

INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
AT  
ST ANDREWS

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*JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE, M.A.*



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# INAUGURAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW'S



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BY

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RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY.

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## ADDRESS.

MY FIRST DUTY, in the observations which I am about to address to you, is to make my personal acknowledgments on the occasion which has brought me to this place. When we begin our work in this world, we value most the approbation of those older than ourselves. To be regarded favourably by those who have obtained distinction bids us hope that we too, bye and bye, may come to be distinguished in turn. As we advance in life, we learn the limits of our abilities. Our expectations for the future shrink to modest dimensions. The question with us is no longer what we shall do, but what we have done. We call ourselves to account for the time and talents which we have used or misused, and then it is that the good opinion of those who are coming after us becomes so peculiarly agreeable. If we have been roughly handled by our contemporaries, it flatters our self-conceit to have interested another generation. If we feel that we have before long to pass away, we can dream of a second future for ourselves in the thoughts of those who are about to take their turn upon the stage.



Therefore it is that no recognition of efforts of mine which I have ever received has given me so much pleasure as this movement of yours in electing me your Rector; an honour as spontaneously and generously bestowed by you as it was unlooked for, I may say undreamt of, by me.

Many years ago, when I was first studying the history of the Reformation in Scotland, I read a story of a slave in a French galley who was one morning bending wearily over his oar. The day was breaking, and, rising out of the grey waters, a line of cliffs was visible, and the white houses of a town and a church tower. The rower was a man unused to such service, worn with toil and watching, and likely, it was thought, to die. A companion touched him, pointed to the shore, and asked him if he knew it.

'Yes,' he answered, 'I know it well. I see the steeple of that place where God opened my mouth in public to his glory; and I know, how weak soever I now appear, I shall not depart out of this life till my tongue glorify his name in the same place.'

Gentlemen, that town was St. Andrew's, that galley slave was John Knox; and we know that he came back and did 'glorify God' in this place and others to some purpose.

Well, if anybody had told me, when I was reading about this, that I also should one day come to St. Andrew's and be called on to address the University, I should have listened with more absolute incredulity than Knox's comrade listened to that prophecy.

Yet, inconceivable as it would then have seemed,

the unlikely has become fact. I am addressing the successors of that remote generation of students whom Knox, at the end of his life, 'called round him,' in the yard of this very College, 'and exhorted them,' as James Melville tells us, 'to know God and stand by the good cause, and use their time well.' It will be happy for me if I, too, can read a few words to you out of the same lesson-book; for to make us know our duty and do it, to make us upright in act and true in thought and word, is the aim of all instruction which deserves the name, the epitome of all purposes for which education exists. Duty changes, truth expands, one age cannot teach another either the details of its obligations or the matter of its knowledge, but the principle of obligation is everlasting. The consciousness of duty, whatever its origin, is to the moral nature of man what *life* is in the seed-cells of all organised creatures: the condition of its coherence, the elementary force in virtue of which it grows.

Every one admits this in words. Rather, it has become a cant now-a-days to make a parade of noble intentions. The application is the difficulty. When we pass beyond the verbal propositions our guides fail us, and we are left in practice to grope our way or guess it as we can. So far as our special occupations go, there is no uncertainty. Are we traders, mechanics, lawyers, doctors?—we know our work. Our duty is to do it as honestly and as well as we can. When we pass to our larger interests, to those which concern us as men—to what Knox meant 'by knowing God and standing by the good cause'—I suppose



there has been rarely a time in the history of the world when intelligent people have held more opposite opinions. The Scots to whom Knox was speaking understood him well enough. They had their Bibles as the rule of their lives. They had broken down the tyranny of a contemptible superstition. They were growing up into yeomen, farmers, artisans, traders, scholars, or ministers, each with the business of his life clearly marked out before him. Their duty was to walk uprightly by the light of the Ten Commandments, and to fight with soul and body against the high-born scoundrelism and spiritual sorcery which were combining to make them again into slaves.

I will read you a description of the leaders of the great party in Scotland against whom the Protestants and Knox were contending. I am not going to quote any fierce old Calvinist who will be set down as a bigot and a liar. My witness is M. Fontenay, brother of the secretary of Mary Stuart, who was residing here on Mary Stuart's business. The persons of whom he was speaking were the so-called Catholic Lords; and the occasion was in a letter to herself:—

'The Sirens,' wrote this M. Fontenay, 'which bewitch the lords of this country are money and power. If I preach to them of their duty to their Sovereign—if I talk to them of honour, of justice, of virtue, of the illustrious actions of their forefathers, and of the example which they should themselves bequeath to their posterity—they think me a *fool*. They can talk of these things themselves—talk as

well as the best philosophers in Europe. But, when it comes to action, they are like the Athenians, who knew what was good, but would not do it. The misfortune of Scotland is that the noble lords will not look beyond the points of their shoes. They care nothing for the future and less for the past.'

To free Scotland from the control of an unworthy aristocracy, to bid the dead virtues live again, and plant the eternal rules in the consciences of the people—this, as I understand it, was what Knox was working at, and it was comparatively a simple thing. It was simple, because the difficulty was not to know what to do, but how to do it. It required no special discernment to see into the fitness for government of lords like those described by Fontenay; or to see the difference as a rule of life between the New Testament and a creed that issued in Jesuitism and the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The truth was plain as the sun. The thing then wanted was *courage*; courage in common men to risk their skins, to venture the high probability that before the work was done they might have their throats cut, or see their houses burnt over their heads.

Times are changed; we are still surrounded by temptations, but they no longer appear in the shape of stake and gallows. They come rather as intellectual perplexities, on the largest and gravest questions which concern us as human creatures; perplexities with regard to which self-interest is perpetually tempting us to be false to our real convictions. The best that we can do for one another is to exchange



our thoughts freely; and that, after all, is but little. Experience is no more transferable in morals than in art. The drawing-master can direct his pupil generally in the principles of art. He can teach him here and there to avoid familiar stumbling-blocks. But the pupil must himself realise every rule which the master gives him. He must spoil a hundred copy-books before the lesson will yield its meaning to him. Action is the real teacher. Instruction does but prevent waste of time or mistakes; and mistakes themselves are often the best teachers of all. In every accomplishment, every mastery of truth, moral, spiritual, or mechanical,

Necesse est

Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris:

our acquirements must grow into us in marvellous ways—marvellous—as anything connected with man has been, is, and will be.

I have but the doubtful advantage, in speaking to you, of a few more years of life; and even whether years bring wisdom or do not bring it is far from certain. The fact of growing older teaches many of us to respect notions which we once believed to be antiquated. Our intellectual joints stiffen, and our fathers' crutches have attractions for us. You must therefore take the remarks that I am going to make at what appears to you their intrinsic value. Stranger as I am to all of you, and in a relation with you which is only transient, I can but offer you some few general conclusions which have forced themselves on me during my own experience, in the hope that you may

find them not wholly useless. And as it is desirable to give form to remarks which might otherwise be desultory, I will follow the train of thought suggested by our presence at this place and the purpose which brings you here. You stand on the margin of the great world, into which you are about to be plunged, to sink or swim. We will consider the stock-in-trade, the moral and mental furniture, with which you will start upon your journey.

In the first place you are Scots; you come of a fine stock, and much will be expected of you. If we except the Athenians and the Jews, no people so few in number have scored so deep a mark in the world's history as you have done. No people have a juster right to be proud of their blood. I suppose, if any one of you were asked whether he would prefer to be the son of a Scotch peasant or to be the heir of an Indian rajah with twenty lacs of rupees, he would not hesitate about his answer: we should none of us object to the rupees, but I doubt if the Scot ever breathed who would have sold his birthright for them. Well, then, *Noblesse oblige*; all blood is noble here, and a noble life should go along with it. It is not for nothing that you here and we in England come, both of us, of our respective races; we inherit honourable traditions and memories; we inherit qualities inherent in our bone and blood, which have been earned for us, no thanks to ourselves, by twenty generations of ancestors; our fortunes are now linked together for good and evil, never more to be divided; but when we examine our several contributions to



the common stock, the account is more in your favour than ours.

More than once you saved English Protestantism; you may have to save it again, for all that I know, at the rate at which our English parsons are now running. You gave us the Stuarts, but you helped us to get rid of them. Even now you are teaching us what, unless we saw it before our eyes, no Englishman would believe to be possible, that a member of Parliament can be elected without bribery. For shrewdness of head, thoroughgoing completeness, contempt of compromise, and moral backbone, no set of people were ever started into life more generously provided. You did not make these things; it takes many generations to breed high qualities either of mind or body; but you have them, they are a fine capital to commence business with, and, as I said, *Noblesse oblige*.

So much for what you bring with you into the world. And the other part of your equipment is only second in importance to it: I mean your education. There is no occasion to tell a Scotchman to value education. On this, too, you have set us an example which we are beginning to imitate: I only wish our prejudices and jealousies would let us imitate it thoroughly. In the form of your education, whether in the parish school or here at the university, there is little to be desired. It is fair all round to poor and rich alike. You have broken down, or you never permitted to rise, the enormous barrier of expense which makes the highest education in

England a privilege of the wealthy. The subject-matter is another thing. Whether the subjects to which, either with you or with us, the precious years of boyhood and youth continue to be given, are the best in themselves, whether they should be altered or added to, and if so, in what direction and to what extent, are questions which all the world is busy with. Education is on everybody's lips. Our own great schools and colleges are in the middle of a revolution, which, like most revolutions, means discontent with what we have, and no clear idea of what we would have. You yourselves cannot here have wholly escaped the infection, or if you have, you will not escape it long. The causes are not far to seek. On the one hand there is the immense multiplication of the subjects of knowledge, through the progress of science, and the investigation on all sides into the present and past condition of this planet and its inhabitants; on the other, the equally increased range of occupations, among which the working part of mankind are now distributed, and for one or other of which our education is intended to qualify us. It is admitted by everyone that we cannot any longer confine ourselves to the learned languages, to the grammar and logic and philosophy which satisfied the seventeenth century. Yet, if we try to pile on the top of these the histories and literatures of our own and other nations, with modern languages and sciences, we accumulate a load of matter which the most ardent and industrious student cannot be expected to cope with.

It may seem presumptuous in a person like myself,



unconnected as I have been for many years with any educational body, to obtrude my opinion on these things. Yet outsiders, it is said, sometimes see deeper into a game than those who are engaged in playing it.

In everything that we do or mean to do, the first condition of success is that we understand clearly the result which we desire to produce. The house-builder does not gather together a mass of bricks and timber and mortar, and trust that somehow a house will shape itself out of its materials. Wheels, springs, screws, and dial-plate will not constitute a watch, unless they are shaped and fitted with the proper relations to one another. I have long thought that, to educate successfully, you should first ascertain clearly, with sharp and distinct outline, what you mean by an educated man.

Now our ancestors, whatever their other shortcomings, understood what they meant perfectly well. In their primary education and in their higher education they knew what they wanted to produce, and they suited their means to their ends. They set out with the principle that every child born into the world should be taught his duty to God and man. The majority of people had to live, as they always must, by bodily labour; therefore every boy was as early as was convenient set to labour. He was not permitted to idle about the streets or lanes. He was apprenticed to some honest industry. Either he was sent to a farm, or, if his wits were sharper, he was allotted to the village carpenter, bricklayer, tailor,

shoemaker, or whatever it might be. He was instructed in some positive calling by which he could earn his bread and become a profitable member of the commonwealth. Besides this, but not, you will observe, independent of it, you had in Scotland, established by Knox, your parish schools where he was taught to read, and, if he showed special talent that way, he was made a scholar of and trained for the ministry. But neither Knox nor any one in those days thought of what we call enlarging the mind. A boy was taught reading that he might read his Bible and learn to fear God and be ashamed and afraid to do wrong.

An eminent American was once talking to me of the school system in the United States. The boast and glory of it, in his mind, was that every citizen born had a fair and equal start in life. Every one of them knew that he had a chance of becoming President of the Republic, and was spurred to energy by the hope. Here too, you see, is a distinct object. Young Americans are all educated alike. The aim put before them is to get on. They are like runners in a race, set to push and shoulder for the best places; never to rest contented, but to struggle forward in never-ending competition. It has answered its purpose in a new and unsettled country, where the centre of gravity has not yet determined into its place; but I cannot think that such a system as this can be permanent, or that human society, constituted on such a principle, will ultimately be found tolerable. For one thing, the prizes of life so looked at are at best but few and the competitors many. 'For myself,' said the great Spinoza, 'I am



certain that the good of human life cannot lie in the possession of things which, for one man to possess, is for the rest to lose, but rather in things which all can possess alike, and where one man's wealth promotes his neighbour's.' At any rate, it was not any such notion as this which Knox had before him when he instituted your parish schools. We had no parish schools in England for centuries after he was gone, but the object was answered by the Church catechising and the Sunday school. Our boys, like yours, were made to understand that they would have to answer for the use that they made of their lives. And in both countries, by industrial training, they were put in the way of leading useful lives if they would be honest. The essential thing was, that every one that was willing to work should be enabled to maintain himself and his family in honour and independence.

Pass to the education of a scholar, and you find the same principle otherwise applied. There are two ways of being independent. If you require much, you must produce much. If you produce little, you must require little. Those whose studies added nothing to the material wealth of the world were taught to be content to be poor. They were a burden on others, and the burden was made as light as possible. The thirty thousand students who gathered out of Europe to Paris to listen to Abelard did not travel in carriages, and they brought no portmanteaus with them. They carried their wardrobes on their backs. They walked from Paris to Padua, from Padua to Salamanca, and they

begged their way along the roads. The laws of mendicancy in all countries were suspended in favour of scholars wandering in pursuit of knowledge. At home, at his college, the scholar's fare was the hardest, his lodging was the barest. If rich in mind, he was expected to be poor in body; and so deeply was this theory grafted into English feeling that earls and dukes, when they began to frequent universities, shared the common simplicity. The furniture of a noble earl's room at an English university at present may cost, including the pictures of opera-dancers and race-horses and such like, perhaps five hundred pounds. When the magnificent Earl of Essex was sent to Cambridge, in Elizabeth's time, his guardians provided him with a deal table covered with green baize, a truckle bed, half-a-dozen chairs, and a wash-hand basin. The cost of all, I think, was five pounds.

You see what was meant. The scholar was held in high honour; but his contributions to the commonwealth were not appreciable in money, and were not rewarded with money. He went without what he could not produce, that he might keep his independence and his self-respect unharmed. Neither scholarship nor science starved under this treatment: more noble souls have been smothered in luxury than were ever killed by hunger. Your Knox was brought up in this way, Buchanan was brought up in this way, Luther was brought up in this way, and Tyndal, who translated the Bible, and Milton and Kepler and Spinoza, and your Robert Burns. Compare Burns, bred behind the plough, and our English Byron!



This was the old education, which formed the character of the English and Scotch nations. It is dying away at both extremities, as no longer suited to what is called modern civilisation. The apprenticeship as a system of instruction is gone. The discipline of poverty—not here as yet, I am happy to think, but in England—is gone also; and we have got instead what are called enlarged minds.

I ask a modern march-of-intellect man what education is for; and he tells me it is to make educated men. I ask what an educated man is: he tells me it is a man whose intelligence has been cultivated, who knows something of the world he lives in—the different races of men, their languages, their histories, and the books that they have written; and again, modern science, astronomy, geology, physiology, political economy, mathematics, mechanics—everything in fact which an educated man ought to know.

Education, according to this, means instruction in everything which human beings have done, thought, or discovered; all history, all languages, all sciences.

The demands which intelligent people imagine that they can make on the minds of students in this way are something amazing. I will give you a curious illustration of it. When the competitive examination system was first set on foot, a board of examiners met to draw up their papers of questions. The scale of requirement had first to be settled. Among them a highly distinguished man, who was to examine in English history, announced that, for himself, he

meant to set a paper for which Macaulay might possibly get full marks; and he wished the rest of the examiners to imitate him in the other subjects. I saw the paper which he set. I could myself have answered two questions out of a dozen. And it was gravely expected that ordinary young men of twenty-one, who were to be examined also in Greek and Latin, in moral philosophy, in ancient history, in mathematics, and in two modern languages, were to show a proficiency in each and all of these subjects, which a man of mature age and extraordinary talents, who had devoted his whole time to that special study, had attained only in one of them.

Under this system teaching becomes cramming; an enormous accumulation of propositions of all sorts and kinds is thrust down the students' throats, to be poured out again, I might say vomited out, into examiners' laps; and this when it is notorious that the sole condition of making progress in any branch of art or knowledge is to leave on one side everything irrelevant to it, and to throw your undivided energy on the special thing you have in hand.

Our old Universities are struggling against these absurdities. Yet, when we look at the work which they on their side are doing, it is scarcely more satisfactory. A young man going to Oxford learns the same things which were taught there two centuries ago; but, unlike the old scholars, he learns no lessons of poverty along with it. In his three years' course he will have tasted luxuries unknown to him at home, and contracted habits of self-indulgence which make



subsequent hardships unbearable: while his antiquated knowledge, such as it is, has fallen out of the market; there is no demand for him; he is not sustained by the respect of the world, which finds him ignorant of everything in which it is interested. He is called educated; yet, if circumstances throw him on his own resources, he cannot earn a sixpence for himself. An Oxford education fits a man extremely well for the trade of gentleman. I do not know for what other trade it does fit him as at present constituted. More than one man who has taken high honours there, who has learnt faithfully all that the University undertakes to teach him, has been seen in these late years breaking stones upon a road in Australia. That was all which he was found to be fit for when brought in contact with the primary realities of things.

It has become necessary to alter all this; but how and in what direction? If I go into modern model schools, I find first of all the three R's, about which we are all agreed; I find next the old Latin and Greek, which the schools must keep to while the Universities confine their honours to these; and then, by way of keeping up with the times, 'abridgments,' 'text-books,' 'elements,' or whatever they are called, of a mixed multitude of matters, history, natural history, physiology, chronology, geology, political economy, and I know not what besides; general knowledge which, in my experience, means general ignorance: stuff arranged admirably for one purpose, and one purpose only—to make a show in examinations. To cram a lad's mind with infinite names of things which

he never handled, places he never saw or will see, statements of facts which he cannot possibly understand, and must remain merely words to him—this, in my opinion, is like loading his stomach with marbles; for bread giving him a stone. It is wonderful what a quantity of things of this kind a quick boy will commit to memory, how smartly he will answer questions, how he will show off in school inspections, and delight the heart of his master. But what has been gained for the boy himself, let him carry this kind of thing as far as he will, if, when he leaves school, he has to make his own living? Lord Brougham once said he hoped a time would come when every man in England would read Bacon. William Cobbett, that you may have heard of, said he would be contented if a time came when every man in England would eat bacon. People talk about enlarging the mind. Some years ago I attended a lecture on education in the Free Trade Hall at Manchester. Seven or eight thousand people were present, and among the speakers was one of the most popular orators of the day. He talked in the usual way of the neglect of past generations, the benighted peasant, in whose besotted brain even thought was extinct, and whose sole spiritual instruction was the dull and dubious parson's sermon. Then came the contrasted picture: the broad river of modern discovery flowing through town and hamlet, science shining as an intellectual sun, and knowledge and justice, as her handmaids, redressing the wrongs and healing the miseries of mankind. Then, wrapt with inspired frenzy, the musical voice, thrilling with



transcendent emotion—‘I seem,’ the orator said, ‘I seem to hear again the echo of that voice which rolled over the primeval chaos, saying, “Let there be light.”’

As you may see a breeze of wind pass over standing corn and every stalk bends and a long wave sweeps across the field, so all that listening multitude swayed and wavered under the words. Yet, in plain prose, what did this gentleman definitely mean? First and foremost, a man has to earn his living, and all the ‘ologies will not of themselves enable him to earn it. Light! yes, we do want light, but it must be light which will help us to work and find food and clothes and lodging for ourselves. A modern school will undoubtedly sharpen the wits of a clever boy. He will go out into the world with the knowledge that there are a great many good things in it which it will be highly pleasant to get hold of; able as yet to do no one thing for which anybody will pay him, yet bent on pushing himself forward into the pleasant places somehow. Some intelligent people think that this is a promising state of mind, that an ardent desire to better our position is the most powerful incentive that we can feel to energy and industry. A great political economist has defended the existence of a luxuriously-living idle class as supplying a motive for exertion to those who are less highly favoured. They are like Olympian gods, condescending to show themselves in their Empyrean, and to say to their worshippers, ‘Make money, money enough, and you and your descendants shall become as we are, and shoot grouse and drink champagne all the days of your lives.’

No doubt this would be a highly influential incitement to activity of a sort; only it must be remembered that there are many sorts of activity, and short smooth cuts to wealth as well as long hilly roads. In civilised and artificial communities there are many ways, where fools have money and rogues want it, of effecting a change of possession. The process is at once an intellectual pleasure, extremely rapid, and every way more agreeable than dull mechanical labour. I doubt very much indeed whether the honesty of the country has been improved by the substitution so generally of mental education for industrial; and the three R's, if no industrial training has gone along with them, are apt, as Miss Nightingale observes, to produce a fourth R of rascaldom.

But it is only fair, if I quarrel alike with those who go forward and those who stand still, to offer an opinion of my own. If I call other people's systems absurd, in justice I must give them a system of my own to retort upon. Well, then, to recur once more to my question. Before we begin to build, let us have a plan of the house that we would construct. Before we begin to train a boy's mind, I will try to explain what I, for my part, would desire to see done with it.

I will take the lowest scale first.

I accept without qualification the first principle of our forefathers, that every boy born into the world should be put in the way of maintaining himself in honest independence. No education which does not



make this its first aim is worth anything at all. There are but three ways of living, as some one has said; by working, by begging, or by stealing. Those who do not work, disguise it in whatever pretty language we please, are doing one of the other two. A poor man's child is brought here with no will of his own. We have no right to condemn him to be a mendicant or a rogue; he may fairly demand therefore to be put in the way of earning his bread by labour. The practical necessities must take precedence of the intellectual. A tree must be rooted in the soil before it can bear flowers and fruit. A man must learn to stand upright upon his own feet, to respect himself, to be independent of charity or accident. It is on this basis only that any superstructure of intellectual cultivation worth having can possibly be built. The old apprenticeship therefore was, in my opinion, an excellent system, as the world used to be. The Ten Commandments and a handicraft made a good and wholesome equipment to commence life with. Times are changed. The apprentice plan broke down: partly because it was abused for purposes of tyranny; partly because employers did not care to be burdened with boys whose labour was unprofitable; partly because it opened no road for exceptional clever lads to rise into higher positions; they were started in a groove from which they could never afterwards escape.

Yet the original necessities remain unchanged. The Ten Commandments are as obligatory as ever, and practical ability, the being able to do something and not merely to answer questions, must still be the

backbone of the education of every boy who has to earn his bread by manual labour.

Add knowledge afterwards as much as you will, but let it be knowledge which will lead to the doing better each particular work which a boy is practising, and every fraction of it will thus be useful to him; and if he has it in him to rise, there is no fear but he will find opportunity. The poet Coleridge once said that every man might have two versions of his Bible; one the book that he read, the other the trade that he pursued; he could find perpetual illustrations of every Bible truth in the thoughts which his occupation might open to him. I would say, less fancifully, that every honest occupation to which a man sets his hand would raise him into a philosopher if he mastered all the knowledge that belonged to his craft.

Every occupation, even the meanest—I don't say the scavenger's or the chimney-sweep's—but every productive occupation which adds anything to the capital of mankind, if followed assiduously with a desire to understand everything connected with it, is an ascending stair whose summit is nowhere, and from the successive steps of which the horizon of knowledge perpetually enlarges. Take the lowest and most unskilled labour of all, that of the peasant in the field. The peasant's business is to make the earth grow food; the elementary rules of his art are the simplest, and the rude practice of it the easiest; yet between the worst agriculture and the best lies agricultural chemistry, the application of machinery, the laws of the economy of force, and the most curious problems of physiology. Each step of



knowledge gained in these things can be immediately applied and realised. Each point of the science which the labourer masters will make him not only a wiser man but a better workman; and will either lift him, if he is ambitious, to a higher position, or make him more intelligent and more valuable if he remains where he is. If he be one of Lord Brougham's geniuses, he need not go to the *Novum Organon*; there is no direction in which his own subject will not lead him, if he cares to follow it, to the furthest boundary of thought. Only I insist on this, that information shall go along with practice, and the man's work become more profitable while he himself becomes wiser. He may then go far, or he may stop short; but whichever he do, what he has gained will be real gain, and become part and parcel of himself.

It sounds like mockery to talk thus of the possible prospects of the toil-worn drudge who drags his limbs at the day's end to his straw pallet, sleeps heavily, and wakes only to renew the weary round. I am but comparing two systems of education, from each of which the expected results may be equally extravagant. I mean only that if there is to be this voice rolling over chaos again, ushering in a millenium, the way to it lies through industrial teaching, where the practical underlies the intellectual. The millions must ever be condemned to toil with their hands, or the race will cease to exist. The beneficent light, when it comes, will be a light which will make labour more productive by being more scientific; which will make the humblest drudgery not un-

worthy of a human being, by making it at the same time an exercise to his mind.

I spoke of the field labourer. I might have gone through the catalogue of manual craftsmen, blacksmiths, carpenters, bricklayers, tailors, cobblers, fishermen, what you will. The same rule applies to them all. Detached facts on miscellaneous subjects, as they are taught at a modern school, are like separate letters of endless alphabets. You may load the mechanical memory with them till it becomes a marvel of retentiveness. Your young prodigy may amaze examiners, and delight inspectors. His achievements may be emblazoned in blue-books, and furnish matter for flattering reports on the excellence of our educational system; and all this while you have been feeding him with chips of granite. But arrange your letters into words, and each word becomes a thought, a symbol waking in the mind an image of a real thing. Group your words into sentences, and thought is married to thought and produces other thoughts, and the chips of granite become soft bread, wholesome, nutritious, and invigorating. Teach your boys subjects which they can only remember mechanically, and you teach them nothing which it is worth their while to know. Teach them facts and principles which they can apply and use in the work of their lives; and if the object be to give your clever working lads a chance of rising to become Presidents of the United States, or millionaires with palaces and powdered footmen, the ascent into those blessed conditions will be easier and healthier, along the track of an instructed industry, than by



the paths which the most keenly sharpened wits would be apt to choose for themselves.

To pass to the next scale, which more properly concerns us here. As the world requires handicrafts, so it requires those whose work is with the brain, or with brain and hand combined—doctors, lawyers, engineers, ministers of religion. Bodies become deranged, affairs become deranged, sick souls require their sores to be attended to; and so arise the learned professions, to one or other of which I presume that most of you whom I am addressing intend to belong. Well, to the education for the professions I would apply the same principle. The student should learn at the University what will enable him to earn his living as soon after he leaves it as possible. I am well aware that a professional education cannot be completed at a University; but it is true also that with every profession there is a theoretic or scientific groundwork which can be learnt nowhere so well, and, if those precious years are wasted on what is useless, will never be learnt properly at all. You are going to be a lawyer: you must learn Latin, for you cannot understand the laws of Scotland without it; but if you must learn another language, Norman French will be more useful to you than Greek, and the Acts of Parliament of Scotland more important reading than Livy or Thucydides. Are you to be a doctor?—you must learn Latin too; but neither Thucydides nor the Acts of Parliament will be of use to you—you must learn chemistry; and if you intend hereafter to keep on a level with your science, you must learn modern

French and German, and learn them thoroughly well, for mistakes in your work are dangerous.

Are you to be an engineer? You must work now, when you have time, at mathematics. You will make no progress without it. You must work at chemistry; it is the grammar of all physical sciences, and there is hardly one of the physical sciences with which you may not require to be acquainted. The world is wide, and Great Britain is a small crowded island. You may wait long for employment here. Your skill will be welcomed abroad: therefore now also, while you have time, learn French, or Russian, or Chinese, or Turkish. The command of any one of these languages will secure to an English or Scotch engineer instant and unbounded occupation.

The principle that I advocate is of earth, earthy. I am quite aware of it. We are ourselves made of earth; our work is on the earth; and most of us are commonplace people, who are obliged to make the most of our time. History, poetry, logic, moral philosophy, classical literature, are excellent as ornament. If you care for such things, they may be the amusement of your leisure hereafter; but they will not help you to stand on your feet and walk alone; and no one is properly a man till he can do that. You cannot learn everything; the objects of knowledge have multiplied beyond the powers of the strongest mind to keep pace with them all. You must choose among them, and the only reasonable guide to choice in such matters is utility. The old saying, *Non multa sed multum*, becomes every day more pressingly true.



If we mean to thrive, we must take one line and rigidly and sternly confine our energies to it. Am I told that it will make men into machines? I answer that no men are machines who are doing good work conscientiously and honestly, with the fear of their Maker before them. And if a doctor or a lawyer has it in him to become a *great* man, he can ascend through his profession to any height to which his talents are equal. All that is open to the handicraftsman is open to him, only that he starts a great many rounds higher up the ladder.

What I deplore in our present higher education is the devotion of so much effort and so many precious years to subjects which have no practical bearing upon life. We had a theory at Oxford that our system, however defective in many ways, yet developed in us some especially precious human qualities. Classics and philosophy are called there *literæ humaniores*. They are supposed to have an effect on character, and to be specially adapted for creating ministers of religion. The training of clergymen is, if anything, the special object of Oxford teaching. All arrangements are made with a view to it. The heads of colleges, the resident fellows, tutors, professors are, with rare exceptions, ecclesiastics themselves.

Well, then, if they have hold of the right idea, the effect ought to have been considerable. We have had thirty years of unexampled clerical activity among us: churches have been doubled; theological books, magazines, reviews, newspapers have been poured out by the hundreds of thousands; while by the side of it there has sprung up an equally astonishing

development of moral dishonesty. From the great houses in the City of London to the village grocer, the commercial life of England has been saturated with fraud. So deep has it gone that a strictly honest tradesman can hardly hold his ground against competition. You can no longer trust that any article that you buy is the thing which it pretends to be. We have false weights, false measures, cheating and shoddy everywhere. Yet the clergy have seen all this grow up in absolute indifference; and the great question which at this moment is agitating the Church of England is the colour of the ecclesiastical petticoats.

Many a hundred sermons have I heard in England, many a dissertation on the mysteries of the faith, on the divine mission of the clergy, on apostolical succession, on bishops, and justification, and the theory of good works, and verbal inspiration, and the efficacy of the sacraments; but never, during these thirty wonderful years, never one that I can recollect on common honesty, or those primitive commandments, Thou shalt not lie, and Thou shalt not steal.

The late Bishop Blomfield used to tell a story of his having been once late in life at the University Church at Cambridge, and of having seen a verger there whom he remembered when he was himself an undergraduate. The Bishop said he was glad to see him looking so well at such a great age. 'Oh yes, my Lord,' the fellow said, 'I have much to be grateful for. I have heard every sermon which has been preached in this church for fifty years, and, thank God, I am a Christian still.'



Classical philosophy, classical history and literature, taking, as they do, no hold upon the living hearts and imagination of men in this modern age, leave their working intelligence a prey to wild imaginations, and make them incapable of really understanding the world in which they live. If the clergy knew as much of the history of England and Scotland as they know about Greece and Rome, if they had been ever taught to open their eyes and see what is actually round them instead of groping among books to find what men did or thought at Alexandria or Constantinople fifteen hundred years ago, they would grapple more effectively with the moral pestilence which is poisoning all the air.

But it was not this that I came here to speak of. What I insist upon is, generally, that in a country like ours, where each child that is born among us finds every acre of land appropriated, a universal 'Not yours' set upon the rich things with which he is surrounded, and a government which, unlike those of old Greece or modern China, does not permit superfluous babies to be strangled—such a child, I say, since he is required to live, has a right to demand such teaching as shall enable him to live with honesty, and take such a place in society as belongs to the faculties which he has brought with him. It is a right which was recognised in one shape or another by our ancestors. It must be recognised now and always, if we are not to become a mutinous rabble. And it ought to be the guiding principle of all education, high and low. We have not to look any longer to this island

only. There is an abiding place now for Englishmen and Scots wherever our flag is flying. This narrow Britain, once our only home, has become the breeding-place and nursery of a race which is spreading over the world. Year after year we are swarming as the bees swarm; and year after year, and I hope more and more, high-minded young men of all ranks will prefer free air and free elbow-room for mind and body to the stool and desk of the dingy office, the ill-paid drudgery of the crowded ranks of the professions, or the hopeless labour of our home farmsteads and workshops.

Education always should contemplate this larger sphere, and cultivate the capacities which will command success there. Britain may have yet a future before it grander than its past; instead of a country standing alone, complete in itself, it may become the metropolis of an enormous and coherent empire: but on this condition only, that her children, when they leave her shores, shall look back upon her, not—like the poor Irish when they fly to America—as a stepmother who gave them stones for bread, but as a mother to whose care and nurture they shall owe their after prosperity. Whether this shall be so, whether England has reached its highest point of greatness, and will now descend to a second place among the nations, or whether it has yet before it another era of brighter glory, depends on ourselves, and depends more than anything on the breeding which we give to our children. The boy that is kindly nurtured, and wisely taught and assisted to make his way in life, does not forget



his father and his mother. He is proud of his family, and jealous for the honour of the name that he bears. If the million lads that swarm in our towns and villages are so trained that at home or in the colonies they can provide for themselves, without passing first through a painful interval of suffering, they will be loyal wherever they may be; good citizens at home, and still Englishmen and Scots on the Canadian lakes or in New Zealand. Our island shores will be stretched till they cover half the globe. It was not so that we colonised America, and we are reaping now the reward of our carelessness. We sent America our convicts. We sent America our Pilgrim Fathers, flinging them out as worse than felons. We said to the Irish cottier, You are a burden upon the rates; go find a home elsewhere. Had we offered him a home in the enormous territories that belong to us, we might have sent him to places where he would have been no burden but a blessing. But we bade him carelessly go where he would, and shift as he could for himself; he went with a sense of burning wrong, and he left a root of bitterness behind him. Injustice and heedlessness have borne their proper fruits. We have raised up against us a mighty empire to be the rival, it may be the successful rival, of our power.

Loyalty, love of kindred, love of country, we know not what we are doing when we trifle with feelings the most precious and beautiful that belong to us—most beautiful, most enduring, most hard to be obliterated—yet feelings which, when they are obliterated,

cannot change to neutrality and cold friendship. Americans still, in spite of themselves, speak of England as home. They tell us they must be our brothers or our enemies, and which of the two they will ultimately be is still uncertain.

I beg your pardon for this digression; but there are subjects on which we feel sometimes compelled to speak in season and out of it.

To go back.

I shall be asked whether, after all, this earning our living, this getting on in the world, are not low objects for human beings to set before themselves. Is not spirit more than matter? Is there no such thing as pure intellectual culture? 'Philosophy,' says Novalis, 'will bake no bread, but it gives us our souls; it gives us Heaven; it gives us knowledge of those grand truths which concern us as immortal beings.' Was it not said, 'Take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed? Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. Behold the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin. Yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' Is this a dream? No, indeed! But such directions as these are addressed only to few; and perhaps fewer still have heart to follow them. If you choose the counsels of perfection, count the cost, and understand what they mean. I knew a student once from whose tongue dropped the sublimest of sentiments; who was never weary of discoursing on beauty and truth and lofty motives; who seemed to be longing for some gulf to



jump into, like the Roman Curtius—some ‘fine opening for a young man’ into which to plunge and devote himself for the benefit of mankind. Yet he was running all the while into debt, squandering the money on idle luxuries which his father was sparing out of a narrow income to give him a college education; dreaming of martyrdom, and unable to sacrifice a single pleasure!

Consider to whom the words which I quoted were spoken; not to all the disciples, but to the Apostles who were about to wander over the world as missionaries.

High above all occupations which have their beginning and end in the seventy years of mortal life, stand undoubtedly the unproductive callings which belong to spiritual culture. Only, let not those who say we will devote ourselves to truth, to wisdom, to science, to art, expect to be rewarded with the wages of the other professions.

University education in England was devoted to spiritual culture, and assumed its present character in consequence; but, as I told you before, it taught originally the accompanying necessary lesson of poverty. The ancient scholar lived, during his course, upon alms—alms either from living patrons, or founders and benefactors. But the scale of his allowance provided for no indulgences; either he learnt something besides his Latin, or he learnt to endure hardship. And if a University persists in teaching nothing but what it calls the humanities, it is bound to insist also on rough clothing, hard beds, and com-

mon food. For myself, I admire that ancient rule of the Jews that every man, no matter of what grade or calling, shall learn some handicraft; that the man of intellect, while, like St. Paul, he is teaching the world, yet, like St. Paul, may be burdensome to no one. A man was not considered entitled to live if he could not keep himself from starving. Surely those University men who had taken honours, breaking stones on an Australian road, were sorry spectacles; and still more sorry and disgraceful is the outcry coming by every mail from our colonies: ‘Send us no more of what you call educated men; send us smiths, masons, carpenters, day labourers; all of those will thrive, will earn their eight, ten, or twelve shillings a day; but your educated man is a log on our hands; he loafs in uselessness till his means are spent, he then turns billiard-marker, enlists as a soldier, or starves.’ It hurts no intellect to be able to make a door or hammer a horse-shoe; and if you can do either of these, you have nothing to fear from fortune. ‘I will work with my hands, and keep my brain for myself,’ said some one proudly, when it was proposed to him that he should make a profession of literature. Spinoza, the most powerful intellectual worker that Europe has produced during the last two centuries, waving aside the pensions and legacies that were thrust upon him, chose to maintain himself by grinding object-glasses for microscopes and telescopes.

If a son of mine told me that he wished to devote himself to intellectual pursuits, I would act as I should act if he wished to make an imprudent mar-



riage. I would absolutely prohibit him for a time, till the firmness of his purpose had been tried. If he stood the test, and showed real talent, I would insist that he should in some way make himself independent of the profits of intellectual work for subsistence. Scholars and philosophers were originally clergymen. Now-a-days a great many people whose tendencies lie in the clerical direction yet for various reasons shrink from the obligations which the office imposes. They take, therefore, to literature, and attempt and expect to make a profession of it.

Now, without taking a transcendental view of the matter, literature happens to be the only occupation in which the wages are not in proportion to the goodness of the work done. It is not that they are generally small, but the adjustment of them is awry. It is true that in all callings nothing great will be produced if the first object be what you can make by them. To do what you do well should be the first thing, the wages the second; but except in the instances of which I am speaking, the rewards of a man are in proportion to his skill and industry. The best carpenter receives the highest pay. The better he works, the better for his prospects. The best lawyer, the best doctor commands most practice and makes the largest fortune. But with literature, a different element is introduced into the problem. The present rule on which authors are paid is by the page and the sheet; the more words the more pay. It ought to be exactly the reverse. Great poetry, great philosophy, great scientific discovery, every intellectual production

which has genius, work, and permanence in it, is the fruit of long thought and patient and painful elaboration. Work of this kind, done hastily, would be better not done at all. When completed, it will be small in bulk; it will address itself for a long time to the few and not to the many. The reward for it will not be measurable, and not obtainable in money except after many generations, when the brain out of which it was spun has long returned to its dust. Only by accident is a work of genius immediately popular, in the sense of being widely bought. No collected edition of Shakespeare's plays was demanded in Shakespeare's life. Milton received five pounds for 'Paradise Lost.' The distilled essence of the thought of Bishop Butler, the greatest prelate that the English Church ever produced, fills a moderate-sized octavo volume; Spinoza's works, including his surviving letters, fill but three; and though they have revolutionised the philosophy of Europe, have no attractions for the multitude. A really great man has to create the taste with which he is to be enjoyed. There are splendid exceptions of merit eagerly recognised and early rewarded—our honoured English Laureate for instance, Alfred Tennyson, or your own countryman Thomas Carlyle. Yet even Tennyson waited through ten years of depreciation before poems which are now on every one's lips passed into a second edition. Carlyle, whose transcendent powers were welcomed in their infancy by Goethe, who long years ago was recognised by statesmen and thinkers in both hemispheres as the most remarkable of living men; yet, if



success be measured by what has been paid him for his services, stands far below your Belgravian novelist. A hundred years hence, perhaps, people at large will begin to understand how vast a man has been among them.

If you make literature a trade to live by, you will be tempted always to take your talents to the most profitable market; and the most profitable market will be no assurance to you that you are making a noble or even a worthy use of them. Better a thousand times, if your object is to advance your position in life, that you should choose some other calling of which making money is a legitimate aim, and where your success will vary as the goodness of your work; better for yourselves, for your consciences, for your own souls, as we used to say, and for the world you live in.

Therefore, I say, if any of you choose this mode of spending your existence, choose it deliberately, with a full knowledge of what you are doing. Reconcile yourselves to the condition of the old scholars. Make up your minds to be poor: care only for what is true and right and good. On those conditions you may add something real to the intellectual stock of mankind, and mankind in return may perhaps give you bread enough to live upon, though bread extremely thinly spread with butter.

I have detained you long, but I cannot close without a few more general words. We live in times of change—political change, intellectual change, change of all kinds. You whose minds are active, especially such of you as give yourselves much to speculation,

will be drawn inevitably into profoundly interesting yet perplexing questions, of which our fathers and grandfathers knew nothing. Practical men engaged in business take formulas for granted. They cannot be for ever running to first principles. They hate to see established opinions disturbed. Opinions, however, will and must be disturbed from time to time. There is no help for it. The minds of ardent and clever students are particularly apt to move fast in these directions; and thus when they go out into the world, they find themselves exposed to one of two temptations, according to their temperament: either to lend themselves to what is popular and plausible, to conceal their real convictions, to take up with what we call in England humbug, to humbug others, or perhaps, to keep matters still smoother, to humbug themselves; or else to quarrel violently with things which they imagine to be passing away, and which they consider should be quick in doing it, as having no basis in truth. A young man of ability now-a-days is extremely likely to be tempted into one or other of these lines. The first is the more common on my side of the Tweed; the harsher and more thoroughgoing, perhaps, on yours. Things are changing, and have to change, but they change very slowly. The established authorities are in possession of the field, and are naturally desirous to keep it. And there is no kind of service which they more eagerly reward than the support of clever fellows who have dipped over the edge of latitudinarianism, who profess to have sounded the disturbing currents



of the intellectual seas, and discovered that they are accidental or unimportant.

On the other hand, men who cannot away with this kind of thing are likely to be exasperated into unwise demonstrativeness, to become radicals in politics and radicals in thought. Their private disapprobation bursts into open enmity; and this road too, if they continue long upon it, leads to no healthy conclusions. No one can thrive upon denials: positive truth of some kind is essential as food both for mind and character. Depend upon it that in all long-established practices or spiritual formulas there has been some living truth; and if you have not discovered and learnt to respect it, you do not yet understand the questions which you are in a hurry to solve. And again, intellectually impatient people should remember the rules of social courtesy, which forbid us in private to say things, however true, which can give pain to others. These rules forbid us equally in public to obtrude opinions which offend those who do not share them. Our thoughts and our conduct are our own. We may say justly to any one, You shall not make me profess to think true what I believe to be false; you shall not make me do what I do not think just: but there our natural liberty ends. Others have as good a right to their opinion as we have to ours. To any one who holds what are called advanced views on serious subjects, I recommend a patient reticence and the reflection that, after all, he may possibly be wrong. Whether we are Radicals or Conservatives we require to be often reminded that truth or falsehood, justice

and injustice, are no creatures of our own belief. We cannot make true things false, or false things true, by choosing to think them so. We cannot vote right into wrong or wrong into right. The eternal truths and rights of things exist, fortunately, independent of our thoughts or wishes, fixed as mathematics, inherent in the nature of man and the world. They are no more to be trifled with than gravitation. If we discover and obey them, it is well with us; but that is all we can do. You can no more make a social regulation work well which is not just than you can make water run uphill.

I tell you therefore, who take up with plausibilities, not to trust your weight too far upon them, and not to condemn others for having misgivings which at the bottom of your own minds, if you look so deep, you will find that you share yourselves with them. You, who believe that you have hold of newer and wider truths, show it, as you may and must show it, unless you are misled by your own dreams, in leading wider, simpler, and nobler lives. Assert your own freedom if you will, but assert it modestly and quietly; respecting others as you wish to be respected yourselves. Only and especially I would say this: be honest with yourselves, whatever the temptation; say nothing to others that you do not think, and play no tricks with your own minds.

Of all the evil spirits abroad at this hour in the world, *humbug* is the most dangerous.

This above all. To your own selves be true,  
And it will follow, as the night the day,  
You cannot then be false to any man.



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