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Rectorial
INAUGURAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

SIR THEODORE MARTIN, K.C.B.

AT HIS INSTALLATION AS

Rector of the University of St Andrews

NOVEMBER 21, 1881



WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCLXXXI

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GENTLEMEN, — As you make your way through life, you will probably find that very many of the things that give you most pleasure, — that sometimes even bring you much permanent happiness, — are things to which you have not only not looked forward, but which have come upon you with all the suddenness of surprise. To reach the goal of some cherished ambition does not always bring the satisfaction we have hoped for. Success may come too late, or it may be bought at too dear an expenditure of energy or of health. But if the aim has been worthy and worthily pursued, the years of strenuous and well calculated effort which have been directed to attain it will surely be cheered by signs from unexpected quarters that your work has not been in vain; that you have made friends where you looked for none; that in some way unknown to, nay, undreamed of by yourself, you have created in others that sympathetic interest which is at once the most precious reward for labours past, and the strongest incentive to future endeavour.

In my own person, gentlemen, I have often had

occasion to acknowledge the truth of what I have just said, but never more than in the circumstance to which I owe the honour of now addressing you from this place. When a student like yourselves, I had my ambitious dreams. What they were it would be hard for me now to recall, when the current of my life has run in channels far different from what I then anticipated, and better things have befallen me than I could even have imagined. But if such an aspiration could then have entered my head as possible, nothing could have kindled a warmer thrill within my heart, than the thought that I should some day be elected as their rector—spontaneously and cordially as I have been—by such a body of my young countrymen as yourselves. As it would have been then, so is it now. I heard of the intention to nominate me for that honourable distinction with a pleased surprise, for it told me—what I had never dreamed—that the younger spirits of my dear native land thought that I had done something in my day and generation not unworthy of their race. When I learned that I had been chosen, in competition with a rival whose pre-eminence in the studies he has made his own none can recognise more frankly than myself, my pleasure was mingled with pride, to find that I had so many unknown friends among the young and ardent who were being trained as I had myself been trained, and who were equipping themselves to fight the battle of life upon the same lines upon which I had myself fought it.

But, gentlemen, my pride was mingled with a strong feeling of my own unworthiness to occupy a place

which has been filled by men of gifts so varied and distinguished. Believe me, I say this in no spirit of false humility. To learn, not to teach, has always been the attitude of my life; and to more than one of these men I have long been accustomed to look up with gratitude for instruction and for guidance. I have had the happiness of knowing some of them as friends, of taking sweet counsel with them in their homes as well as in their books. Nor will you think it out of place if I say here, that among the many gratifying circumstances associated with my election as your rector, not the least is the remembrance, that the very first to offer me congratulation was one whose name will always, I am sure, be held in high honour in this University, but whose voice, alas! it will no more hear,—the late Dean of Westminster. Yes, we shall hear his voice no more, and how great is that loss to those who knew and loved him, it would be difficult to estimate; but the large generous soul, that gave a charm to the fine lines of that expressive mouth, and spoke in the eager penetrating kindly glance of those sympathetic eyes, lives on in his books. It lives, too, in the influence which his spirit and character wrought upon those among whom he moved and worked, and through them will carry on the great purpose of his life, to break down the futile distinctions which separate men into schools, and sects, and parties, and to bind them together in the ties of Christian brotherhood, as befits us short-lived “travellers between life and death,”—the children of a common Father, the wayfarers towards a common goal.

Coming after such men as Arthur Stanley, as Froude, as John Stuart Mill,—men whose lives have been devoted to the study of history, of human progress, of the great questions that bear upon the welfare of men here and hereafter,—how can I hope to engage your attention, or to say anything that you will regard as a word in season? A crowded life of hard professional work has left me little leisure for

“The search of deep philosophy,
Wit, eloquence, and poetry.”

I have been well content if only I might “enjoy the things which others understand,” and the longer I live the more do I incline to the silence of the humble student, growing, as I do, every day more and more conscious of the perplexities which in these days of change and restless inquiry surround nearly every question that concerns the social and political wellbeing of our race. I cannot therefore hope to say anything very new to you; or rather, I should say, to put any old truths—for all great truths are old—before you in a new and striking way. But I am sure you will bear with what I may have to say for the sake of the sincerity and goodwill with which it is offered.

Gentlemen, it seems to me that never at any period of our country's history was it more necessary that young men, on entering into the active life for which you are now preparing, should bring with them not only a clear conception of what they mean to aim at there, but also minds and bodies well prepared for the career, whatever it may be, into which they may be

thrown. Every profession, every vocation, is crowded to excess, and as the population goes on augmenting, the struggle for subsistence becomes daily harder and harder; the competition for employment grows keener and keener; the standard of attainment in knowledge and practical skill becomes higher and higher, the strain upon the physical strength more severe. This being so, it becomes more than ever essential that a young man shall bring into the field the “*mens sana in corpore sano*,”—a sound constitution both of mind and body, a brain that has been taught to observe and to think, a moral nature disciplined to labour and to self-denial, with nerve to face difficulty, and not to be daunted by disappointment, or even by failure, and with health to support fatigue and to profit by success. To achieve these results in the degree and manner suitable to the various spheres of life is, I presume, the purpose of all education that deserves the name. But it is in an especial degree that of the class to which you belong.

Our Scottish forefathers had very clear ideas on this subject. They took care that every child learned, both at home and in the parish school, that he could not do his duty to God or man unless he lived an honest, sober, truthful, simple life, making the best that circumstances would permit of the faculties and opportunities God had given him,—earning the bread that he ate, and thinking it the worst of shames not to secure his own independence, and that of those who had to lean upon him, by the labour of his brain and hands. That simple noble creed were ill exchanged for the

superficial accomplishments which nowadays pass in many quarters for education. It made our country what it was, the home and stronghold of civil and religious freedom; it triumphed over the disadvantages of a rigorous climate and barren soil; it sent out our young men to all parts of the world, to be the pioneers of industry and improvement, to earn honourable rewards in fame and fortune, and to make the blood of a Scotchman widely recognised as in some measure a guarantee for integrity, for courage, intelligence, and perseverance.

In that old system which had for its main object to mould and weld the character of the people into uprightiness and self-reliance, book learning was not overlooked. But as that was not to be acquired without special gifts, or the leisure of which those who have to do the rough everyday work of the world have of necessity little, no attempt was made to make it general. At the same time, however, every fair encouragement was given to those whose genius irresistibly impelled them to a life of study and research, or to seek a career in what are called the learned professions. There, too, the system had its triumphs; for it not only bred good preachers, lawyers, and doctors, but also turned out scholars, philosophers, and men of science, who, pursuing knowledge generally under difficulties, which put their enthusiasm to the severest test, and who, having to make sure their footing at every step of their progress, knew thoroughly what they professed to know, and by books of solid value, or by important discoveries in science, proved

their title to a place among the teachers and benefactors of mankind.

The great principles by which our ancestors were guided in these matters are eternally true. To turn out good men and good citizens was their aim; and, according to their lights and their means, they spared no efforts to achieve it. As regarded primary education, there was little room for improvement. Whether, as time went on, and great changes took place in the circumstances and the wants of the country, the methods pursued in the higher education were always the best, is not so clear.

Speaking from the experience of my own youth, the range of studies was too limited, the methods of instruction were faulty; and too much, far too much, time was spent over these studies, such as they were. We were too early taken away from learning the structure and the resources of our own language, and from its stores of historical, biographical, and other knowledge, which the opening mind of youth could follow with interest and assimilate with ease and advantage, and were sent to puzzle in a confused way over Latin and Greek, to which many of the best years of our youth were devoted, almost to the exclusion of every other study. Never can I forget the hopeless weariness of those long hours, spent by myself in the Edinburgh High School, during six years, in learning badly what might easily, under proper training, have been learned thoroughly in one-half the time. The system was radically faulty; for the pace at which our knowledge advanced was regulated by the idlers and

the dunces, who, to say the least, formed a tolerably liberal proportion of the much too large classes, of which we were compelled to form a part.

What was the result? As it cost a boy of fair intelligence really no effort to acquire all that he was expected to learn, and as no amount of attainment enabled him to abridge the regular curriculum, the studies to which he was fettered too often became to him an object of *ennui* and disgust. Accordingly, it was only the boys of strong character, who set up other subjects of study for themselves, and so kept their minds fresh and active, who escaped unhurt from the evils of the system. But the injury to them was not slight; for at that age I hold that every hour lost is a serious mischief, and the mischief is more serious when the loss is linked by painful associations with studies that should have brought only delight and profit. How many of us felt what Byron so vigorously expressed in his farewell to Horace, whom "he hated so"!¹ The weary iteration of lines badly construed and miserably translated under the handling of a prosaic system, which did not even aim at giving vitality to the poetry of our text-books, or creating a human interest in either the men who wrote it or the people of whose soul it was the finest expression, took from the Venusian bard well-nigh all his brilliancy and charm, and blurred the sweetness and stately grace of his great compeer Virgil. And this for young men who already knew and loved

¹ "Then farewell, Horace, whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine," &c.

—*Childe Harold*, canto iii., stanza 67.

Milton, Dryden, Gray, Goldsmith, Burns, and Scott, who were beginning to appreciate Wordsworth, and to drink instruction to mind and heart from that perennial well-head of beauty and wisdom, and humour and humanity, which is to be found in Shakespeare,—young men who, if rightly taught, might have enjoyed their Horace, their Virgil, or their Catullus, with a relish as keen as they felt for their English favourites,—nay, with possibly even a keener relish, by reason of the pleasant extra effort which it costs to master them, and which fixes attention upon the subtler shades of suggestion or of beautiful diction, which young readers, ever impetuous and eager, are apt to overlook in their native writers.

Passing from the High School to the University, with any love for the classics which I had ever felt almost crushed out of me, I must ever remember with gratitude the new life and interest infused into them for us by the spirit of the then Professor of Humanity there—Professor Pillans. What had seemed harsh, crabbed, colourless, grew full of fascination and charm, and "a perpetual feast of nectared sweets, where no crude surfeit reigned." He taught us to read and to assimilate the thoughts, of which the words had heretofore often seemed but sapless husks. He connected the literature of Rome with its history; he made us understand something of the men to whom it was addressed, and of the state of society in which it was produced. Thus he made it a living thing for us. He taught us to think of men—who for us had hitherto been little better than names—as human beings, much

like the men who had made and were making our own history, and encouraged us to try to gather from their stories incentives to work as they had done—

“*Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate,*”

and lessons to guide us in the formation of opinion as to what is the foundation of a nation's greatness, and by what the greatness of a nation, once achieved, is alone to be maintained. Under such guidance, gentlemen, you may conceive with what eager delight we took to our Cicero, our Livy, and our Tacitus; how it became a positive pleasure to combat the difficulties that stood in our way as we strove to gain full insight into their meaning, and how deep a hold the great maxims of practical wisdom, which we learned from them, established upon our minds and in our memories! With what different eyes, too, did we look upon our Lucretius, our Ovid, our Virgil, our Horace! We read them with a new light upon the page, and learned to love them with a love which has outlived the lapse of years, and been proof against the blandishments of newer claimants for our regard.

Why do I recall these experiences of my own? I do so, because they seem to me to contain a lesson of wide application. I do not know whether the system under which my compeers and myself suffered has been changed. I hope it has been reformed, and that not indifferently only, but altogether; for as it was then, so it must always be, a heavy drag upon the nascent intelligence of a large section of the community. If boys or young men are to be taught, you

must make sure of their feeling an interest in what they have to learn. Do that, and the idlest will not turn away from his studies, nor the dullest lose heart over them. Let them see the use of what they are learning; make their understanding work upon it; waken their powers of observation and deduction; rouse within them the feelings and the thoughts of which words are but the symbols; feed them, in short, with facts which they can appreciate, and not with phantasmal phrases, and I care not what you set before them, be it grammar, or history, or geography, or classics, or mathematics, or natural science, or the great leading principles of health, morality, or economy, and you will have little cause to complain of the numbers of dull boys or unsatisfactory men. Follow the opposite course,—cram them, according to their various powers of absorption, with facts they neither understand nor care for, with dates and names which they have not been taught to connect with subjects of human interest; load their memories with problems which they have been schooled into working out mechanically, and with cut-and-dry opinions, which can be produced to meet the exigencies of a pass examination, and you may turn out a fair number of clever fellows, to make a figure in class lists, but in those lists, I fear, very few of the men will be found who make their mark in life by bringing into it the well-digested knowledge, the ready helpful intelligence, and the strength of character, which are the things most wanted in every sphere, and which, in the main, are tolerably certain of recognition and worldly success.

I am not going to weary you with any remarks upon the vexed question, whether a classical or so-called scientific education is the best. Like many other controversies of comparison, it seems to me to be rather a futile one, believing, as I do, that it is quite possible to combine both, and that in all the higher education both ought to be combined, leaving the student to give the preponderance of his time and attention to that which he finds most congenial to his gifts and tastes, or most likely to prove of value for the work he has to do in life. No one will admit more frankly than myself, that the educational studies of our schools and universities, as formerly pursued, were both too narrow and too uniform. They omitted instruction in many things which it was not only useful but necessary for every educated man to know, and they did not sufficiently take into account the diversities in the social position, and in the quality and bias of mind, of the students. All this is now in the fair way to be corrected. With the facilities everywhere offered, it will be a man's own fault if he finds himself, as many of the men who won distinction in the then only favoured studies used to find themselves, launched into active life in ignorance of the elements of physical science, of the phenomena of the material world, and of the laws and forces by which it is animated or controlled. The regret of such men at their own deficiencies was deepened by the thought, how easy it would have been to have acquired, by a little extra effort, all this knowledge side by side with their other pursuits, and how difficult it was to repair the defect,

when the mind was either no longer so plastic or so receptive as in youth, or when the studies and active duties of a business or profession left them little or no opportunity for the task. So, too, in the wide range of academic studies, there is now scope for every variety of gift and inclination, and there is no longer an excuse for the deadening of enthusiasm, often degenerating into habits of idleness, which was begotten by distaste for studies for which the student had no natural aptitude.

But whatever a man's special gifts may be, or whatever his future profession or pursuits in life, it seems to me that he cannot but be a gainer by the training which is to be had under a good system of classical study. Of course all studies are good by which the mind learns to think, to observe with precision, to seek out principles, to methodise facts, to draw reasonable conclusions from them, and to be able to find apt words for whatever it wants to express. But I know of no way in which all these ends are more likely to be arrived at than by a sound training in the classics. The man who has grappled successfully with the great Greek and Roman writers may be trusted to have developed a faculty which will stand him in excellent stead, whatever he may be called upon to do, or wherever he may be called upon to go. What he knows he will know thoroughly, and he will have acquired a habit of application and intellectual discernment, which will enable him to acquire and digest other knowledge with a rapidity, and to turn it to account with an address, that must give him an incalculable advantage

over other men, who may be full of general information or practical knowledge, but who have not undergone the discipline of difficulty, of reasoning, and reflection involved in a mastery of the great classical writers.

The young man who can put into terse well-chosen English all the meaning of any passage of Thucydides or Tacitus, or who can make a good *précis* of an oration of Demosthenes or Cicero, will go into active life well prepared to follow any intellectual pursuit. As a doctor, a lawyer, a clergyman,—as an engineer, an artist, a merchant, or a manufacturer,—he will find the benefit of the knowledge and aptitude which went to these achievements. They will make all the special studies of his vocation easier. At the same time, he will be better able to fulfil the duties of a good citizen, by bringing to the consideration of all social and political questions a judgment less likely to be captivated by plausible fallacies or fervid rhetoric, for he will know why states and empires, which bear the closest analogy to our own, have risen and fallen. He will know, too, what the manly and sagacious thinkers of antiquity have thought upon such questions, and be able to call the experience of the past ages and states of society to his aid in judging of what is necessary or expedient for the present.

And who will say that such knowledge is not specially needed at the present time? These are days in which, it seems to me, every man who can is bound to think of these things, and to be at pains to seek light from whatever quarter he can in forming his political

opinions. And where will he find more instruction, whether to warn or to guide, than in the history of Greece and Rome, and in the recorded conclusions of the leading minds of those countries as to what makes the welfare and prosperity, and secures the stability of a state. We have chosen—whether wisely or not time will show—to set aside the principle which, among all civilised states of which we have an authentic record, has been accepted as the only sound one. Cicero expressed it in ten words. “*Semper in republicâ tenendum est, ne plurimum valeant plurimi*,¹ (De Republica, II. 22). And Why? Because wisdom and constancy have never yet in the world’s history been the characteristics of the “*plurimi*.” Is there anything in the state of our modern society to make us believe that this is less the case now than it has ever been?

Look at any of our great cities, in which population multiplies with a startling rapidity, without a corresponding increase in the means of comfort, or even of bare subsistence. Is the proportion of the suffering, the discontented, the needy, the improvident, the unscrupulous, which will always be found in old communities, less than it has ever been? Is the bitterness of those “*who have not*” against those “*who have*” likely to be less rancorous, where the extremes of wealth and poverty, of luxurious idleness and ill-paid toil, of profuse extravagance and “*looped and windowed raggedness*,” are brought into such sharp contrast? Is

¹ “There is one rule that must ever be observed in a state,—the preponderance of power must not be in the multitude.”

the disposition to think that "whatever is wrong" likely to be less widely spread, when the numbers who have nothing to lose by change are so great? Still it is in the hands of the "plurimi" that we have deliberately chosen to place the preponderance of power; and, being there, to recall or to restrict it is impossible. We must therefore make the best of the altered state of things, trusting to the average good sense, and to the patriotism of the mass of the body politic, not to use that power without deliberation, or a due regard for the teachings of history and experience.

But the experiment we are making is a momentous one; and it is incumbent upon the educated youth of the country to show by their example that they are alive to the fact. If British liberty shall ever be in danger, the danger will come not from above, but from below. The old party distinctions have lost wellnigh all their meaning. Be in no haste, I would say to you, if I might, to make up your views on great political questions. None are more intricate. The interests of the nation are so vast and so complex; our relations to our own colonies and dependencies, as well as to the other great states of Europe, demand such cautious handling, that there are in truth no subjects on which it so much behoves men to ponder well before coming to a conclusion. Think of the magnitude of the interests involved; think of the disastrous consequences of any great mistake in legislation or in policy! A colony lost, the stability of property shaken, the belief disturbed that Britain can hold by her own strong arm and her wise administration

all that generations of her sons have won for her! Let any of these things happen, and who can say how great, how swift may be her decline? These are the great issues on which political questions bear. How needful, then, that they should be approached with minds unwarped by the bias of party ties or of party passions. Even without such bias it will always be hard enough to keep the judgment clear. Why then should young men, who may fairly hope hereafter, each in his sphere, to assist—some, it may be, even to lead—in the formation of public opinion, fetter their judgment or their independence by adopting the catchwords of the hour, or by subjecting themselves to the prejudices from which no political party can be wholly exempt?

Just as I consider what may be learned in a sound course of classical study an admirable preparation for approaching the political questions which agitate modern society, so, too, I venture to think that to none will such studies, and those studies of mental philosophy with which they are generally combined, be of more advantage than to those whose lives are to be devoted to the natural sciences. They will have learned that there is a large number of ultimate facts and phenomena in man's nature, as real and as significant as any of the material phenomena of the universe. They will know how thoroughly most of the problems about man, the world he lives in, his place and duties in it, and his future, have been canvassed and discussed by the wisest heads of which the world has left any record. They will therefore approach their studies

with a modest and reverential spirit, and be less likely to launch into profitless speculations on what can never be known, and to promulgate those rash deductions from very limited data, which characterise so many works of modern scientific philosophy. Were such studies as I have indicated more general, many weak and mischievous books would never see the light, and many a tortured heart and brain would be saved from bewilderment and despair.

Neither, gentlemen, I am sure, will you fail to join with me in rating highly the advantage of being trained in youth upon books, written in languages which, as vehicles of expression, have never been surpassed,—books which Time's severe but kindly hand has winnowed for us from the mass of ephemeral and commonplace work, which was, no doubt, produced in abundance both at Athens and in Rome. Depend upon it, ancient civilisation, like our own, was prolific in men like the Etruscan Cassius, of whom Horace speaks in the Tenth Satire of his First Book,—

*"Caspis quem fama est esse librisque
Ambustum propriis,"*

whose poems were so voluminous that, as Mr Conington puts it in his admirable translation:—

*"When he died, his kinsfolk simply laid
His works in order, and his pyre was made."*

The ancients had a most laudable horror of big books. They felt how true in regard to books, as well as to other things, is the proverb: "The half is better than the whole." Above all, they knew that the man

who studies to condense, acquires in the process the sense of proportion, the art of separating what is essential from what is accidental; makes, in short, that reserve of power to be felt in his work, which leaves upon the reader's mind a delightful impression of symmetry and finish. Moreover, the tone of thought in the best Greek and Roman writers is essentially noble and manly. Trained upon such standards, the mind is less likely to be attracted by what is false or feeble, unwholesome, sickly, or sentimental, of which there is enough and to spare in modern literature; just as, if our early years have been surrounded by specimens of the best art, ancient or modern, we insensibly imbibe such a knowledge of pure form, of elevated expression, of what is essentially true to nature, that the eye turns aside with indifference from bad drawing, vapid sentiment, or meretricious colour.

The main thing after all is, that in youth we "learn to learn," and having done this, that we then find out for ourselves what interests us most, and what we are therefore likely to do best. With that knowledge let us then determine to work out what gifts we have with all our might. "*Quidquid vult, valde vult,*" says Cicero of his friend Brutus. It is this doing what he has to do with a will, with the determination that what he wills that he shall accomplish, which makes the useful, the influential, the successful man. He is sure, however his lot may be cast, to find scope for his energy. An intelligent persistency, which is a very different thing indeed from a resolute obstinacy, is the quality of all others a young man should culti-

vate in himself. Be modest, but determined; measure your own powers carefully and even sternly; but resolve that whatever gift is in you shall, with God's help, be fully and strenuously worked out. Aim high, but take care that your aim is within your compass, and that, come what may, it is pursued by honourable means. Above all, cultivate the habit of work. "I consider the capacity to labour," writes Sir Walter Scott to his friend Adolphus, "as part of the happiness I have enjoyed." Part of the happiness? Most men who have gone through a life crowded with demands upon their capacity for labour, will rather say that it has been their chief enjoyment, nay, their chief blessing, that they have been called upon to exercise that capacity, and that it has answered to the call. Many such men have I myself known; and I wish I could tell you how much to them has been that delight in recurring to the books and studies of their youth, which makes them look back with tender reverence to the school or Alma Mater in which their love for literature, philosophy, or science was first developed. Others I have known, men "gifted with predominating powers," which have found vent in pursuits that have crowned them with wealth and all the good things which wealth places within our reach, who have bitterly mourned, either that in their youth they had no chance of acquiring a knowledge of books or the arts, or that they had not duly availed themselves of such opportunities as they had. How poor and maimed do such men feel their life to be, when they find the strength or the occasion for active pursuits fail, and

they cannot beguile the weariness of the heavy hours, by availing themselves of the delights which they see are found by other men in the very books which stare at themselves in mute rebuke from their library shelves!

It is no paradox to say that there is nothing like work,—pursued, of course, with a due regard to the claims of the body to exercise and care,—for maintaining the elasticity of the mind, and preparing it for what we should all aim at, the carrying on the spirit of youth, the freshness of enjoyment, into riper years, and even into old age. Idleness and frivolity are the cankers of the soul, and bring upon it premature disgust, decrepitude, and palsy. There is a sentence of Cicero's on this point, which experience has often recalled to me as full of truth. "*At enim adolescentem, in quo senile aliquid, seu senem, in quo est aliquid juventutis probo; quod qui sequitur, corpore senex esse poterit, animo nunquam erit.*" "What I delight to see is a youth with something of an old man in him, even as I do to see an old man who has in him something of a youth; where these qualities are, a man may become old in body, but never in mind." In this great world of moral and material wonder, where there is so much of beauty, of grandeur, of mystery, of struggle, of noble effort, of pitiful failure, of magnificent enterprise, of fascinating discovery—so much to love, so much to admire and to revere, so much to help forward, so much to fight against and to subdue—in this world which we believe to be but the training-ground of our souls for nobler and higher and less encumbered

work hereafter, in this *quasi* childhood of our real lives,—why should we not try to keep our souls as open to new impressions in our riper years as in the days of our youth? It is not years that make age. Frivolous pursuits, base passions unsubdued, narrow selfishness, vacuity of mind, life with sordid aims or without an aim at all,—these are the things that bring age upon the soul. Healthful tastes, an open eye for what is beautiful and good in nature and in man, a happy remembrance of youthful pleasures, a mind never without some active interest or pursuit,—these are the things that carry on the feelings of youth even into the years when the body may have lost most of its comeliness and its force.

There is so much to be known, so much that it befits all educated men to know, that the work of learning cannot be begun too soon, or prosecuted too earnestly. At the best, do what we will, we shall do little more than learn, at every step we advance, of how much we are ignorant, and see dim vistas before us of paths to be explored, and catch glimpses of fresh fields where knowledge is to be reaped. Is there not something deeply significant, deeply touching, in Goethe's dying words: "Light, more light!" Light to keep our feet from stumbling, light to cheer us on our onward path through toil and trial, light to lighten the darkness by which "our haughty life is crowned." It is for this that the daily cry goes up from all good men everywhere, and from none more earnestly than from those to whom most of it is vouchsafed. To bring light and sweetness into our lives is the doctrine pressed un-

weariedly upon us by one of the most impressive writers of our time. It is not for me to define all that Mr Mathew Arnold includes within these two words; but I think I will not wrong him, if I say that he means them at least to include that culture of the whole man, which, while it sharpens, enriches and fortifies the intellect, feeds the imagination with noble images and aspirations, develops and cultivates the taste for the arts and courtesies which embellish life, and the sympathies which make men unselfish, forbearing, and helpful one to another. Wisdom of the head, he would tell us, is all very well, but there is a something greater and better than that, without which no man can indeed be truly wise,—wisdom of the heart. It is only when the two combine that the world gets its really great men and women. And who are they whom we best love, and admire the most among those that cross our path in daily life? Is it not those in whom we recognise that blending of intelligence with refinement, and consideration for others, which gives a harmony and beauty and calm strength to the character, and commands instinctively our confidence and respect?

What Mr Arnold says, Goethe also meant; for as I have read his teaching, he included sweetness in the light—the glow of the heart as well as the illumination of the brain—which he craved as needful for man's happiness. The first part of his greatest work, the 'Faust,' is only a splendid illustration of the doctrine, that the cultivation of the mere intellect, and the quest of happiness in and for the individual

merely, must culminate in disappointment and despair. The second part, which may be fairly held to contain his last views on the great problem of human life, illustrates the truth, which wise men of all ages have preached, that happiness is only to be reached through active beneficence, through the application of knowledge and power to the welfare of mankind. While Faust pored in his study over musty volumes of medicine, jurisprudence, and theology, and perplexed his reason with problems which, by their very nature, admit of no solution, the accumulation of pedantic scholarship, and the bewilderment of brain, in which his studies resulted, brought only bitterness of heart, a feeling that every higher aspiration of his nature was left unsatisfied, a deadness of all belief in whatsoever makes life worth living, a total recklessness as to the great hereafter, what it might be, or whether there was any hereafter at all. In this mood, we know, Mephistopheles found it easy to get him into his toils; and Faust, confident in his sad creed that all mortal struggle, all mortal happiness, was vain, made his unholy compact, on the footing that the fiend may claim him as his own, should a moment ever arrive in which he should say—

“Verweile doch! du bist so schön.”

“Stay, stay, oh stay! Thou art so fair.”

That moment he believes will never come, but come it does. And how? Not when he holds poor Gretchen in his arms in the rapture of triumphant passion; not in the contemplation of the beauty and grandeur of

the universe; not in the possession of wealth and power; not even in the ecstasy of winning for his bride the divine Helena, whom he is able to evoke from Hades in all the splendour of her immortal charms—

“Fairer than the evening air,
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.”

Even in the transports of enjoyment and triumphant power a sense of insufficiency and incompleteness is ever present with him. It is only when he has grown old, when his thoughts are not for himself but for others—when he takes to reclaiming land from the sea, and to building harbours, and succeeds by these and other works in making hundreds of his fellow-creatures happy,—that the cravings of his heart are for the first time satisfied. Then the wish mounts to his lips, that the state of things in which he finds himself, and the mood of soul which it has wrought within him, may last. The moment *has* come when he can say to it—

“Stay, stay, oh stay! Thou art so fair,”

and be content to die.

Let none of you think that, because your career in life may afford no wide scope for doing good to your fellow-men, that the principle here indicated does not apply to you. Which of you can say to what great work he may not some day be called, or what his power for good over others may be? But whatever your sphere of influence, be it large or be it small, there is sure to be ample scope in it for unselfishness

and for active good,—for proving yourselves to be gentle, generous, sympathetic, forbearing, courteous. Determine that such you shall be. Keep this resolve steadily in view, and it will “make the path before you always bright,” and keep alive within you that sacred fire of enthusiasm which, if fostered and directed to worthy ends in youth, will not burn itself out, but will prove to be the purifier and sustainer of your riper age. “Beautiful is young enthusiasm,” said Thomas Carlyle; “keep it to the end, and be more and more correct in fixing on the object of it. It is a terrible thing to be wrong in that—the source of all our miseries and confusions whatever.”

Many of you, I dare say, know well some lines with which Thackeray ended one of his pleasant Christmas books,—lines as full of wisdom as they are beautiful in tone and in their simple force. They express much of the feeling with which I close the few and feeble words in which I have addressed you—

“Come wealth or want, come good or ill;
 Let young and old accept their part,
 And bow before the Awful Will,
 And bear it with an honest heart.
 Who misses or who wins the prize,—
 Go, lose or conquer as you can,
 But if you fall, or if you rise,
 Be each, pray God, a gentleman!”

