

"THE CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS IN INTELLECTUAL EFFORT."

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

The Calliopean and Apollonian Societies

OF

UNION UNIVERSITY, MURFREESBORO', TEN.,

AT THEIR ANNIVERSARY,

JULY 10th, 1855.




BY REV. GEO. W. EATON, D. D.,  
PROF. OF THEOLOGY

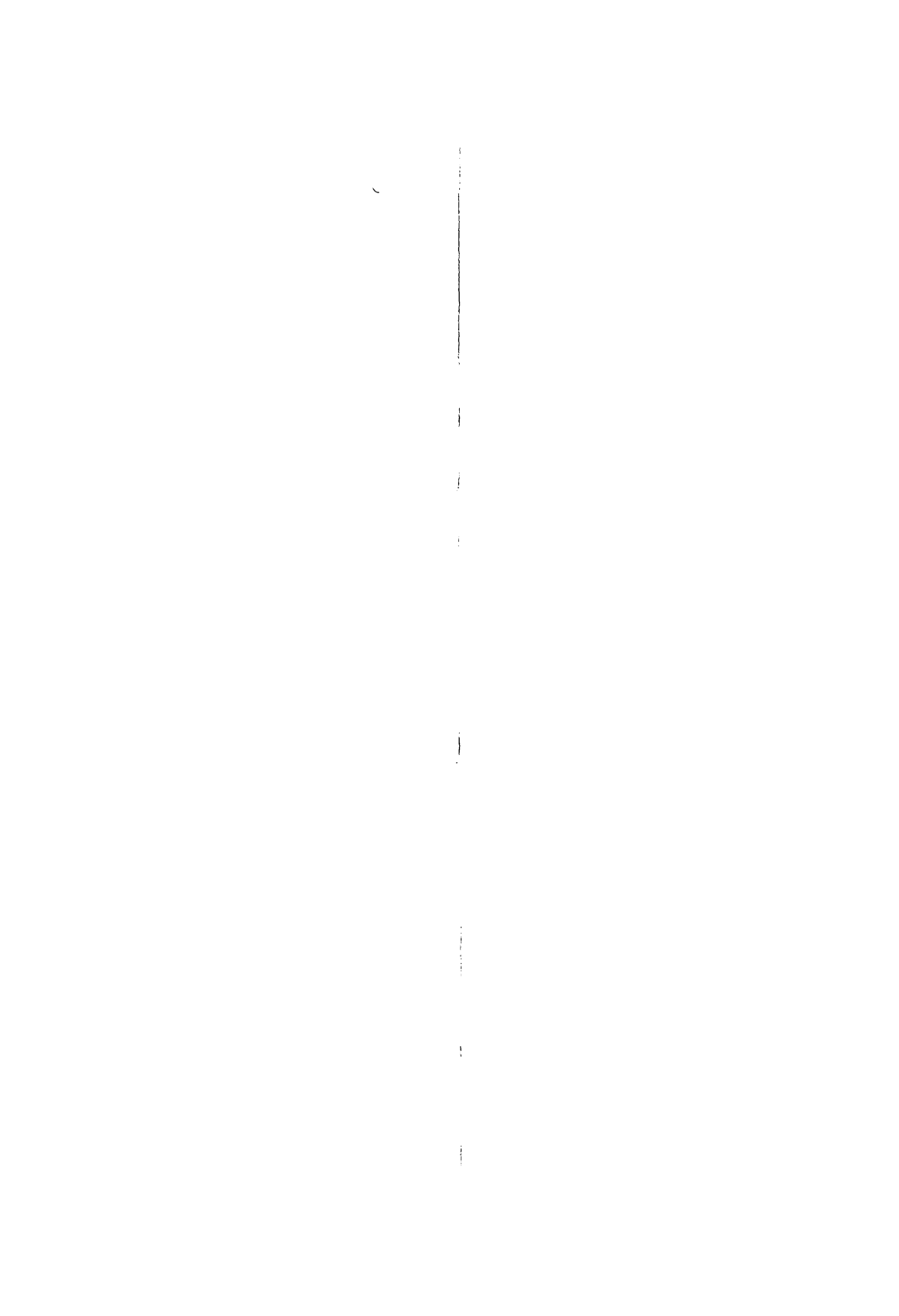
IN

MADISON UNIVERSITY, HAMILTON, N. Y.

NASHVILLE:

W. F. BANG & CO., BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS,  
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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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REV. G. W. EATON, D. D.

*Dear Sir:*—With pleasure we tender you the thanks of the Calliopean and Apollonian Societies, for the able, instructive and appropriate Address delivered before them on last night; and, while in their name we request a copy of the same for publication, permit us to add our individual solicitations that you will comply with our request.

With sentiments of respect and esteem,  
We Remain Yours, &c.

G. N. CROOM, B. B. BOONE, W. G. SAPPINGTON, SAM'L H. COWARD, JOHN L. CRIGLER,	}	<i>Committee of Calliopean Society.</i>	}	LANG. C. ALLEN, M. LOWE, H. READY, E. A. COLLINS, J. H. CASON.	}	<i>Committee of Apollonian Society.</i>
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TO THE COMMITTEES OF THE CALLIOPEAN  
AND APOLLONIAN SOCIETIES.

*Gentlemen:*—In reply to your respectful note soliciting a copy for publication of my Address of last night, I would say, that no one can be more sensible to its imperfections than myself; but if you judge it worthy of wider and more general attention, I commit the manuscript to your hands to dispose of it as you may think proper. Gratefully appreciating the respect and consideration you have accorded to me personally, and to the suggestions I have offered you in the Address,

I subscribe myself, with sentiments of high regard for each of you individually, and with the warmest wishes for the continued and increasing prosperity of the Literary Societies to which you respectively belong,  
Yours truly,

GEO. W. EATON.

MESSRS. G. N. CROOM, B. B. BOONE and others, *Com. of Col. Society.*

MESSRS. L. C. ALLEN, M. LOWE and others, *Com. of Apollonian Society.*



## ADDRESS.

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*Gentlemen of the Literary Societies  
of Union University:*

I account it among the peculiar felicities of a life not now young, that through your courtesy and by the kind providence of God, I am permitted to stand in this place and address you on this occasion. I am happy in having the opportunity to reciprocate the favor done to the Institution with which I am connected, by the honored head of your flourishing University a few years since, and to gratify a personal affection which is among the deepest and most abiding of my nature. I am conscious however of higher motives in the performance of the present service, than those which pertain to personal considerations. I have fondly cherished the patriotic hope that by a friendly visit to your region, and by the service I am to perform, I may perchance add a little strength, even if it be but a single link, of the mighty chain which encircles and binds together our glorious *union*. I love and prize the union of these States beyond the power of language to express. In its perpetuity and in an enlightened and cordial appreciation of its inestimable value on the part of its several members, I see a national advancement, glory and happiness—an inexhaustible source of political and social blessings for our country and the world, beyond the Statesman's mind in his widest conceptions adequately to comprehend, the Orator's tongue in its grandest utterances to express, or the Poet's pencil though charged with "colors dipt in heaven" to delineate. In its angry disruption, I can descry nought but scenes, from the contemplation of which, the imagination recoils with indescribable horror. Among the means which may be made available to strengthen

the bonds of this union, I deem the fraternal intercourse, the reciprocation of kindred services, the mutual exchange of intellectual treasures, and the cordial courtesies and amenities of high culture between those having in charge our higher institutions of learning, as not among the least potent and efficient. These Institutions are great centres of a wide, permeating and moulding, intellectual, moral and social influence. To them we are mainly to look for the production of minds of broad, generous and varied culture, of large and many-sided sympathies, exalted and directed by sound, moral and religious principles, qualifying them to take comprehensive, just and discriminating views of the diversified phases and conditions of society; and of the influences, permanent and transient, healthy and morbid, which lie back of, and give rise to these, and to form correct moral judgments and rational conclusions adapted for safe practical applications in extinguishing the *evil*, whether of oppression or anarchy, and conserving the *good*, whether of liberty or order, in a complicated system of civil polity; and while true to their own honest convictions in a firm and consistent adherence, and in a fearless but courteous expression, knowing still how to respect and properly appreciate opposing convictions, equally honest, of others differently situated, politically and socially. In proportion to the right culture the mind receives, the more multiplied are its points of sympathy with other minds, and with the common mind of society at large, and hence, the more competent it is to judge with candor and impartiality, and to act with discretion and safety, in respect to the diversities of human opinion and the varying social peculiarities, caused by different social institutions and conditions. Now, almost without exception, those who are recklessly and treasonably tugging at the pillars of the magnificent temple of our union, whether upon the north or the south side (for they are at work upon both sides, and the temper and conduct of both parties are equally to be reprobated and opposed) are men of *imperfect culture*, and hence, of *narrow* minds, of contracted and exclusive sympathies, of strong and violent prejudices (all the more strong and violent for the confined channel in which they run, bubbling, dashing, chafing, fretting and foaming along) and so



mentally and morally incapacitated to grasp and rightly apprehend the several elements of great and complicated questions, involving the proper adjustment and resulting harmony of diverse interests and antagonistic social forces, covered and protected alike by the broad ægis of our national constitution, and of shaping and directing their political and social action, so as to strengthen and maintain this adjustment and harmony. If the different portions of our widely extended country are to live in union and peace under a common political constitution, they must understand and respect the peculiar views and interests of each other, and while each is left to take care of and manage its own concerns, there must be a *mutual* seeking for the right adjustment of conflicting interests, and for the general good of the whole. All are mutually dependent upon, and necessary, the one to the other. All are equally interested in maintaining, in its integrity, the matchless constitution our fathers bequeathed to us—the richest inheritance ever left to a people by an ancestry, boundless in the wealth of wisdom and in the virtues of patriotism. For the preservation and consolidation of our union against the fratricidal efforts of narrow-minded and violently prejudiced *disunionists*, north and south, let us avail ourselves of the mighty influences emanating from our Universities and Colleges in both sections,—let there be a free, constant and magnanimous intercourse between the cultivated, comprehensive and patriotic minds controlling and going forth from these institutions, so that there may be formed a vast web-work of these influences, extending over the whole land, suppressing or rendering abortive all profane assaults upon the sacred temple of our union. With these introductory remarks, I pass to the special subject of my discourse.

The subject I have chosen for the present discussion is—

“THE CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS IN INTELLECTUAL EFFORT.”

In discussing the subject proposed, I shall aim mainly at the *practical* and the *useful*. I shall neither let down my plummet into the abyss of the profound, nor attempt to scale the heights of the transcendental, but shall keep within the limits and along the level of homely and tangible reality. It were a frivolous

errand, unworthy of the speaker and unjust to you, that he should have come away from his distant home at your courteous invitation, for the purpose of merely delectating your intellects with speculations, whether recondite or lofty, which had no perceptible bearing upon the stern realities and serious duties of earnest every-day life. And more exceptionable still, were he to spend the hour allotted to this service in depicting rainbow hues, however gorgeous and dazzling, upon the feathery spray and unsubstantial mists raised by the sports of fancy upon the surface of thought. No, whether I succeed or not, my honest purpose is to drop into your minds words of familiar counsel, that may serve as available capital to you in the great practical economies of a solemn and responsible agency.

The subject, gentlemen, named, is one eminently of practical and personal interest to you all. You belong to that portion of mankind whose main business in life is to benefit others by *intellectual* effort; to shed abroad the light of mind, to instruct, to inform, to guide, to exalt others, who will look to you as living fountains of mental and moral effulgence. If faithful to your calling, your whole life must be a series of intellectual efforts. Surely then the consideration of the conditions of success in this high sphere of action is pre-eminently proper and pertinent to this occasion. A word of definition here may serve as a beam of light to aid in the application of the point and force of subsequent remarks. I call *that* a successful *intellectual* effort, where light and power are evolved by the working mind, so as to irradiate and move other minds. However intense the mental action may be, if no illuminations are emitted, and no active force is generated, affecting the mass of mind with which the individual mind so acting is in contact, there is no real success. There may be much action and movement where the result is nothing but smoke and dust, that only blinds and perplexes.

There is what may be termed a *law of success* in every department of action,—certain *conditions* growing out of the very constitution of things, which must be recognized and observed, or all effort is fruitless, or fails of its appropriate end. And this law—these conditions, is something quite different

from the acting power itself. All agencies, both in the world of matter and of mind, act according to established laws, the disregard of which frustrates the purpose intended, and results in a waste of energy, or what is worse, serious disaster. Illustrations of this fact may be abundantly gathered from the material world around us. Power acting lawlessly and at random, is always useless or destructive. It is indeed a prime and essential element of efficiency, without which the law of its action is nothing. All conditions are a nullity, of course, without the living energy whose actions are to be regulated and controlled, and modified by them. Combine the power and the law, the agent and the conditions, and you secure the desired efficiency. Mere power, acting blindly, is not efficiency. Old Polyphemus retained all his power after his central orb of vision was extinguished, but its exertion was laughably futile. The wonderful results of modern civilization will be found to be the product of agencies acting under *specific conditions*, without the observance of which, no result would have been realized. The power of steam has existed in the world ever since fire and water were brought into contact. But for nearly six thousand years it was a useless or destructive agent, until by the genius of man it was subjected to certain conditions, and lo! it forthwith became the master-agency in pushing on the conquests of modern civilization. Other examples will readily occur to your minds. Now, these examples from the material world have their counter-parts in the world of mind. The agencies of mind are as much under law as the agencies of matter; and effective and beneficent action is as much dependent on conditions in the one case as in the other. We take it as a moral postulation, that every intelligent and responsible agent is in duty bound to accomplish all the useful results which the measure of his intellectual capacity, and his opportunities and circumstances give him ability to perform. As a matter of fact, however, we find that the results accomplished by different individuals, bear no proportion to the comparative measure of their intellectual power, or their opportunities for its effective exertion. Some individuals, confessedly of uncommon intellectual ability, and of large opportunities, accomplish little or nothing of permanent value during a long

life. Their reputation stands upon the mere possession of power, exhibitions of which they have made in some isolated cases. Others, on the contrary, far less gifted, perhaps of mediocre capacity, have strown their way with the richest blessings to their fellow-men, blessings flowing directly from effective and beneficent mental exertion, put forth to the full extent of their moderate abilities. Now excluding from our consideration the *morally* delinquent—those who are too lazy or sensual to make use of their power, and those who waste it upon trifles or selfish interests, we may still find a wide difference in actual results among those equally well-intentioned. Here too, the results are by no means in proportion to respective ability. Not a few of acknowledged power, original and acquired, spend their lives in comparative inefficiency. They have good purposes, and are always busy and *trying* to do something, but they somehow fail to make any decisive and permanent impression. They do not hit *right*, nay, they do not *hit* at all. They beat the air and exhaust their energies in fruitless efforts; they enlighten nobody; they arouse nobody; they give no impulse to any living thing. Others again, no better endowed, have the happy faculty of making effort tell, they seem always to do the *right* thing at the *right* time, and in the *right* way; and so the very most is made of the power they possess—no energy is dissipated on vacancy, every blow reaches the work aimed at, and expends its full force upon that *very* spot. Some mind is enlightened, instructed and moved in the right direction. Now in these latter cases, the difference of results is due mainly to the fact, that in one case the conditions of success are apprehended and observed—in the other they are overlooked and disregarded.

With these preliminary observations, we advance directly to the investigation of the conditions of success in intellectual effort.

In order to give the highest practical effect to what I shall say, I will descend from the region of generalities, and deal with particular cases. Allow me, young gentlemen, if you please, to be familiar and somewhat personal. Let me *use* you *individually*, and suppose that one of you—any of you, is called upon on

some fitting occasion to put forth a more than ordinary intellectual effort. You wish to do your very best, to come up to the full measure of your capacity, or it may be to stretch beyond your measure—to transcend yourself. What are the conditions to be observed, in order to realize the highest degree of success? What constitutes the “staff of accomplishment?” I shall take it for granted that you already possess the requisite of power, whether latent or more or less developed; you all have *mind* with its immortal and exhaustless energies. You have the *vivida vis animi*—the glowing fire of intellectual life—the original source of all mental emanations. This is the endowment of the author of your being who made you rational intelligences. There can of course be no compensation or substitute for its absence. *Without* it, a man is an idiot or a mere animal. And this endowment I hold is distributed more equally than actual manifestations indicate. Every man who is not a natural fool, has mind enough not only to make a considerable noise in the world, but to make his power felt and respected in the domains of intelligence. Your minds too have been considerably informed and disciplined. Your original power has received accessions of strength from knowledge and discipline. You are not unaccustomed to the use of your mental faculties. You have therefore *available* power and resources, and our present business is to enquire *how* you can make the *best* use of your power in its practical applications. Let us recur to the individual case: you are called upon for a special effort, for example, to prepare an oration, address or essay. The first thing I shall name among the conditions of success, not however as the most important, is the *choice of a subject*. *This* is of course the first thing to which attention is to be directed. It is idle to talk about the success of an effort, without taking into account the subject or object on which it is to be expended. But what is a *proper subject*? It is by no means necessary that it should be *novel*, or one that has been rarely discussed. Novelty, so far from being a recommendation may be a good reason for rejection. I have been amused with the anxiety manifested by some students under appointment for a public effort, either during their course or at their graduation, to get a subject quite out of the

old beaten tracks of discussion. They were concerned to get hold of something very *original*, and which had not been discovered by any of their predecessors, or been the theme on similar occasions. They had a great horror for hacknied and thread-bare subjects. Now this feeling is not altogether unreasonable, but it has less real ground than you are probably aware of. No subject involving important truth can be exhausted by the human mind, however vast its powers. Every truth is many-sided and has countless relations to other truths, and to the whole universe of truth. Taking your position upon one truth, you will find it a centre of a measureless circumference from which you may look out over an illimitable prospect, crowded and glorious with other luminous and radiating centres with which yours is connected, and with whose rays those of yours are blended, and constitute a part of the common effulgence. You may take your centre as a starting point, and by lines of relation travel on from truth to truth, until you reach the "flaming bounds of the 'universe,'" or you may rise upward, and by the successive rounds of the golden ladder connecting earth and heaven, ascend to the High Empyrean where *He* resides, out of the eternal and fathomless depths of whose infinite perfections flows all truth and goodness and beauty and bliss. One truth is seen to be connected with all other truths, on every side of it. The vast universe of truth is *one*, consistent and harmonious throughout, in which are mirrored the uncreated perfections of the eternal Godhead. You have no need to avoid a *common* subject through fear that it has been exhausted by other minds, and that nothing new or original can be said of it. The very fact of bringing the peculiarities of your own mind in contact with it, may give rise to new and peculiar combinations of power and beauty, before unknown. Each individual mind has a configuration and distinctive peculiarities of its own, which make it specially different from every other mind, and the light of truth, though the same every where, falling upon it, is decomposed and reflected in forms corresponding to the peculiar constitution and features of the individual mind imbibing it. Just as in nature, the light of the sun is reflected in peculiar hues from the different objects on which it falls accor-

ding to their respective nature and interior conditions, and these hues are susceptible of endless varieties.

What an eminent writer says of the elementary principle of faith, we may apply to the point under consideration. "Faith" says he receives an enrichment—a diversity of color and an individual form from the peculiarities of the mind wherein it lodges. Shall we say that as when the pure splendor of the sun falls on the unequal prism of crystal, it undergoes decomposition, and while losing a portion of its intensity, yet throws off its several elements of beauty—its seven colors that diversify all the face of nature; so when the brightness of the divine glory and the unsullied beams of eternal life come in upon the soul and are there imbibed, the finite substance with its limitation of faculty, its personal figure, its individual constitution, imparts diversity to the celestial element, and gives birth to new and special forms of emotion." You may be sure, therefore, that when an original and active mind takes hold of a subject, however common and trite, there will be something new and peculiarly interesting elicited; some new aspect, some undetected relation is brought out, or there is something in the manner and mode of the thought and expression which invests the whole subject with fresh interest. Old Horace says in his "Ars Poetica" that it is the province of genius to invest a trite topic with the charms of novelty. Coleridge takes up and expands the idea, and asserts that "in Philosophy equally as in Poetry, it is the highest and most useful prerogative of genius to produce the strongest impressions of novelty, while it rescues admitted truths from the neglect caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission." We would extend the idea still further, and say that it is the prerogative of every thinking, independent mind, whether or not endowed with that mysterious, indefinable something, called *genius*, to invest every subject it handles with a new and special interest. The interest lies in the peculiar nature of the product resulting from the combination of the ethereal intellectual spirit of the mind, with the subject with which it has come into co-existence. The mind, by the subtle process of thought, has given something of its own configuration and hue to the subject, and therefore, it

seems really new, though treated and discussed a thousand times by other minds. I dare to say, your own experience, short as it may be, can verify this statement. You have doubtless listened to, or read expositions of the commonest subjects—those which lie upon the very surface of things, and are patent to the observations and familiar to the thoughts of every day life, which present them in new lights and open new views, imparting to them a beauty, charm and fascination, far beyond the interest of mere novelty. In your delightful surprise, you exclaim, "why as familiar as the subject has been to me, I never thought of it in this light before! It has a beauty and a richness which I had not dreamed it possessed." This new interest has been given to it by the mind dealing with it in its own original and peculiar way. The only reason why any subject becomes trite and common-place is, that there are so many minds that do not think at all, which slavishly follow in its treatment, in the track of some original and vigorous mind that has ably discussed and felicitously illustrated it, and to their limited apprehension seems to have exhausted it, and so left them nothing to do but to pick up and flourish and present in the same form *its* thoughts and illustrations. Abandon then, gentlemen, this unnecessary hunting after novel and out-of-the-way subjects. The qualities which recommend a subject to your choice are of a very different kind. It should, first of all, be one of real and intrinsic *importance*, involving some valuable truth, the discussion and elucidation of which may be available for the instruction, illumination and moral guidance of those to be addressed. Waste not your efforts upon trivial and unpractical themes. In short, let the nature of the subject be worthy of the best efforts of an immortal mind, allied by its spirituality and eternity to angelic natures, and to God Himself; and whose powers shall expand and progress until it reaches the stature of the tallest archangel in the Hierarchy of Heaven.

2nd. The subject chosen should be *adapted* to the character and constitutional tendency of your mind. This proposition needs some explanation, and its importance will justify extended remark. *Adaptation* is an essential condition of success in any sphere of action. The *want* of it frustrates the end pro-



posed, however powerful the agency applied to effect it. But what do we mean by the *adaptation* of a subject to the character of the mind? We have no reference here to the calibre or capacity of the mind itself, and hence, mean not to intimate that a *little* mind should choose a *little* subject, and a *great* mind a *great* one. In the great domain of truth there are no little subjects. I care not how great the subject on which any mind chooses to make an effort. If there are important aspects or relations of the subject which it can apprehend and intelligibly present to others, *that* is a reason for choosing it, though there may be heights and depths which it can neither scale nor fathom. There are many subjects which have *familiar* aspects to us, and in numerous points touch our dearest interests, whose magnitude and vastness the intellect of Gabriel cannot grasp and comprehend. "God is love," is a theme invested with the profoundest and tenderest interest to us, and we can comprehend many of its interesting relations; but it is as vast as the universe on which it is expended, and as fathomless and incomprehensible as the nature of God. I am not disposed to warn any of you, whatever may be the measure of your capacity, against *great* subjects. If a subject is quite beyond the range of your faculties, or your knowledge is not sufficient to enable you to apprehend any of its elements or real aspects, *that* is another thing. It is to be rejected in this case, on account of its *unfamiliarity*, and not its greatness. But to proceed with the explication of our meaning of *adaptation*. Every mind, doubtless, has its *peculiar* gift or endowment by nature. There is a character and tendency which is original,—constitutionally impressed by the finger of the Creator on the embryo mind; and this peculiarity, if the mind is allowed to be developed naturally, very soon manifests itself, it may be, in the strength and activity of the *reasoning* faculty, or in the vigor and vividness of the *imagination*, or in some other power. Now, while we would strenuously maintain the importance of the cultivation and development of *all* the powers of the intellect, we would as earnestly recommend that the main intellectual efforts of each mind should proceed along the line of its native tendencies. The highest success can only be reached by

observing this condition. This is what I mean by *adaptation*, in the connection now under consideration. If a young man should come to me for a subject, who had the reasoning faculty large and active, and was deficient in imagination, I should not think of suggesting to him a highly *poetical* theme, unless I wickedly wished him to make a miserable failure. There are a few highly and universally gifted minds that are capable of achieving success in every department of intellectual effort, but these are exceptions to the general allotment. He who has the reasoning faculty in strength and prominence, should select a subject on which his logic may be displayed to the best advantage, and leave illustration and embellishment to others; and let him on the other hand, whose imaginative power is large, expend his chief intellectual efforts in the appropriate exercises of illustration, persuasion and enforcement, by living and impressive exemplifications. But some one may say, I do not know yet what my mental characteristics and tendencies are, and how can I judge of the adaptation of which you speak? "*Nothi se auton*," "Know thyself" is one of the first duties of an intelligent being after attaining to the power of reflection; and as the acquisition of this self-knowledge is a duty, it is within the reach of all. In regard to the specific point before us, there are some tests of adaptation, one or two of which I will suggest. If the subject be readily suggestive to your mind—if it easily starts trains of thought when brought into contact with your faculties, and further, if it interests your feelings,—if you find your mind *spontaneously* rising to meet it, or instinctively opening and expanding on its distinct presentation, as the flower opens and unfolds itself to the magic rays of the morning sun, you have good evidence of *adaptation*, and a reason for your choice. You may be assured that your effort upon such a subject, will not be lost. But again, your subject must not only be adapted to your own mind, but also to the auditory you address, otherwise your effort will be wasted; for recurring to our definition of a *successful* intellectual effort, it is seen to relate especially to its practical effect upon minds addressed. The adaptation, however, in this case, is of a different kind from the former. It consists in the ability to *understand* and *appre-*

*ciate* the effort rather than in the power to make it. There are many capable of admiring and feeling the force of high intellectual excellence, who can by no means produce it. But this admiration and sympathy can never be awakened by a subject, however appropriately treated, which is altogether beyond the range of the thoughts and interests of those to whom it is presented. He who should take as a theme for a discourse to a company of plain farmers, or illiterate laborers, an abstruse and knotty question on Science or Metaphysics, might as well talk to them in Greek as in English, and however masterly and profound his disquisition, he would enlighten and impress no one; his effort would be 'wasted on the desert air.' Choose then your subject with special reference to its adaptation in the sense explained, to your auditory, and you have complied with another *condition* of success.

This is still another kind of *adaptation* of higher range and wider scope. It is that which respects the relation of the subject to the state and prevalent tone of the minds of the community at large. If this relation be such as to secure the ready and earnest attention of the popular mind, and especially if the subject from existing circumstances takes strong hold of the interests and feelings of intelligent masses, a rare opportunity is furnished for an outlay of intellectual capital which, if sagaciously and judiciously applied will yield a rich revenue of substantial good and enduring fame. The great Poet of human nature has said:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men  
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune."

So it may with equal truth be said, "there is a tide" in the sentiments and feelings of communities and nations, which taken at the flood leads on to fame and power. The great popularity and commanding influence of some authors and public speakers are really owing less to the originality and intrinsic worth of their productions than to their felicitous adaptation to the prescribed circumstances of the times, and the consequent attitude and temper of the public mind. They have had the sagacity to discern the particular wants, tastes and sympathies, intellectual, moral and social, of the class they address, and have hap-

pily met the existing demand and a universal and hearty response has been returned to their sentiments suggestions and appeals, and in consequence they have become *famous*, and are looked up to as the lights of the age. There might have been tenfold more of real power of intellect and the results of exhausting thought in their production, yet had they been wanting in the quality of adaptation to a present felt want in those addressed, they would have fell comparatively powerless upon their minds, and they themselves in danger of being voted "*bored*." So much is depending upon the high order of adaptation now under consideration, I must interpose a word of discrimination, lest a false impression may haply rest upon your minds as to the precise scope of my meaning. The subject may be viewed in different lights greatly changing its moral aspects. Authors and speakers sometimes become popular favorites by successfully adapting themselves to the superficial and temporary views, the unreasoning prejudices, selfish interest, and wrong tastes and tendencies of the masses. Shrewdly discerning these, and ambitious of personal popularity for the subservience of selfish ends, they set themselves to the work of catering for the popular gratification, and a certain kind of smartness enables them to succeed according to their low and sordid wishes. I trust it is quite superfluous for me to say that I would not, by the most remote implication, be understood as including this sort of unworthy proceeding, in my view of the topic now urged upon your attention. Popularity, so acquired, is a very mean and perilous acquisition. It must be transient and meteor-like, at best, but being secured at the positive moral damage of the community, sooner or later perceived by them, their plaudits are changed into execrations, and the throne of their idol being consumed by the flame of their indignation, nothing is left him but the black and acrid ashes of shame and contempt. No, my aim has a high moral import. I am trying to teach you how you may best succeed in making deep and permanent moral impressions, for good on a large scale, and so achieve an honorable fame. For this purpose you must be able to command the respectful and serious attention of the great public, not more by the intrinsic value of your suggestions, than by their *appropri-*

*ateness* to the better convictions and deep-felt wants which at the time possess and agitate that public. The topic in this high moral view, admits of rich and varied illustration, but we have no time to do it justice. A thought or two further, and we must pass on. By the operation of moral and social causes, concealed and noiseless it may be for some time, society, scarcely knowing why, is brought into a state of unusual ferment. The great sea of the public mind begins to heave and undulate, and its agitated surface is easily raised into angry billows by the winds of ill-directed and excited discussion. Contrary currents, of prejudice and passion meet and dash against each other, raging, breaking and foaming in wild confusion. Floating and conflicting sentiments, half-formed and fragmentary conceptions, strong but vague apprehensions of some disastrous development, and an earnest but blind feeling after some great principles of right, stability and potency to control and calm the perilous agitation, mark the unsettled condition of the general mind. Now, let some mind, with the adequate comprehension, wisdom and power, look calmly over the scene of general perplexity, and by a grand and mighty effort seize upon the points of real difficulty, give fixedness, form and expression to the better sentiments and convictions of the great majority, bring forth, embody and enunciate in clear, intelligible, and impressive forms, the great principles applicable to the right solution of the complicated social problem, and point out the proper methods to a safe return to order, harmony and peace. This would be a grand illustration of the topic in one important moral sense. In the history of communities, as well as of individuals, there are occurring ever and anon, what are termed *crises*—particular junctures of circumstances, when the course of affairs can proceed no further as formerly—when a *new* order of things must be inaugurated, we hope to conserve the good of the past, and ensure desirable results in the future; and when the great question of the future weal or woe of society hangs upon the decision of the hour. The man who knows how to meet the exigency—who can speak the fitting and potential word that resolves the momentous question, eliminates the elements of a right decision, and gives the proper direction to the whole train of new and grander develop-

ments, becomes a great public benefactor, and his name is justly enrolled on the scroll of immortal fame.

We may take a less intensive and more common view of the matter. Providential events of marked character may so affect the public mind as to render it highly impressible to serious views, just sentiments and salutary admonitions. The mass of the community is softened and mobile, and is ready to receive whatever impression and impulses a wise and great mind may choose to give it. Here is an opportune occasion for an illustration of the moral aspects of our present topic of quite common occurrence. Such occasions should be watched for, and seized by all who desire to make the most of their mental efforts in effecting permanent benefit to their fellow men. The effects will not be temporary, though adjusted to a present and passing state of circumstances. *Real* good done to society within the sphere of our personal influence spreads itself by a law of diffusion, and is perpetuated by historic succession from generation to generation. It is a great distinction to attain by a knowledge of the wants and spirit of the times, and by the adaptation of our efforts to present demands, to the dignity of an acknowledged *organ* and *representative* of the age in which we live. But there is a still higher distinction within the reach of human capacity. It awaits him, who with a comprehensive understanding of the present, and holding himself in living sympathy with it, is able to horoscope the *future*, and lead on his generation in the shining way of ever-progressive improvement in all that enriches the condition, adorns the character and fits for a glorious immortality, rational and responsible beings. He is the *prophet-leader* of the race. Let not your ambition young gentlemen fall below this glorious eminence. The higher your aim, the higher you will rise by well directed and continuous effort. Let us return to the path of sober discussion. Having selected your theme with the recommendations specified, now, what is to be done? Why, the *main thing*, the *power* is to be applied which is to *accomplish* the object. Now the *crisis* comes. Gird up the energies, and walk right up to your subject, do not be afraid of it, grapple with it in good earnest, nay lovingly embrace it and press it toward your mind's centre. Res-

olutely exclude all other subjects not obviously related to it. Give yourself wholly to it, *totus in hoc*. Make it your intellectual companion by day and by night—in the reveries of waking, and in the dreams of sleeping. Withdraw yourself for the time being, from all other mistresses of your affections of more palpable and fleshly mould. Marry, if I may so speak, your mind and your subject, and make it part and parcel of your intellectual life and being. This blending of your mind and subject is a prime condition of the highest success. If you would make the true fire fly, if you would kindle a blaze that illumines without bewildering, if you would shake the lightning from the cloudy folds of your intellect, there must be this close juxtaposition, this living contact and subtle infusion and permeation of your subject with your faculties. When they are thus put in communication, thought will be generated by the natural operation of the established laws of mind. The faculties will be aroused and concentrated, and their functions vigorously discharged. A great and continued effort is ordinarily required to hold an important subject steadily to the mind. Energy and persistence of *will* are especially demanded here at the outset. Imbecility and fickleness of will have often prevented the successful action of the finest powers of genius. Take hold of your subject with the unrelaxing grasp of an indomitable will, and resolve come what may, you will make something out of it worthy of attention. We have not only need to exclude all other topics, but the external world, to go *alone* to some retired nook, to shut away the light from *without*, that a more brilliant light may be kindled *within*, by the introverted action of your mental powers. If you keep this steady hold of your subject so that you can contemplate it on all sides, you may calmly and confidently await the result of the living processes which will be set to work. This repose of the spirit (if I may be indulged in an apparent solecism,) over the scene of the active elaborations of thought, is itself a condition of success. There are some, while making a more than ordinary effort, so full of anxieties, fears and agitations, that the natural action of their powers is disturbed and prostrated. Others again under the impression that the result depends upon the dint of hard

thinking, lose all their labor by *disregarding the laws of thought*. They go with might and main *directly* at the hard subject, and beat their brains against it until they become almost fools, and produce nothing to the purpose. Now, thought does not come by *direct* effort to produce it. You cannot by a direct volition bring a single idea into being. The province of the will lies back of the region of ideas. Bring the subject by the power of attention (which is subject to the will) into the close contact of which we have spoken with the intellect. Rouse the faculties by the magic embrace and then they go bravely on, doing their glorious work according to the law of association. One thought gives rise to a second, and that to a third, and so on *ad infinitum*. On the practical treatment of your subject I hardly need to say that the *first* inquiry is, what is its prime *significance*? You must have intelligent views, clear and consistent conceptions, or you will talk or write nonsense. As far as you can *understand* your subject, aim to understand it rightly and clearly, and let your highest ambition be to utter *good sense*. Discard the foolish wish to be profound or brilliant. Do not *try* to soar. If you imbibe the divine afflatus in the natural order of an intellectual process, you will find yourself rising fast enough by the glowing energy within, and you will have strength enough to bear up your readers or hearers with you.

The next condition of success of which I shall speak, relates to your style or modes of expression. Having attained to a just and clear understanding of your subject, or those aspects of it which you are able to comprehend, and having produced an accumulation of proper conceptions and ideas in relation to it, the next thing of importance is the *medium* through which you are to convey your knowledge and treasure to other minds. I assume it to be a law with rare exceptions, that distinct and clear conceptions will clothe themselves with definite and conspicuous phraseology. There seems to be really a natural and vital connexion between thought and language. Without entering here into the metaphysical controversy, in regard to the question whether it be possible to think *without words*; I cannot doubt that thought naturally seeks to find utterance in appropriate words. The idea rising in the mind seems to be in-



distinct with life and spontaneously seeks after a medium of outward manifestation. If this theory is in the fullest extent true, we might safely leave the mode of expression—the language and style to follow as a consequence of the thinking process, and confine our directions and instructions to the science and act of correct thinking, being assured that if we can make the intellect think rightly, strongly and clearly, it will find for itself fitting modes of manifestation. Practically however, the theory does not always hold good. We meet sometimes with poor thoughts clothed in undeservedly good style, and good thoughts in mean attire. Language and style, are therefore made in our books of instruction distinct and separate subjects of consideration, and we are taught to divide our attention between the thought and the expression, and to establish the right relation between them. As language is the medium of the thought, it is obviously important in order to give the highest power of impression to the latter, that the former should be made as clear as possible. It should exhibit the thought in its real form and just proportions, without obscuration or distortion. *This* is the principal direction I have to give as to style, and its observance I hold to be a highly important condition of success, in intellectual effort. The office of language is not to *conceal*, as the cunning Talleyrand asserted, but to *utter* in the clearest and most forcible manner the *thought* within us. It is the main means in reaching and affecting other minds. In giving expression to your conceptions—follow this rule:—use the *word* which most exactly and impressively sets forth the conception in your mind. If you wish to embellish, do it *after* this paramount end has been secured, and so as to enhance and not diminish the effect. Use no words *at random* or without a reason *why* the particular word you have selected, should be the one and not another, and let every word be significant and loaded with thought. In fine, do justice to your thought, in the dress you give it, and here let me entreat you as you value and desire to secure intellectual power, eschew the silly *penchant* for what is called *fine writing*. I have come almost to loathe the very expression—“fine writing.” If you bend your energies to this pursuit you will in the end have thought *fine* enough in a different sense of the epithet.

It will be *so* fine, that nobody can see or feel it. I do not mean by this, to depreciate proper attention to the elegancies and beauties of style. No one enjoys a truly elegant and beautiful style more than I do, but I hold, that style is truly so, only as it presents in a striking light the elegance and beauty of the thought of which it is a medium, so perfect as not to be itself noticed. I cannot forbear here to express my conviction, of the inutility of devoting much time *directly* to the study and improvement of style. In the general study of the classics, ancient and modern, by which I mean the best works in ancient and modern literature, we learn the force and beauty of words and phrases, but it is in *immediate* connexion with the living thought enshrined in them; and when we begin to think for ourselves, we readily appropriate without study kindred forms of expression. I cannot but believe that there is much truth after all in the theory already alluded to, that original living thought instinctively appropriates fitting modes of utterance. In the writings of great and original geniuses, we may distinguish a singular and striking *conformity* and *adaptation* of the words to the ideas. The *word* seems to be the *very form*—the embodiment of the idea which is the animating life, glowing through and illumining it with its living light. The very words are *alive* and *luminous*, and so intimately blended with the ideas that you cannot change them for others, without affecting the peculiar force and beauty of the meaning. They are not intended to be separated any more than the *spirit* and the body, which is its palpable impersonation. Now I believe the same effect will be realized to a greater or less degree in every case, where there is original spontaneous out-gushing, strong, full and clear thought. It will seek for itself the best modes of manifestation. A strong and clear conception will disdain and repudiate a feeble and bungling mode of utterance. It will *demand* the *trumpet-word* that gives a "*certain* sound" and a clear *ring*. If then you would attain to a vigorous, felicitous and effective style, let your chief concernment be directed to the elaboration of original, distinct and perfectly formed ideas. If you succeed in this, I will go security for your *style*—your thoughts will come forth to view, out of your laboring mind, all

perfect in outward form, as Venus arising from the ocean's spray, in the majesty of power, and in the radiance of beauty.

## PHYSICAL CONDITIONS.

The conditions which I have named thus far, are purely *intellectual*, i. e., they depend upon the nature and constitution of the mind itself. But we are not all *intellect*; there are other parts of our nature, which in our present state of existence, are vitally connected with the intellect, and their peculiar condition has much to do in directing and controlling its action. We have a *fleshly* corporeity, and it has a most intimate and mysterious connexion with the intelligent principle which animates it. That the *brain* is the *material* organ of thought, the medium through which the intellect manifests itself, has come to be generally regarded as a fundamental doctrine in Mental Science. This is a doctrine not peculiar to Phrenologists, though they have done much to elucidate and verify it. It stands clear, however, of their manifestations and cranial divisions. He who denies that the intellect operates through the brain,—that the head is the workshop where thought is elaborated, would be regarded as much opposed to the deliverances of true science, as the advocates of a stationary earth, with the sun and stars actually sweeping their circumferences around it. The action of the intellect will be necessarily modified by the state of the brain; but the brain itself is in living sympathy with the stomach and other viscera, and its normal and healthy condition depends upon a corresponding state in these. Moreover, it is exquisitely sensitive to every change which they undergo. The perfection of manhood in its present state is expressed in the aphorism, "*sana mens in sano corpore.*" It is a condition eminently desirable, and I hesitate not to say, essential to the highest achievements of the in-

tellectual power. These general remarks on the connexion of body and mind are designed to prepare the way for the brief consideration of some *physical* conditions of success in intellectual effort. This is a large, and by no means unimportant branch of our subject, but in treating it in the imperfect manner in which I am compelled to do in the narrow limits to which I must confine myself, I may be exposed to the charge of degrading the whole discussion by the introduction of topics too grossly *material* and seemingly frivolous. But let it be borne in mind, in the first place, that the complexity of matter and spirit in our present mode of being, imposes necessary conditions of a physical nature upon the action and development of mind, which cannot be ignored with impunity; and in the second place, that the importance of a fact or incident, is not to be estimated by its apparent insignificance in itself considered, but by the *consequences*, whether immediate or remote, which flow from it in the natural course of things, or rather, we should say, by the arrangements of an over-ruling Providence. Every where in nature and providence, we may mark effects of great magnitude and far-reaching influence resulting from causes apparently the most slight and trivial. A paltry insect entangled in a delicate wheel of a vast machinery, may disorder and frustrate the action of its whole complicated arrangements. A spark of fire no larger than a pin's head, has kindled a conflagration, which in a few hours has transformed the fairest portion of a mighty city into a blackened, smoking desolation. A slight misstep, or a particle of dust casually sucked in by the inspiring breath, may occasion the death of an individual, on whom alone depended the execution of an enterprise affecting the destinies of nations for generations to come. Such illustrations of the importance of apparently trivial incidents may be gathered in abundance from the history of communities and of individuals. Nothing is insignificant which has a relation of cause to effect, or of occasion to result in the fortunes of individuals and communities, however disproportionate the former may seem to the latter. Every thing must be judged by its connexion with consequences. Now in consequence of the vital connexion between the functions of the body and the

faculties and affections of the mind, whatever effects the one, must in some way effect the other. This condition of things is coming to be much better understood than formerly, and well will it be for the healthy, powerful and beneficent action of the mind when its relation to the body shall be well understood and wisely regarded. The sciences of Physiology and Psychology are cognate, and should be studied in connexion; they are not indeed identical, for mind, the subject of the one, is different in its nature and attributes from the body, the subject of the other, and will eventually escape from its corporeal connexion, and act independently by its own immortal vigor; but, as we have said, in the commixed mode of our present condition, they are so inextricably and livingly bound up together, the vital influences of each are so incessantly and mutually playing the one upon the other, that a comprehensive and accurate acquaintance with the science of either cannot be acquired without taking within the scope of our view that of the other. It cannot, therefore, be materializing and lowering the dignity of our subject to touch with discrimination upon the consideration due to the state of our physical system, in its relation to the power and success of a mental effort. Besides a prudent regard to preserve the general healthiness and vigor of the bodily organs and functions, there is to be a *special attention* paid to whatever affects their condition *while* making drafts upon your intellectual powers and resources. You must take heed to what, both as to nature and quantity, you submit to the action of the digesting and assimilating organs. You may depend upon it, that whatever overcharges these or induces a morbid action of their functions, will extend its disturbing and vicious influence to the domain of the intellect. The brain, the immediate organ of mental manifestations, we have seen, instantly sympathises with the condition of the digestive organ. If this be surcharged by excess over the proper quantity which it is capable of managing, there will be corresponding oppression and sluggishness in the cerebral functions, unfitting them to be instruments of the mind's action. A drowsiness and dullness will supervene upon the intellectual power, from which it will be difficult to rouse it to exertion. If, again, what is

taken into the stomach be of an indigestible or noxious, or too highly stimulating nature, the effect upon the brain, and consequently upon the mind, will be far more sinister and disastrous. An abnormal, morbid, or excessive action will be transmitted to the brain, producing racking and consequent mental confusion, physical pains, or engendering subtle and poisonous vapors, which becloud the mind's vision and paralyze its powers, or precipitating it into a state of intense and unnatural activity, which soon exhausts its energies and leaves it powerless. In either case the intellectual effort you desire to put forth, will be a *failure*.

I hold in memory a painful incident illustrating the disastrous effect of an unfortunate deposition of indigestible material in the gastric region *during* an important mental process. It is not necessary to name the victim—or give any clue to his identification. The incident itself is pertinent and admonitory, and its relation may relieve the tedium of our dry discussion. The individual in question was appointed to prepare a discourse for an extraordinary occasion, demanding the highest exertion of his powers adequately to meet it. He addressed himself to the task under favorable circumstances, and progressed satisfactorily. He had laid down his main propositions, and proved and fortified them by solid argument and apposite illustration. The foundation of the mental fabric was broadly and firmly laid, and its nether story reared with compactness and symmetry, and in imagination, he saw the superstructure rise in grandeur and beauty, even to the culminating apex of its ample and magnificent dome. His soul kindled in prospect of his assured triumph on the great occasion. The high noon of his glowing enthusiasm was reached about midnight of the day previous to the one for the fulfilment of the appointment. He saw clear through the remaining processes necessary to the grand consummation of his labors. But having still a whole day and night to realize in a substantial form, the glorious vision, and being physically weary with his toil and vigils, he concluded to seek refreshment in grateful slumber, and resume on the morrow with renovated powers, his now delightful task, and carry it out to its completion. But in passing to the couch of repose, his evil

genius led him through the *pantry*, where his eye unluckily fell upon a mince-pie, in close juxtaposition to a pan of *lacteal* fluid, with a surface of a rich golden hue. Having drawn so heavily upon his brain, an "aching void" was felt in the region below. The temptation was too powerful to be resisted. He cut out a piece of the rich pastry, and dipping it into the unctuous fluid, deposited it in the *vacuum* below his diaphragm. No doubt his evil genius "grinned a ghastly smile" at the success of his fiendish machination! He retired to bed—"to sleep, perchance to *dream*." Aye, to dream of "Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire." He awoke from the tumultuous scene of horrible phantoms to an intolerable sense of excruciating and nauseating pain, vulgarly called sick-head-ache—one of the worst aches "flesh is heir to." He rolled in agony and retchings through the day, and then was left in helpless exhaustion of bodily frame, and almost idiotic confusion of mind. The gorgeous vision of the preceding night had fled, and could not be recalled. Chaos and darkness reigned where all had been harmony and light. It was now too late to retrieve the disaster, even had his powers been in working order. His only hope was that in meeting his audience and carrying them with him over the portion of the ground so thoroughly prepared, he might perchance gather inspiration sufficient to bear them on to the close satisfactorily to them and creditably to himself. A *triumph* he could no longer hope for. He went under a desponding prepense to the scene of trial. A crowded auditory was waiting for the fore-doomed speaker. He took them grandly enough along over the solid pavement of the preliminary argument, but no inspiration came, and at the end of the lofty and firm footing of demonstrated propositions he had so elaborately constructed, he "fell plumb" an unmeasured depth into a chaotic abyss of fragmentary and abortive conceptions, in which he floundered on to his own intense mortification, and to the blank surprise of his hitherto deeply interested audience. Never was the line of Horace,

*"Amphora cæpit*

*"Institui: currente rota:cui urcens exet!"*

more sadly exemplified, or rather it was *more* than exemplified. Instead of *something* coming out, however *diminutive*, there

was *nothing* but "confusion worse confounded." It was a most wretched failure, and all owing to the untimely lodgement of the mince-pie, dripping with cream into the digestive receptacle! A splendid intellectual triumph when entering within the range of easy achievement, was thus lost by the untoward incident. It utters a potent voice of warning to the aspirant for intellectual laurels, to beware of introducing mince-pie and cream into a *vacated stomach* when *in the midst* of his preparation to meet an opportune occasion for the display of his powers. Doubtless many a failure in intellectual achievement has been owing to causes even more trivial and petty than the one instanced. A 'horn' too many (and *one* is too many) of intoxicating beverage has hazarded and even negatived success in many instances. Allow me here to dwell for a few moments upon the vitiating influences of this species of physical excitement upon the healthy action of the mental powers. I do not propose to entertain you with a temperance lecture, I take it that you are in no special need of one. Your clear and manly countenances indicate your freedom from what has sometimes been termed "the curse of genius." Be that freedom complete and perpetual. But I wish to offer some remarks in this connexion, especially applicable to the present branch of our main subject. You are aware that the opinion has widely prevailed in former times, and is still entertained by many, even among those who are not habitual worshippers at the shrine of Bacchus, that the excitement induced by draughts from the wine cup or brandy bottle, is favorable to the development of great mental power, and so some of reputed general sobriety resort to such stimulants when a more than ordinary effort is demanded of them. Now, I need not say that I utterly repudiate this false and dangerous doctrine. I do not question that the immediate effect may be to enhance the vividness of the mind's perceptions, and give increased activity and energy to its operations, but it is transient, unnatural and unhealthy, and is more likely than otherwise to throw "ominous conjecture on the whole success;" for there is no physiological law more certainly established than that the higher the *forced* elevation above the normal condition of our physical and mental systems, the lower is the inevitable



subsequent depression, and so the ultimate result of the effort, at best, will be an incongruous intermixture of strength and imbecility, of sublimity and bathos, of brilliancy and insipidity. Or, if the effort as to power and brilliancy is sustained throughout by the constant supply of the unnatural stimulant, a morbid and poisonous element will be diffused through the whole resulting product, reducing its value, morally at least, to a very low standard. Productions of astonishing power and brilliancy have come from gifted minds under the inspiration, not of some Heavenly muse, but of Circe's cup; but the power was fierce and baleful, and the brilliancy, like that which gleams from the eye, and glistens in the scales of the terrible serpent. There can be no moral health and genial warmth, no true and elevating sublimity, no attractive and beneficent beauty in a production which has had its birth amid the convulsive throes of a mind wrapt in the exhilarating and poisonous vapors of Alcohol or Opium! No, no, the mind acts by far the most successfully for a noble triumph of its powers when *entirely* freed from all foreign stimulation of liquids and drugs, and is left to its natural action under the impulses of the native forces provided by its Maker in a sound, physical and mental constitution. The sublimest achievements of human genius have been attained by those who took nothing into their physical systems but the simplest preparations of nature's laboratory. Milton was strictly temperate, and the "*Paradise Lost*" stands at the head of all the productions of human genius, ancient or modern. Byron, with equal natural endowments, inflamed his system with draughts of fiery liquid, and "*Don Juan*" was the result!

I have one other suggestion to make before dismissing this part of the discussion. It is this:—The intellect should never be set to hard thinking while the organs of digestion are laboring to reduce the digestible materials submitted to them. The work of digestion should be *completed* before the elaborations of thought begin. The functions of the brain designed as instruments of the mind's action, must not be called into severe exercise until the pure fresh blood—the nutritive essence of our material food, is separated and refined by the several curious processes through which the aliment is made to pass in our cor-

poreal system, and is sent with its life-giving vigor through the delicate channels and ramifications of the nervous mass. With these imperfect hints, touching the *physical* conditions of successful intellectual action, we pass to higher considerations.

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## MORAL CONDITIONS.

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There is still *another* part of our being to be brought into action in all our intellectual efforts, and the prime considerations of true success are connected with its peculiar state and tone. I mean our moral nature, or more briefly, the *heart*. Here opens a wide and most attractive field of reflection and discussion, but my remarks upon preceding topics have been so protracted, as to leave me a few moments only for its consideration. You will, therefore, I trust, indulgently accept some general views instead of elaborated details. The moral nature constitutes the true dignity and grandeur of man as a creature of God. Here are found the elements which enter into our conception of the true man in the highest and noblest sense of the phrase. The true measure of the man, is not his mental calibre—his genius or talent, however powerful and brilliant; it is the breadth, depth and fulness of his moral nature. In this part of him, the affections, the sympathies, the whole family of warm and genial humanities have their home, if *home* they have at all in his bosom. Here is the fountain of motive, the salient springs of the generous impulse, the noble aim, the sublime purpose. This part of man's nature allies him to angels and to God—in it is reflected, if reflected at all, the image of the Divine. On this side of him Heaven opens, and its glory comes in to spread its celestial illuminations over all his inner being. We cannot doubt that it is in accordance with the Divine design, that the most potent agencies which

put in motion the intellectual machinery, come from the *stirred* depths of our moral being. The intellectual energies are never aroused to their highest capabilities, except under the stimulus of *intensified* emotion. In plain language, the *heart* must be interested—the moral feelings excited and enlisted in the subject on which our intellectual effort is expended, or we shall not reach complete success. How then is this moral excitation to be effected? In the first place, I answer, that you must consider your subject in respect to its *truth*. Truth is the appropriate object of all intellectual exertion. Its discovery, illumination, illustration and clear exhibition constitute the *proper* business of the human intellect. It was for this end it was created and endowed by its Creator, with its wonderful powers, perceptive, conceptive, abstractive, discursive and imaginative. They were all to be intently employed according to their respective functions, in finding out, in extricating from their matrices, in clearing from the maculæ of error, in polishing and appropriately setting the priceless gems of truth 'strown thick as autumnal leaves on Vallambrosa's brooks' over God's creation, that their mingled splendors might conspicuously blaze, and illumine, and guide intelligent and moral beings to their loftiest destiny. Now, every thing animate or inanimate, which has a sphere of action assigned it, acts the most vigorously and effectively in the direction of the *natural* end of its action. If it be turned aside from this direction, its action is embarrassed and futile, or morbid and pernicious. So it has been, to a most deplorable extent, with the human intellect. Under the control of a bad heart, (for we would repeat the sentiment already expressed, that in the *heart* the main-spring of all mental activity as well as of moral purpose, lies coiled up,) it has widely departed in its investigations, speculations, and discursions from its destined end. The history of man, since his apostacy, has in great part, been a history of the perversions, aberrations and frivolities of the human intellect. It has, indeed, retained and displayed its amazing capabilities, but they have been used to furnish to the corrupt heart, *gratifying* illusions instead of *distasteful* realities,—in fabricating and garnishing with tinsel and garish brilliancy, the unsub-

stantial and fantastic castle of error, rather than in the erection of massive temples of truth, founded upon the rock of eternal verities, and lifting their ample domes to heaven, through which stream the golden beams from the exhaustless fountain of all truth, lighting up the interior with splendors fadeless as they are pure. Still, however, true to its original destination, when under the impulse and direction of a heart which appreciates and loves the truth, the intellect acts with its highest energy and achieves its sublimest results. Not in the misty regions of *error*, has it vindicated its immortal and godlike energies, but in the golden field of *truth*. The great minds which have flung an enduring and fadeless glory upon their age and race by their intellectual achievements, were smit with the impassioned love of truth, and wrought with quenchless ardor in its service. The love of truth then, is itself a moral power of most potent efficacy in exciting the intellectual powers to their noblest action. You cannot, gentlemen, too assiduously foster and nurture this glorious passion. As subsidiary to this end, conceive of your subject as a *truth*, a substantial *verity*—an eternal *fact*.

The intellect, you have seen, indifferently acts in the service of error and of truth, I mean with the qualification noted in regard to comparative power. It can become deeply interested in a beautiful theory as a subject of pure *speculation*, without any reference to its truth or falseness. The imagination can disport itself right gaily amid its chimerical creations. The fancy can play most merrily with its gorgeous images, as unsubstantial as they are dazzling. The reasoning faculty can delight itself in the construction of abstruse and complicated formulæ, and in following out lines of curious ratiocination, leading to conclusions of no practical value; and altogether a most ingenious and brilliant display of intellectual gymnastics and pyrotechnics can be made, which surprises, charms and delectates us exceedingly; but all the while the *heart* is untouched, no moral emotion is awakened, all is cold as boreal corruscations glented back from mountains of ice. There are intellectual exhibitions, which are like the stars of a winter's night, intensely brilliant, but O! how cold! It is only when the subject of our contemplation is apprehended as a great *truth*, that it begins to stir and heave the

moral nature, and corrugate its surface with the waves of emotion. When our theme of meditation presents itself to the eye of the mind in the glorious form of a living truth, then the heart rises to meet and embrace it, and its warm throbbings impart a reactive impulse to the mind's action, which strings it with an energy derived from no other source. Truth is intrinsically excellent and peerlessly beautiful, for it is a direct emanation from the eternal fountain of perfect excellence and beauty, and it seems to possess a moral quality, or rather a moral *life*, which adapts it to affect and deeply move the moral nature. When a mighty truth is clearly revealed to the meditative mind, it pours its immortal vigor into the heart, and sends it thrilling along every artery, and vein, and fibre of the moral frame. *Then* it is, that the intellect girds up all its powers for its grandest achievements. Get a view of your subject then, young gentlemen, in the light of its *truth*, meditate upon it in this character, until its pure radiance comes in upon your soul and diffuses itself through all its avenues and chambers. Look abroad, then, upon its relations to other truths, and let your mind expand and expatiate over the scene of ravishing harmony. But there is still a higher and more potential view to be taken of the *moral aspects* of your subject. It is that of its relations to the *solid* and *permanent* benefit of your fellow-men,—to individual, social and national well-being. Truth is the great instrument in the enlightenment, reformation and restoration to his original dignity and purity, of erring and fallen man; and no sublimer mission can be assigned to any intelligence, however high in the scale of being, than the effective application of this instrument to its beneficent end. But this mission may be assumed by the humblest man or woman among us, who has a heart for the work. Nay, it is the duty of all to rise to the moral dignity and grandeur of this noble mission, and summon their best powers to the discharge within the scope of their respective capabilities and opportunities, of its high responsibilities. And truly, there is nothing so fitted to quicken into vigorous life the moral energies, and urge them to lay their authoritative command upon the intellect to do its utmost, as a proper conception of the office of truth, in regard to human

welfare, and a fervent desire to promote that welfare through the appointed means. And so it is, as we have asserted, that the intellect never acts with such astonishing energy and irresistible effect as when compelled into action by a *great heart*, expanding and glowing with the unselfish desire to avert impending evil, and secure substantial good to individuals, to society, to country, and to man. What was it that communicated the living fire to ancient eloquence, which has made it as immortal as the human mind itself? What armed the intellect of Demosthenes with those thunder-bolts that blazed and roared, and crashed with blasting destruction upon the traitors of his country? What made the eloquence of Cicero burn, and wrap, and consume, as an all-environing conflagration, the conspirators against the republic? It was their lofty and impassioned *patriotism*. Their great hearts glowed with its fires, like an oven heated seven times hotter than wont; and, hence it is, that we can almost hear, yet, the rumbling echoes of the thunders of the Bema, and see the reflected light from the fires of the Forum. The same thing has been exemplified a thousand times since. We need not go to the great masters of ancient eloquence for illustrative examples of our position. They have been rivalled, if not altogether surpassed by modern instances. What aroused the slumbering, dreaming intellect of Patrick Henry,—that *lazy* youth, who seemed to require some one to help him draw his breath—to those utterances of impassioned eloquence which startled and thrilled the nation's heart, and rocked the throne of England's monarchy to its very base? What clothed the intellect of the elder Adams with a robe of flame as he stood forth in the Continental Congress, the living impersonation of the genius of liberty, in defence of the immortal Declaration of our Nation's Independence? It was the same great passion, purified and sublimed, that fired the bosoms of their ancient prototypes. They had meditated upon their country's wrongs and their country's freedom, until a sacred madness possessed their mighty souls, imparting to their intellects a superhuman energy, that enabled them to pour forth overwhelming torrents of "breathing thoughts and burning words." Take a higher and more sacred example. The intel-

lect of Whitfield was of moderate capacity, as the productions which have come to us from his pen, clearly attest. But kindled up by the Divinest of all passions which can stir the human bosom—the *love of Christ*, and the perishing souls for whom He died—it became a *flaming fire*, melting into penitence and humiliation, the hardest and proudest hearts of God's enemies, and leading them trembling, submissive and adoring to the foot of the cross they had despised. We can obtain no conception of the wonderful power of this holy man, and model preacher of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, from his published sermons. He spoke for the most part, *extempore*, and under the power of a heavenly impulse of soul, and we learn of the inevitable and overwhelming nature of his divinely-impassioned eloquence, from the contemporaneous accounts of his hearers. They tell us that his very voice would seem, at times, like the peelings of the wrathful thunders of Heaven, and then, in "strains as sweet as angels use," would whisper the peace of the Gospel. He would rend the veil that secludes from mortal view the world to come, and carry his awe-stuck audience with him into the very midst of its eternal realities, and place them upon some awful eminence, from whence looking down, they seemed to see the ever-ascending smoke, and hear the piercing wails of the *lost* from the gulf of perdition, and looking upward, to behold the glories and catch the strains of immortal praise of the *saved* in their Heavenly home. Now, in view of the common order of his intellect, we know not why any of us might not attain to the transcendent power of Whitfield, were our whole moral nature elevated, energized and impelled by the same divine passion as was his. If such be the measure of our capabilities, may it not also be the required measure of our responsibilities? Here I rest the discussion, feeling that an apology is due to you for its length and imperfections. Such as it is, it is commended to your serious meditation and earnest improvement. God has given you intellects for the noblest purposes. He has afforded you every facility for their highest cultivation; and in this country and age, you will have the largest opportunities for their freest exercise. Manfully and resolutely rise to the responsibilities imposed by your gift and position, and let each one of you,

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lighting the torch of his intellect at the glowing fires of a heart kindled by the love of God and man, keep it lifted high, that its broad and steady illuminations may reach to the widest possible extent over the moral scene around you.