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GROUNDS OF THANKSGIVING:

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED

IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, NEWARK, N. J.

DECEMBER 8, 1831,

ON THE

Occasion of Public Thanksgiving.

BY WILLIAM T. HAMILTON, A. M.

PASTOR OF SAID CHURCH.

NEWARK:

PRINTED BY W. TUTTLE & CO.

1832.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

DISCUSSION

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ON THE 15TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 1888

BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NEWARK, December 12, 1831.

REV. WM. T. HAMILTON,

Dear Sir,

IT being the unanimous opinion of the Board of Trustees, (expressed at their meeting held on Friday evening last,) that the publication of your Sermon, delivered on the 8th instant, would be, not only desirable, but very useful: you are therefore respectfully requested, to furnish a copy of the same for that purpose.

Very respectfully, yours,

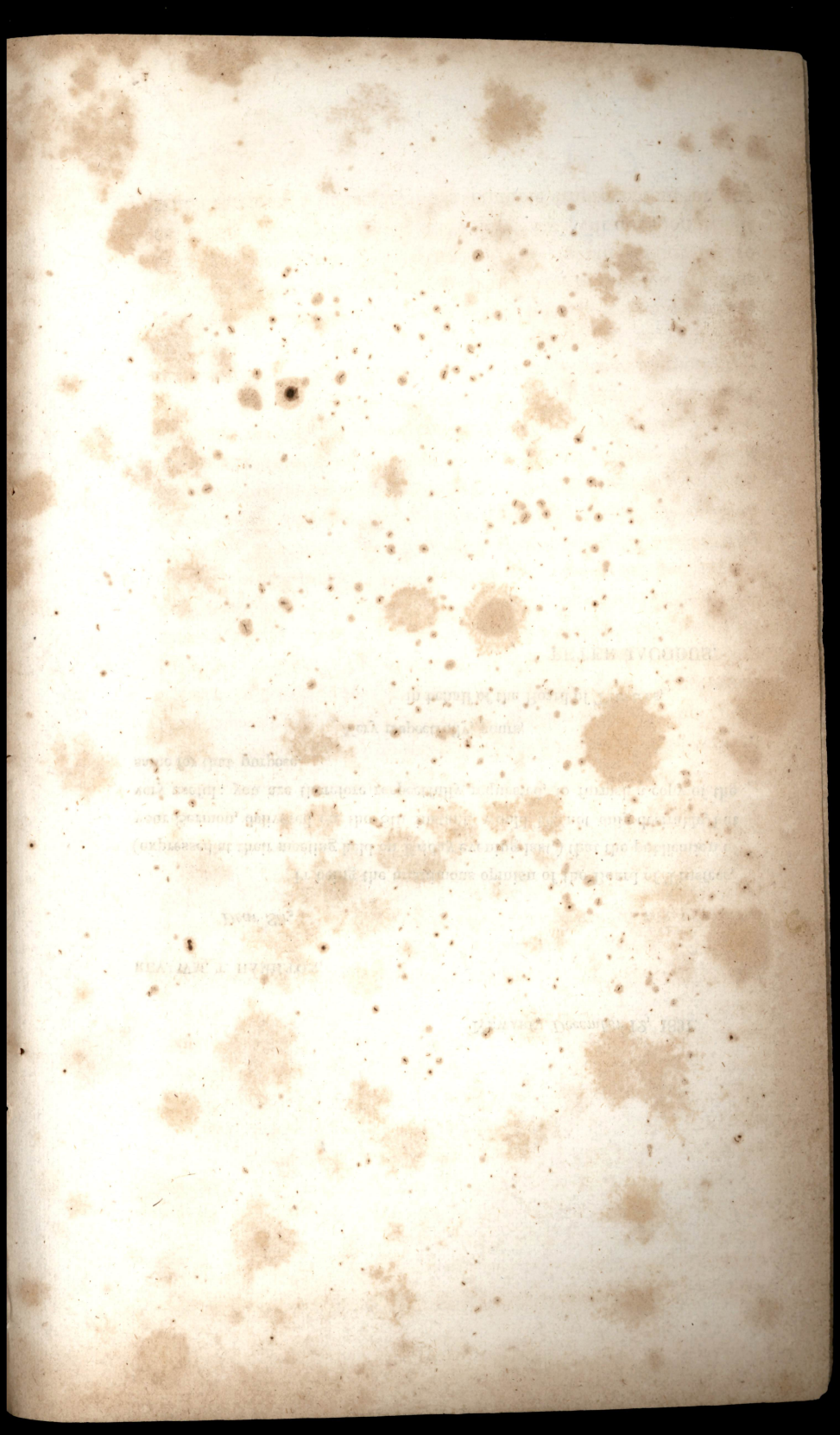
in behalf of the Board of Trustees,

PETER JACOBUS.

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VAULT



DISCOURSE.

PSALM cxlvii 12-15 and 20.

“Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem ; praise thy God, O Zion ! For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates : he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth ; his word runneth very swiftly.”—“He hath not dealt so with any nation !”

HAD the sacred penman lived in our own times, and written the passage before us with direct reference to us, he could hardly have expressed himself in a manner more appropriate to our circumstances at this very period ; so that it appears not so much an *accommodation* of the text, as a direct and legitimate use, to apply it to this great, and growing, and favoured community. *“Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem ; praise thy God, O Zion. For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates : he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat. He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth ; his word runneth very swiftly.”—“He hath not dealt so with any nation !”* For that it is God by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice, God who exalteth one and abaseth another—that unless God build the city, they labour but in vain that build it ; and consequently, that in all the causes which produce political power and national prosperity, the hand of a gracious God is to be distinctly recognized,—it were but labour lost to set ourselves to prove, since none, probably, will question it. It will therefore, I conceive, be a suitable improvement of the

recommendation from our chief magistrate to consecrate this day to devout thanksgiving before Almighty God,—if we call up in review before us this morning some of the many grounds of felicitation that present themselves to us as *American citizens*.

And here the first thing that obtrudes itself on our thoughts is—the *extent of territory* comprised in these United States, which stretches from the St. Lawrence and the great chain of lakes in the north, to the Gulf of Mexico in the south—and from the Atlantic in the east, quite across the whole continent to the vast Pacific in the west, and presents an area of 2,400,000 square miles. Its extreme length is 2780 miles—and its greatest breadth 1300 miles. Scarcely has any empire of ancient or modern times ever presented a more extended surface; a territory, too, lying altogether in the temperate regions, enjoying a congenial climate, indented by numerous deep bays, which furnish many safe and convenient harbours for shipping, and watered by a vast number of noble rivers, some of them of the first magnitude; while its mines yield abundantly of coals, and the various useful, and even the precious, metals. In Illinois, in 1830, 1,626,486 lbs. of lead were manufactured, and in Huron, 6,697,512 lbs. Thus vast, thus ample in its resources is the territory assigned by a kind Providence to this nation.

But a second ground of felicitation is found in *its location*.—None can observe the movements in the political world, on the old continent, without being struck with the fact, that the proximity of one nation to another renders all jealous in the extreme of any movement that may take place in any one. If any one people resist oppression and strike for liberty, all other governments, from one end of Europe to the other, immediately assume a warlike aspect, ready to fall at once on the daring innovator, should he be likely to succeed, and crush his hopes at a blow. Thus Poland has been almost as much fettered in every movement by the cruel neutrality of her neighbours, as by the arms of Russia. The jealous interference of other governments has prevented Greece from reaping the full benefit of her protracted struggle: and France herself, in all her noble movements, has evidently been influenced and checked by the consciousness of this universal jealousy. It is, probably, in no small degree, to the wide separation between this country and older empires, that

the attainment and preservation of her distinguished privileges are owing. The distance is too great for our people to be much corrupted by intercourse with other nations, or our rulers to be awed and fettered in their measures by the jealousy of older governments. While those who are our immediate neighbours, besides being more nearly assimilated to us in sentiment and in political feeling, are too inconsiderable, when compared with ourselves, to excite alarm, or even to feel jealousy. The people are here left to act for themselves, to call out all their resources and develop all their energies, unchecked by the calculations which European cabinets must ever keep in view, how this jealous neighbour, or that angry rival, may feel, or what may be the best means to advance their own welfare without conflicting with that of others. It is her insulated position, far distant from the scene of European jealousy and contention, that gives the United States advantages above every other civilized country on the globe.

This leads us to notice, third, THE GREAT INCREASE OF POPULATION; for, of what avail would a vast territory, however favourably situated, be, without an adequate population to occupy it, to improve it, and to reap the advantages it presents? America was first settled by those who sought a peaceful asylum, and it has ever continued to afford an asylum for the poor and the oppressed, and to offer an inviting field for the enterprising from every country under heaven. The abundance and cheapness of land, the room for competition in every department of human industry, the popular government and equal laws, all present powerful inducements to the overcrowded population of European states to cross the Atlantic and settle here: and, accordingly, there is every year a tide of population pouring in upon our shores, and spreading over the face of the country, wholly unprecedented in the annals of mankind. In 1790, the entire population of the United States amounted to 3,929,328; in 1800, to 5,399,026; in 1810, to 7,408,270; and in 1830, to 12,856,154, that is, in round numbers, 13,000,000. About 40 years since, the entire population, west of the great chain of the Alleghany mountains, did not exceed 100,000, *i. e.* not more than half the present population of the single city of New-York: now it exceeds 3,000,000. In 1811, the population of England

and Scotland together was 12,358,000; that is, nearly 600,000 less than the United States had in 1830. The state of New-York alone has a population very nearly as great as the whole population of Scotland in 1821. The vast increase is apparent from this, that the city of New-York one hundred years ago, that is, in 1731, contained 8622 inhabitants, and now in 1831, it has over 200,000; having increased at the rate of nearly 2000 a year for 100 years. When the revolution commenced in 1766, the population of all the United States was less than 3,000,000, and the nation ranked with the smallest, such as Denmark and Switzerland; and now this nation is the second naval power in the world.

The increase of population is found to exceed 1000 souls every day. Already, in point of population, the United States ranks amongst the most considerable nations of the civilized world; and causes are in operation, which, if not checked by unforeseen events, will accumulate in this land of enterprise and freedom, and that at no distant period, a population greater than that of any nation of Christendom. It is a grand spectacle to behold the forests sinking before the advancing steps of civilized man; and where late the prowling wolf and the shaggy bear found a safe retreat, to see peaceful cattle grazing, and the blue smoke ascending from the husbandman's dwelling: while the wide land spreads its waving harvests to the sun, and cities are rising and villages are multiplying, the land throughout. A fair specimen of the general increase we have in our own town, in which new streets are constantly opening, new buildings rising, new branches of business are entered into, and fresh inhabitants are pouring in, insomuch that, as recently stated in one of our public journals, an increase of one thousand names has been made to the collector's list of taxable inhabitants within the last year.*

* In the last eleven years Newark has received an increase of not far from 6000 inhabitants. There are here several shoe factories that employ from 100 to 250 men, besides women and boys as binders and closers. There are hat factories that employ from 50 to 70 workmen; carriage makers employing from 80 to 100 men. Two of these factories avail themselves of steam power. There are besides several extensive establishments for the manufacture of saddlery and harness; all contributing to increase the general prosperity and growth of population.

But, fourth, *with all this extending population, external peace and internal tranquillity have been maintained.* There are some venerable few yet remaining among us, who can tell us of the horrors of war, such as they themselves witnessed in times past, when an enemy was ravaging the country, and property and life were alike insecure. They could tell of the miseries of warfare in the depth of winter, of the burning of houses and churches, and of the suffering attendant on the hasty flight of delicate females and tender children, uncertain whether their fathers, and husbands, and brothers, were not lying unprotected from the pinching cold, or captured by the foe, or stretched bleeding on the snow! Look to hapless Poland; lacerated in every member, betrayed by those she trusted, and now subdued and trampled on by her bitter oppressor, she is compelled again to bow her neck to the yoke; and now, after losing thousands of her sons, and expending her treasure, and pouring out her blood like water in her noble but fruitless struggle, the bravest asserters of her rights must atone for their ill success, by pining in dungeons, or by dreary exile, or by the executioner's hands! And when you see such fruits of war, even in the noblest of causes, bless God for the difference in your condition, and for the peace that smiles on your borders.

Not only from foreign foes, but from domestic dissensions and internal tumults, God has graciously preserved us. See the commotions that, for the last eighteen months, have every where agitated Europe, and shaken its empires to their foundations! The Netherlands are rent asunder. Italy, and many of the states of Germany, are in restless agitation; the tide of political feeling has been rising and ebbing with fearful violence and frequency, betokening the working of a cause deep within, which, like the smothered fires of a volcano, threatens, ere long, to break forth in terrible commotion. In France, too, after all that has been gained, there is still a feverish excitement on the public mind: affairs there seem to be far from finally settled: the aspect of things in that great community reminds the observer, not of the heaving and rolling of the mighty deep as it is settling to rest after the tempest is over, but of the fitful, restless movement, the turbulent commotion, that troubles the face of ocean in some brief interval of the storm, while it is gathering up its powers to rush down

with tenfold violence, and sweep every thing away before it. Scarcely less agitated is the public mind in Great Britain, where a contest is going on for the rights of the people, which, end as it may, cannot fail to bring immensely important consequences in its train. Cast your eye over what part of this world's political horizon you choose, it presents a troubled aspect. But here, in this land of western seclusion, all, as yet, is peaceful and calm. No deep plots are in agitation; no political strifes are rending the body politic asunder. The expression of bitterness, occasioned by party feeling, is but as the safety-valve by which the violence of men's evil passions may work off, and the machinery of public business move along safely and successfully! Compare the peace and tranquillity here reigning, with the tumults every where raging in other nations, and *lift up your hands in the sanctuary, sing praises to our God.*

A fifth ground of thanksgiving may be found in *the continued stability of our free institutions!*

Valuable as tranquillity is, it may be purchased at too dear a rate: no blessing was ever gained without a struggle, none can be long preserved without effort. The liberties of this country cost an arduous, and bloody, and protracted struggle: and the memory of that struggle will long remain; its influence will long continue to operate. Yet, dear as is the prize of liberty, and often as it has erst been won, in instances how many has it been heedlessly lost, or basely sold, or tamely surrendered? Greece was once free and independent, yet she has seen a long night of despotism. Rome was once a free republic, and jealous of her liberties, yet were they gradually torn from her, till she bowed at the feet of the Cæsars, and tamely acknowledged their will as her law! France, not long since, overturned the throne of royalty, and swept away the very foundations of despotism with torrents of blood, seizing the reins of government into her own hands—yet she speedily surrendered those reins to a daring adventurer, who ruled her with consummate genius, it is true, but with a rod of iron; and various have been the vicissitudes of her fortune since that hour. Every page of historic legends admonishes us to beware, lest the fair fabric of liberty, reared with so much toil, and whose foundations were cemented with the best blood of thousands of the fathers of their country,

be overthrown by violence, undermined by treachery, or defaced by corruption. Whether, contrary to all past experience and in defiance of the numerous and powerful and increasing causes at work to effect its destruction, (causes found in the ignorance and depravity of men), this republic, with all its glorious institutions, is to stand, and how long, is known only to the omniscient mind. But thus far it has stood, and shed its rich blessings far and wide over thousands, and thousands of thousands.

For, sixth, *almost unexampled prosperity has crowned this land.* Possessing for the most part a fertile soil, a salubrious climate, and just laws, which secure to every man the rewards of his own industry, enterprise and activity every where enliven the face of society. A bounteous Providence crowns the labours of the husbandman with abundant crops, and the produce of his toil is received by the merchant, and wrought by the manufacturer,—while commerce spreads her sails to every wind of heaven, and visits every port on the wide globe. Every where throughout the whole country, lands are cleared, roads are laid out, rivers are rendered navigable, canals are dug, and rail-roads are beginning to be constructed; by which the facilities of transportation are increasing to an almost incredible degree; and commerce, both internal and foreign, is augmenting, and presenting continually fresh stimulants to the industry of the husbandman, the mechanic, the manufacturer, and the merchant. In these improvements our state participates, as this town can testify.

As evidence of improvement in the United States, it may be mentioned, that there were, in

| | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------|--------|----------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| 1790, | post-offices | 75, | of post-roads(miles) | 1,875, | recpts. | \$37,935 |
| 1800, | - | 903, | - - | 20,817, | | 280,804 |
| 1810, | - | 2,300, | - - | 36,406, | | 551,684 |
| 1821, | - | 4,976, | - - | 79,808, | | 1,029,102 |
| 1829, | - | 8,004, | - - | 115,000.* | | |

* The revenue of the Post-office department in the United States, the year ending July 1831, was \$1,935,559 31
 Yielding a surplus revenue of 210,412 89
 The amount of mail transportation, that year, was in steam-boats and stages 10,728,348 miles
 On horseback and in sulkies 4,740,344 miles

In 1808, the whole amount of exports from the United States to foreign countries, was - - - - \$22,430,960

In 1820, it was 69,691,669

In the year ending Sept. 30, 1829, it was 74,492,527*

In 1791, the whole public revenue of the United States amounted only to \$4,771,342: the expenditures to \$3,797,436.

In 1815 already, the revenue amounted to \$51,283,946; and the public expenditure, the same year, was \$25,522,089, not half the amount of the public income.

In 1799, the whole value of houses and lands in the United States was estimated at \$619,977,247: in 1815, it had increased to \$1,631,657,224. In 1830, it must be about \$2,519,009,222.

In 1831, the registered tonnage of vessels, employed in foreign trade, was - - - - 619,029

In coasting trade - - - - 588,014

In fisheries - - - - 55,574

Total in 1821, - - - 1,262,618 tons.†

The increase of mail transportation that year was 1,196,771 miles

Increase of mail transportation by stages, that year 968,702 miles

Amount in which stages were substituted for horse mails that

year was 362,321 miles

Total amount of mail transportation the year ending July 1831,

was 15,468,692 miles

* The total value of articles of domestic produce exported in the year ending September 30, 1829, was \$55,700,113

The amount in 1828, 50,669,669

Increase of one year only, amounts to 5,030,444

As a further evidence of rapid improvement it may be remarked, that, when Mr. Jay made his treaty with Great Britain in 1793, cotton was not even mentioned as an article of American produce. In 30 years from that time, that is, in 1824, the growth of cotton was 560,000 bales—and in 1831, the crop is estimated at 1,038,847 bales,—worth, at an average of 300 lbs. to the bale, and at 8 cents a lb. \$25,000,000. Of this no less than 426,485 bales were exported from New Orleans alone.

Again, Ohio was first settled in 1788. In 1802 it took its rank among the independent States. It has now 15,877,171 acres of land duly assessed.

In 1829, the houses and lands were valued at \$41,193,000

The value of horses alone in Ohio, was 7,012,760

And of other cattle 5,756,768

Cincinnati, in Ohio, has a population of 26,515 inhabitants. So rapid is the improvement made in less than 30 years.

† See note, next page.

Never did the sun shine on a nation that was advancing with such giant strides in population, in wealth, and in power.—

† In 1828, the whole amount of tonnage in the United States was 1,706,239, showing an increase in that one year of 120,784 tons.

In the year ending September 30, 1829, 872,946 tons of American shipping entered, and 944,799 cleared from ports in the United States, and 130,743 tons of foreign shipping entered and 133,006 cleared, during the same period, showing an entire aggregate of 2,081,494 tons of shipping, in American ports, in one year.

Besides this commerce on the seaboard, there is a considerable and rapidly increasing commerce carried on upon the inland waters, the lakes or fresh water seas, the rivers and canals.

On the lakes Huron, Erie, and Michigan, there are now upwards of 100 vessels employed in commerce, of which the average tonnage is 70 tons each.

In 1830, there had already been entered and cleared at the custom-house, at Detroit, 4,500,000 tons.

The number of entrances and clearances at Detroit in that one year was 926
 The amount of steamboat tonnage, on the upper lakes, was in 1830 1,692
 The aggregate amount of tonnage on the lakes was 7,090
 Vessels are now building, or under contract, to the amount of . . . 200 tons.

The first steamboat on the western waters, was built at Pittsburgh, 1811: till 1817, only 7 or 8 were built: but by 1830, there had been 323, making a tonnage of 56,000 tons, employed on the waters of the Mississippi and Ohio: the largest size rated at 500 tons.

At this time there are more than 200 steamboats in commission, making an amount of about 35,000 tons. It is estimated that 525,000 cords of wood are annually consumed by them, which, at \$2 25 a cord, makes an annual expense of \$1,181,000 for fuel alone. The whole expense of maintaining these boats is \$2,500,000.

To show the improvement in the interior communication, it is said that persons have travelled by the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, in steamboats, from N. Orleans to Pittsburgh 2,246 miles, thence to Erie by land 130 miles, thence to Buffalo 96 miles, by steam, thence by the Erie canal to Schenectady, 320 miles, thence from Schenectady to Albany 15 miles by stages, to avoid the numerous locks, and from Albany to New-York 160 miles by steam; in all, 2,967 miles, and at a total cost of \$73, meals included.

The improvements in canal navigation are almost unprecedented. Ohio has 375 miles of canal navigation.

One canal, from Cincinnati to Dayton, of 65 miles, with 22 locks, cost \$746,000.

The Ohio canal, finished in 1831, cost \$3,584,367 96. Such are the improvements in a state not yet 30 years old.

Pennsylvania has expended vast sums on internal improvements.

In January 1830, she had 435 miles of finished canal, and nearly 300 miles more in a state of forwardness. By these works she has incurred a debt of \$8,286,000.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Zion, for he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates, he hath blessed thy children within thee. He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.

Another point which here merits attention, is, *our continued freedom from wasting disease*. When we survey the immense territory of this country, stretching from the extreme north to the borders of the torrid zone; the great diversity in the soil; the multitude of low and marshy lands, especially along our seaboard and by the great rivers, and that too in hot climates; when we call to mind the incessant activity, the daring enterprise and consequent exposure of our citizens, it is astonishing that pestilential diseases are so rare, so almost unheard of. Only call to mind what havoc was periodically made, a few years since, in our large cities, and especially in the south; how many the victims, how deep the mourning, and how great and just the consequent alarm; and, surely, the almost entire exemption of our citizens, spread over so vast and diversified a territory, for this and a number of preceding years, from pestilence of every kind, calls for devout thanksgiving to Him, in

The Schuylkill canal alone, 108 miles in length, cost \$2,000,000.

In 1828, the tolls on this canal amounted to 64,000 dollars; and in 1829 they amounted to 120,000 dollars, nearly doubling the income of the former year.

The arrivals of vessels from sea, at the port of Philadelphia, in 1822, were 1,706; in 1829 they were 2,584.

In Philadelphia, extensive manufactures of domestic goods are carried on to the value of many millions of dollars annually.

In the city of New-York, the amount of sales at auction of dutiable goods, in the interval between 1810 and 1829, was \$231,279,080 28

Amount of duties paid in that time, 3,674,148 12

In 1829, a single auctioneer paid duties to the amount of 56,199 92

The Erie canal in the state of New-York is 363 miles long; it cost 9,027,456 dollars and 95 cents. The tolls on this canal amounted, in 1828, to 727,650 dollars and 20 cents. The state was still in debt for this canal, January, 1830, 7,706,013 dollars.

A further evidence of the growth of the United States is apparent in her navy. At the period of the revolution she had no navy. Now she is the second naval power in the world; having seven ships of the line of 74 guns each—seven frigates carrying 44 guns, three carrying 36 guns—fifteen sloops of war, and seven other smaller vessels, employed in her public service. There are seven navy-yards, containing vessels on the stocks, materials for vessels, and other naval stores, to the value of several millions of dollars.

whom we live and move and have our being ! And when further we cast our eyes over the Asiatic and European continents, and behold the fearful havoc made among the nations by that rod of the Almighty's hand, *the dreaded cholera!* which sweeps away its thousands to the grave, irrespective of rank, condition, sex, or age ; and which passes over the nations with the sure and resistless march of death, spreading terror far in advance of its actual approach—surely, surely, my hearers, favoured as we have been, the warmest ascriptions of praise are due to him “ *in whose hands our breath is !*”

Even now, while we are met in the temple of God to speak his praises for the blessing of continued health throughout our whole country, as well as through this state, thousands of families throughout Eastern Europe are in mourning : thousands in Petersburg, in Vienna, in Riga, and even in Hamburg, (as the latest advices assure us,) are at this hour suffering under the frightful cholera, or expecting, in alarm, to see its deadly symptoms on their friends, or to feel them in themselves ! In this town, and in this congregation, though sickness has not been unknown, and not a few of you have felt the keen stroke of bereavement, yet, my beloved hearers, God's mercy has been conspicuous, in the health generally enjoyed, and in the total absence of all pestilence and of any extensively deadly malady. True indeed it is, that a return of the day of thanksgiving will always excite painful emotions in the bosoms of some afflicted ones, from the striking memento it gives them of what they have suffered, and what they have lost, during the year. We have dropped, with many of you, the tear of sympathy during the year—and the remembrance of it shall give a mellowness and a softness to our tones of praise, that, we trust, will not only prevent them from breaking harshly on your ears, but gently persuade, even the afflicted and bereaved, to unite with us in praise to Him whose hand afflicts only to bless. O seek, my afflicted hearers, to gather cogent motives from your sorrow, so to live, and so to watch, that, when this checkered life shall close, you may enter on a day of thanksgiving that shall never end.

A seventh source of felicitation lies in the commanding influence which the United States are beginning to exert

upon other nations. In the United States, alone, is exhibited the glorious spectacle of a great population, with a vast territory, numerous and crowded cities, a great and growing commerce, prospering and thriving in every part; peaceable and tranquil at home, respected abroad, and yet a nation of equals; governed in a manner strictly popular; a nation in which the laws are enacted by the people; commerce is regulated and government administered by the people, through officers, who from the highest to the lowest, are elected by the people, and directly responsible to them. "This unexampled system," as a distinguished foreigner observes, "has survived the tender period of infancy, and outlived the prophecies of its downfall. Its principles have been fostered into maturity. It has borne the nation triumphantly through a period of domestic difficulty and external danger: it has been found serviceable in peace and in war, and may well claim for the people it has saved and honored the votive benediction of *esto perpetua*: May it be permanent!" "The example of the United States," says the same writer, "proves to all nations that the expensiveness of a government is no test of its efficiency, or real excellence; and that the cheapest political system *may* be the best. No taxes are raised within the country for the support of the general government; the produce of the port customs, and the sale of public lands, constituting the whole of the public revenue."

Another intelligent and eloquent foreigner thus expresses himself: "The United States have already done the most essential service to the cause of freedom, not so much, perhaps, by the conduct of her people, or by the acts of her government, as by her mere existence in peace, respect, and prosperity, under institutions more practically popular, and a constitution more purely democratic than has ever prevailed among civilized men from the beginning of the world; thus affording a splendid illustration, and irrefragable proof of the possibility of reconciling the utmost extent of freedom with the maintenance of public authority, and the greatest order and tranquillity, and security to private rights, with the most unbounded exercise of political ones. America has gone on prospering for fifty years, and has exhibited a picture of uninterrupted, rapid, and unprecedented advances in wealth, population, intelligence, and concord, while

all the arbitrary governments of the old world have been over-run with bankruptcies, conspiracies, rebellions, and revolutions, and are at this moment trembling in the consciousness of their insecurity, and vainly endeavoring to repress irrepressible discontents, by confederated violence and terror. She has not only put to shame the stationary communities of Europe, but has even compelled their statist and political economists to revise and remodel their systems to correspond with her startling and excessive prosperity. Such are the services which America has rendered to the cause of liberty; and that too, without an effort of her own, yea, almost without her consciousness. They have flowed like a healing virtue from her existence and her example. She has only had to be free: and peaceful and happy and prosperous in her freedom, to put down the shameless advocates of despotic power, and to give the strongest encouragement to all the nations of the earth to emulate her happiness and peace, by imitating her freedom!"

When disinterested spectators in foreign lands give such a testimony to the influence of the example of this republic, can we wonder that that influence is shaking the thrones of despotism to their foundation? Can we wonder, that the name of an American citizen is, in many places in Europe, a passport to good society? "*Praise thy God, O Zion, he hath blessed thy children within thee!*"

But an eighth ground of congratulation is found in the advance of literature and the general increase of intelligence.

In 1775 the whole number of newspapers published in this country was thirty-seven; in 1810, three hundred and fifty-three; in 1828, eight hundred and twenty-seven; and now it falls not far short of twelve hundred: in Pennsylvania, twenty-two papers are published in German; and several French and Spanish journals are now regularly issued in our large cities.

In no country in the world are so many public journals circulated and read as in the United States: and the subject of elementary education is attracting increasing attention in all the States of the Union: nearly all the States have a public fund appropriated solely to the advancement of elementary instruction. In the single State of New-York \$1,061,699 have been expended by the public in school-houses, books, and appa-

ratus for common schools; and the annual amount of the school-fund exceeds \$100,000. In our own State, \$20,000 are annually appropriated to this important object. Of Sunday schools, the American Sunday School Union has 6,654 schools, 61,372 teachers, and 411,009 scholars. The Methodist Sunday School Union has 406 auxiliaries, 2,436 schools, 4,872 superintendents, 36,540 teachers, and 158,240 scholars. The whole number of Sabbath scholars in the U. States is about 600,000.

In May, 1831, there were in the United States, besides a large number of public academies and high schools, 48 incorporated colleges, 292 instructors: The number of living alumni of 25 colleges, was 42,372; and of undergraduates, in 44 colleges, 4021; of law students in three colleges, 88; of medical students, 1240; and the number of volumes in 32 college libraries, was 237,237. Most of the new States are taking measures to endow colleges within their own limits.

Of theological seminaries there were 22. The number already educated in 13 seminaries, was 1,751; of medical schools of eminence, there are 9; of law schools, 3.*

There are not, indeed, here, as in Great Britain, means for producing giants in literature. Here the college course is but four years; there eight years' study is indispensable to obtain a master's degree; and it is not until after a course of nineteen years study, at the English universities, that a candidate can demand his full honor as doctor of divinity, law, or physic. But the means of obtaining a *good* education are incomparably greater and more generally accessible here; and probably in no country in the world is intelligence more generally diffused, or the habit of reading more universal.

But lastly and chiefly are *we called on to bless God for the continuance and extension of true religion, and the advance of a sound morality.*

In the United States, at the close of 1830, there were 9,941 ministers of religion of all denominations; 13,891 religious societies or congregations, and 1,314,344 communicants in the

* From public documents it appears, that in September, 1831, there were in the United States 59 literary institutions ranked as colleges, then containing about 4,903 students, having 417 instructors, and connected with which are no less than 246,926 volumes in their libraries.

visible church; and all these ministers, be it remembered, are men chosen and maintained by the flocks they serve, without any connexion with the government. The church in this country has contributed to the great objects of philanthropy and benevolence, since the commencement of active effort, about three and a half millions of dollars: to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, \$839,898; to the American Bible Society, \$909,291; to the American Tract Society, \$205,210; to the American Home Missionary Society, \$99,092; and to the American Colonization Society, \$102,439.

The most striking of all these great movements is that of the American Temperance Society. In times past, 500 murders were annually committed in the United States, through intemperance, and 15,000 communicants were annually excommunicated from the 12,000 churches, for intemperance; while the United States could number about 375,000 regular drunkards: now, by the blessing of God on the four years' operation of the American Temperance Society, there are 19 State and 300 Temperance Societies in the Union; 300,000 persons are pledged to total abstinence; 200 vessels now sail out of our ports without spirits; 1000 distilleries have stopped; 100 taverns are kept which sell no spirits; 3000 merchants have abandoned the traffic, and at least 3,000 drunkards have become reformed. "*Surely this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*"

But the most cheering item of all is the number, extent, and power of revivals of religion with which God has blessed our American Zion, from Maine to Georgia, from the Atlantic shore to the very depth of the Western prairies and forests. Every week brings fresh intelligence of what God is doing: within a few weeks past, thousands have joined the people of God in the Presbyterian church, and thousands more in other communions. Within two years past, it is estimated, that more than 3000 teachers and scholars of Sabbath schools have bowed to the sceptre of King Jesus. Within the last twelve months, many thousands of souls have found the joys of salvation in these United States; and, at this very hour, God's hand is stretched out in great power over the land, and hundreds and thousands feel as they never before felt, and see that

they must decide, and decide speedily, for eternity. Every hour is big with destiny to souls and to the land. *God hath sent forth his commandment upon earth—his word runneth very swiftly.* Nor have we been wholly left: some who are this morning in the house of God, will for ever bless him, as I hope, for what they have seen, and heard, and felt in 1831.

The extent of our territory, the location of the country, the increase of population, continued peace and external tranquillity, the unimpaired stability of our free institutions, great and growing prosperity, general health, rising influence among other nations, extending literature and intelligence, and, above all, the continuance of the gospel, improvement in morals, and the astonishing blessing of Heaven in spreading revivals through the land,—call on us, with loud and solemn emphasis, to render thanks unto the Lord, "*Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Zion, for he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates—he hath blessed thy children within thee, he maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of wheat.*"—*He hath not dealt so with any nation!*" **AMEN!**