a creature accountable to his Maker, we find that he has an allotted station, to which are annexed corresponding duties. The obligations laid upon him will indeed be more or less complicated, in proportion as his connections with individuals and with the

community are multiplied in a greater or less degree. But the number of individuals must be extremely small, who do not sustain a variety of relations at once; and yet, seldom or never, will it happen that the duties resulting from them interfere with one another. The responsibility of man will also be different, according to the strength of his body, the powers of his mind, the advantages of birth, education, and fortune. And we have seen, that, before he reaches the age when he occupies his station in society, it is proper and usual for him to undergo a trial, in which he must cultivate such habits, and attain such qualifications, as may enable him to fill that station with effect. This consideration however brings us to the *second* division of the subject; namely,

That a distinct and proper season is allotted to every man for his work.

When the Children of Israel were assigned their task under the bondage of Pharaoh, they at first had little reason for complaint, because the requisite materials were supplied for their task, and a time, barely sufficient indeed, was allowed for its execution. But when the materials were withheld, and yet the work was required to be performed in the same space of time, their murmurs against the capricious severity of the tyrant were completely justifiable.—Man however can complain of no such hardship—scarcely as connected with society, and not at all in his relation to that vast system, which is regulated by an Almighty Sovereign. Human life is a state of discipline, not of bondage: and the subjects of Divine government have not only ample materials supplied, but a sufficient time allowed for the performance of their several labours. For the *whole* series of *trial* the *whole* period of *life* is assigned. But wisely are we forbidden to know the duration of that period: since, if its limits were accurately defined, a protracted extent would induce a spirit of delay; while a shorter space might occasion precipitation or despair. In exact proportion to our powers, and to the time, be it longer or shorter, in which those powers are called forth, the merit or demerit of our lives will be determined, when the account of those “things which have been done in the body” shall be rendered up at “the judgment-seat of Christ.”—The progressive stages of trial have

however their limits distinctly marked, and consequently the employment allotted to each regularly defined.—The alternate succession of day and night, the uninterrupted recurrence of the seasons, point out to us with exactness the periods of labour and rest, and determine the species of labour suited to each season. If those, who are employed in the important business of raising fruits from the ground, neglect the hours of day; in vain will they seek to repair the effects of their negligence, when the sun has withdrawn his light. If the operations required at any one particular season be omitted, not only will the opportunity be lost at the time which is past, but the future season will supply no materials for exertion. In like manner the successive periods of human existence, and consequently the duties to be performed in each, are clearly and regularly distinguished. In an early age the foundations of knowledge must be laid; and upon them must be reared in youth a superstructure, fitted to purposes of utility and ornament for maturer years. But if the hours of spring be wasted in sloth or in vice, in vain will the summer's sun smile on the neglected fields;—no cheering fruits of industry will then be prepared for the autumn of our existence. The precious moments of opportunity will have gone by unimproved; and the habits, thus induced, will not only diminish our power to make any future exertions, but render them unavailing, when made, because they will be unseasonable. When we are arrived at the age of manhood, society expects and exacts from us the performance of duties, which are incompatible with the time and attention necessary to the season of preparation. The restraints, unavoidable in the stages of education, would be ill applied and ill relished at a more advanced age; and if, by reflecting upon his youthful folly, the man were solicitous to retrieve his time, he would discover too late the wisdom of those laws, by which, in the several periods of our probation, we are furnished with means of improvement,—adapted to each indeed, but not applicable, with equal ease or equal effect, to any other.

Since therefore each portion of our life has its appropriate duties, if we would return to the performance of those, which were left undone at an earlier period, we must neglect the business, which belongs to the time at which we are arrived: if we would trace

back the paths, over which we have strayed carelessly and unprofitably, we lose the opportunity of advancing. We can, in such a case, neither occupy with comfort the station already gained, turn back with dignity, nor go forward with security.

Having thus attempted to explain the duties of man, as connected with the proper employment of his time, we may proceed,

In the Third place, to consider the danger of neglecting them, and the causes which produce such neglect.

The value of time, the carelessness with which it is squandered, and the difficulty with which its loss can be repaired, are topics which have exercised the thoughts and employed the pen of the pensive moralist, the philosophic poet, and the pious theologian. Such observations may perhaps be deemed trite by *him*, whose course of action proclaims them to be melancholy, in proportion as they are just. In no respect, however, are they more melancholy or more just, than in reference to life as a state of trial. If time be considered as a preparation for eternity, if the passing hours be measured by the effect which the use or abuse of them must have upon an endless existence, can we turn a deaf ear to those maxims of prudence, which the experience of ages has shewn to be irrefragable, but which the infatuation of short-sighted Beings still renders necessary to be repeated? If we would appeal to authority more than human, let us seek and obey it in *his* warning voice, who has taught us, by his own example, to “work the works of him that sent us, while it is day.”

But, to urge considerations more immediately applicable to our present situation.—The danger of neglecting the duties of our age and condition, at the proper time of performing them, chiefly arises from hence; that we cannot neglect the formation of good habits without contracting bad ones. Complete inactivity, either of body or mind, produces weariness and disgust. If our attention be diverted from what is useful and becoming, we are, imperceptibly perhaps, led to the practice of what is useless and unbecoming. Granting, however, that we fail in acts of laudable and seasonable exertion from mere vacuity or listlessness,—that, with an unmanly and inconsiderate aversion from employment, we suffer our faculties to languish in sloth,—that very sloth is dangerous. Upon either of these

suppositions, we have numerous and formidable difficulties opposed to our honest resolutions, if at length we feel a desire to retrieve the time, which has been wasted unprofitably or mischievously. In the one case, we must unlearn what practice has rendered easy and agreeable; and, in the other, we must rouse ourselves to the task of restoring pliancy to powers, which are benumbed from want of exercise. Whether therefore we contract habits of actual profligacy or of mere inactivity, it is evident that the task of returning to duty is rendered doubly painful and difficult. The energy, which should be devoted to progressive improvement, is exhausted in efforts, often vain, to repair the consequences of past errors and past indiscretion. And thus, while the day is far advanced, little has been done towards the completion of a work, which should have commenced with the dawn; and while the thoughts are distracted from all effectual employment by the recollection of what has been left undone, night draws on, and the season for labour is passed away.

Let it not be thought, that the danger of thus omitting our appointed labours can be compensated by the seeming security and unruffled calm, for which we dismiss the fatigue of exertion. The delights of indolence are to be found only in the fictions of poets, and in the paradoxes of sophists. So little, indeed, is a life of occupation incompatible with pleasure, that pure and permanent enjoyment cannot be secured without it. It is true that the ignorance of mankind, or the imperfection of language, has not unfrequently associated some idea of pain with labour; but the experience of almost every individual sufficiently attests, that labour, when properly applied, is a never-failing source of gratification. "So many advantages, both to body and mind," (observes the elegant and rational Jortin) "arise from it, that it may be made a question, whether the toil, which God enjoined to Adam after his fall, and to his posterity, was a punishment or a favour. Certain it is, that labour, if it was brought into the world by transgression, is one of the best preservatives against it;—if it was the child of sin, it is the parent of virtue\*."

\* Sermons, Vol. I. p. 69.

More pernicious is *his* error, who flies from the necessary labours of life, in the pursuit of pleasure,—who quits the appointed business of *to-day*, in fond assurance that *to-morrow's* sun will light him to his toil, and that a few hours, gaily employed, will not take away from the amount of his work. To-morrow's sun *will* rise, but will it find the votary of pleasure disposed to shake off his feverish slumber with its returning beams? Has not the intoxicating cup unnerved his hand for hardy toil, or indisposed his mind for serious occupation? Has not the fatal draught already overset the steadiness of his resolution, weakened more and more his sense of duty, and tempted him again and again to renew the dangerous gratification?—In a thoughtless moment, he has yielded to temptation from the hope of enjoyment! Has it then, we may ask, supplied him with enjoyment, such as shall compensate the reproach of mis-spent time, and the loss of more sure and more lasting delight? Or, is it only to bury the painful recollection, that he prevails upon himself to repeat the hazardous experiment? Too soon and too severely, alas! are the hopes of the voluptuary destroyed by the sad effects which he feels, in a body enfeebled, and a mind incapacitated for virtuous exertion. But *difficult* and *slow* is the recovery from habits once contracted, and continued, because they *are* habits, long after they have failed to bestow the expected satisfaction. The unhappy sufferer, indeed, has at last discovered that the prospect before him is dreary and forlorn; but he knows not how to measure back his steps to that path, which he has inconsiderately forsaken. The day of life perhaps closes in upon him, while he thinks, vain man! that the sun will yet beam in meridian splendour. In a wild confusion of disappointed hope, of unavailing regret, of imperfect resolutions, he sinks in darkness and despair.

So foolish, so criminal, and so wretched, is the conduct of those, who yield themselves victims to the apathy of sloth; or who are beguiled by pleasure to waste those hours, which ought to be consecrated to activity and improvement. It is evident that the folly and the mischief are increased, according to the number of opportunities, and the magnitude of duties, so irrationally neglected.



And in no period or condition of human life are any opportunities more auspicious, than such as are presented to Academical Youth; and surely no duties can be more arduous or comprehensive, than such as are imposed upon the higher and more enlightened classes of the community. Suffer me then, before I conclude, to dwell awhile on this momentous subject.

Whether we consider Man as ordained to perform an appointed work, or entrusted with the management of certain talents, he is an instrument for good in the hands of his Maker. If he diverts his powers to the purpose of evil by neglect or misapplication, sentence will be awarded against him in proportion to the benefits withrawn from society, or to the injuries inflicted upon it. *He* therefore will assuredly be exposed to a more rigorous judgment, who has wasted the means of *more extensive good*, and rendered unproductive those talents, which might have been employed with *general advantage*. These solemn considerations apply with peculiar force to *all*, who are permitted to enjoy the benefits of an Academical life: for however they may differ at present in external circumstances, the end of their education is the same. They are all trained up in habits of good order and useful learning, that they may occupy with propriety situations, in which, by their good conduct, the interests of their fellow-creatures may be greatly promoted; and in which, by criminal ignorance or mismanagement, they must be seriously endangered. In a word;—whether your claim to distinction be founded upon the privileges attached to descent, or the importance arising from wealth; upon advantages derived from connections, or the steady and judicious cultivation of your own powers; by claiming distinction you contract an obligation to promote the good of others. Whether you are destined to fill the commanding station of Legislators, to assert the rights of your fellow-citizens by a just administration of the laws, to soften the pangs of disease by a skilful application of medicine; or whether it shall be your peculiar province to spread abroad the treasures of religious knowledge; who does not perceive what incalculable benefits may flow from a rational disposition of your time,—from an honest and vigorous exercise of

your faculties?—Upon the wise, or indiscreet, employment of the precious hours now within your controul, it must therefore depend, whether society at large shall hereafter rejoice in the well-directed foresight of those, who consigned you to these abodes of science and virtue; or whether it shall lament the wretched perversion of your time and talents:—whether it shall acknowledge with gratitude and triumph the advantages derived from your patriotism, your eloquence, your professional skill, your ardent, but well-regulated zeal; or whether it shall deplore the mischief produced by your remissness, your incapacity, or your vices. If among you there shall be some, as no doubt there are, whose wealth shall exempt them from the necessity or the wish to fill a public station, it is your bounden duty to recollect, that all the advantages, which can be employed for the good of society, give society a claim upon the possessor for a share of those advantages. Yours it is to recollect, that neither wealth nor talents are ever exempted from the responsibility which is annexed to every act of favour, and every instance of bounty, on the part of our Heavenly Father. Yours it is to recollect, that riches are bequeathed, not to your own arbitrary, uncontrolled disposal;—they are bestowed, not for the gratification of a groveling appetite, of fantastic caprice, or of enervating indolence, but for the gracious and salutary purpose of making many among God's creatures happy.

Thus briefly have I attempted to point out your duties. As to opportunities, you have here unbounded leisure for the acquisition of knowledge;—you have an ample supply of books, in every language and every science. Here emulation stimulates exertion, and honourable distinction rewards it. Nor, in addition to other means of improvement and incentives to industry, must we forget the lessons and the example of good and great men. Can you then be too often or too seriously reminded that these opportunities have their appointed bounds? When this period of probation is past, other scenes, other duties await you. In the world, upon which many of you soon must enter, a succession of cares, with which you are now unacquainted—of occupations, for which you are unprepared—*must* deprive you of the means for acquiring

knowledge which are here so largely afforded, and *may* frustrate any determinations you have formed for a more vigorous and effectual prosecution of your studies.

In an Assembly of Christian Youth, many of them preparing for the office of Religious Instructors, it surely cannot appear unseasonable to enforce the proper employment of time, even in the various pursuits of human science, from religious motives. Already have I endeavoured to shew, that industry in our worldly callings may, and must, be inculcated, upon the principle of obedience to that God, who has assigned to his creatures their several stations in life. And, it were easy to prove that every study, by which the powers of the human mind are invigorated and enlarged, has a tendency to improve us in the belief and practice of true Religion. Whatsoever extends the limits of our knowledge, whether in the natural or in the moral world, cannot fail to supply additional proofs of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Deity. The abstruse sciences, by exercising the faculties in the art of reasoning, enable it to grasp more firmly the various arguments for the truth of Christianity: and even those studies, by which the fancy is warmed, and the taste matured, dispose us to estimate more justly, and to feel more exquisitely, the lofty imagery, the appropriate diction, and the winning simplicity of the Sacred Writers. *This* indeed is the end, to which every part of knowledge should be ultimately directed; nor can we set forth, in a fairer or more striking point of view, the advantages of polite and recondite learning, than by shewing that it affords the clearest perception of the excellency, as well as truth, of Revealed Religion. I trust, however, that it will in no wise diminish the efficacy of this motive, if I remind you, that our credit and our interest in this world are promoted by the means, which are calculated to secure the more certain and durable enjoyments of futurity. Who does not acknowledge the mischief, as well as folly, of idleness? Who does not view with scornful disdain, or with generous indignation, the conduct of him, who, amidst the most splendid opportunities of gaining knowledge, perseveres in a state of degrading ignorance? Prompt and well-directed industry will, in a certain degree, crown

our worldly undertakings with success. It causes many an hour to pass cheerfully and agreeably; and it compensates for the want of those external advantages, which the worthless or inconsiderate are disposed to regard as the *only* objects of pursuit, and the *only* incitements to ambition. The Scholar is animated with a spirit of independence, which scorns to forfeit its own approbation by any unworthy act, however it be enforced by the menace of ill or the prospect of gain. The conscientious devotion of our time to the business assigned us in our respective stations, although it may not lead to worldly distinctions, yet will always ensure a comfortable sufficiency, and with it will obtain, what is ever dear to a generous and enlightened mind, the applause of the wise and good. Such a man, at the close of life, will undoubtedly look forward, as his surest hope and brightest reward, to the approbation of his Heavenly Judge. Infinitely beyond all *earthly* considerations will he prize “the gift of God, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord\*.” But he will not be insensible to the opinion of his fellow men; of those, who, like him, have pursued their career of honourable and useful employment,—who, like him, have secured “the testimony of a good conscience” by the diligent performance of the duties attached to their respective stations. He will not lose sight of the glorious prospects, which open to his view in another state of being; yet assuredly he will cast one lingering look upon that state, which he soon must leave. He will entertain that love of honest fame†, which, in every age and under every dispensation, has supplied an incitement to useful exertion; and he may indulge the wish that some kindred mind will pay a tribute to his memory, generous and animated as the following:

Λόγον τοῖς ἀρίστοις περὶ αὐτοῦ καταλέλοιπεν, ἀνδρὸς εἶον βεβιωκῶς, ὑψηλότερον, ὢ Καρῶν ἀνδραποδωδέστατε, τοῦ σοῦ μνήματος, καὶ ἐν βεβαιότερῳ χωρίῳ κατεσκευασμένον ‡.

\* Rom. vi. 23.

† See the Peroration of Cicero's III. Catilinarian, and the Speech for Marcellus, edit. Ern. Tom. II. p. 1414.

‡ Lucian. Diogen. et Mausol. edit. Hemsterhus. Tom. I. p. 431. “Behind him hath he left a name among the truly good, HAVING LIVED THE LIFE OF A MAN:—a name more lofty, thou most abject of Carian slaves, than even thine own sepulchre, and raised upon a more secure foundation.”

our worldly undertakings with success. It causes many an hour to pass cheerfully and agreeably; and it compensates for the want of those external advantages, which the worthless or inconsiderate are disposed to regard as the only objects of pursuit, and the only incentives to ambition. The Scholar is animated with a spirit of independence, which seems to forbid its own approbation by any unworthy act, however it be enticed by the prospect of ill or the prospect of gain. The conscientious devotion of our time to the business assigned us in our respective stations,

*Lately Published by the same Author,*

Handsomely printed in One Volume 8vo. Price 7s. 6d. in boards,

**ILLUSTRATIONS of the TRUTH of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION.**

THE SECOND EDITION, REVISED.

ALSO,

*Preparing for the Press,*

**THESAURUS GRAECAE POESEOS,**

*à T. MORELL;*

PASSIM EMENDATUS, ET NOVA VERBORUM ET EXEMPLORUM  
SUPPLEMENTUM INSTRUCTUS.