ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN WHIG

AND

CLIOSOPHIC SOCIETIES

OF THE

COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY,

AT PRINCETON, JUNE 23D, 1868,

BY

THE HON. THOMAS N. McCARTER.

PHILADELPHIA:
M'CALLA & STAVELY, PRINTERS, 237-9 DOCK STREET.
1868.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF

THE AMERICAN WHIG SOCIETY.

"RESOLVED, That the thanks of the American Whig Society be presented to the HON. T. N. MCCARTER, of N. J., for his able and eloquent address delivered this day before the Literary Societies; and that a Committee be appointed to request a copy for publication."

HENRY C. CAMERON,
J. QUINCY A. FULLERTON, } Committee.
WILLIAM S. LITTLE,

WHIG HALL, June 23, 1868.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF

THE CLIOSOPHIC SOCIETY.

"RESOLVED, That the thanks of this Society be tendered to the HON. T. N. MCCARTER, for his able and interesting address of to-day, and that a Committee of three be appointed to request a copy of the same for publication."

HENRY W. GREEN,
SAMUEL H. PENNINGTON, } Committee.
CHAS. A. AIKIN,

CLIO. HALL, June 23, 1868.

ADDRESS.

THE revolution of another year has brought us once more together, to engage in the exercises and partake of the literary festivities which attend that most interesting occasion, a College Commencement,—an occasion which every alumnus hails with delight, as affording him an opportunity to revisit those scenes of his youth with which is connected more of romance than any other portion of his life,—to renew old and long-severed acquaintances,—to clasp by the hand the friends of his boyhood, who perchance have, like himself, also come hither, after many years of absence,—to renew his pledges of devotion to that cherishing mother to whose fostering care he owes whatever of intellectual stature he may have attained, and to exchange words of kind greeting and friendly counsel with those who on the morrow shall step forth to engage for the first time in the actual battle of life.

To us who have come up hither from the busy

engagements of the world, all covered with the dust and smoke of life's conflict, as we tread these walks so peaceful and quiet, and so much in contrast with the scenes of tumult and confusion from which we have but just emerged,—as we traverse the grand old halls and walk again among the pleasant seats of learning, the whole place becomes invested with a sort of religious interest, and a reverence akin to that which pilgrims feel, when after long separation they revisit the scenes of their early worship, fills our hearts.

To us on such occasions as this, these pleasant places become indeed

> "Pilgrim shrines,
> Shrines to no code or creed confined:
> The Delphian vales, the Palestines,
> The Meccas of the mind."

Of all the associations which are awakened by a commencement occasion, none are more agreeable than those connected with the two literary societies in whose behalf we are on this day assembled. The exercises of these societies, as we behold them again after a protracted absence, bring back to our minds the past with more of interest than any other portions of the college experience.

These society halls, for whose prosperity we manifested so much zeal, and from whose instruction we derived so much profit, made an impression on our youthful minds which never can be

effaced. They are the forum on which the student first tries his own intellectual powers, without the guiding hand of tutor or professor. They are the arenas on which are fought those mimic conflicts which so closely resemble the engagements of actual life. They beget in the student those habits of self-reliance which he will so much need in his future intercourse with the world. They serve to counteract that tendency to scholastic retirement which results from the rigid discipline of the college curriculum, and they aid to develop the mere student and scholar into the man of business and the citizen.

As the student in a country like ours, as soon as he graduates from college, necessarily becomes, in most cases, more of a citizen and a business man than a mere scholar or student, and is compelled at once to discharge the duties and meet the responsibilities of citizenship, an occasion like the present serves naturally to lead to a consideration of some of the relations which the educated men of this country bear to the government under which their lot is cast.

In a government which is theoretically based upon the perfect equality of all men before the law, we are prone to lose sight of the fact that such equality exists more in name than in reality—that the very name and essence of government implies restraint, authority, coercion, brought about by the exercise of power; that while all

men are equal before the law, all are subject to the law, and that this law is not a mere abstraction, but is a visible, tangible power, which controls fleets and armies, establishes courts of justice, asserts rights, redresses wrongs, inflicts punishments, and makes itself manifest in all the departments of business and all the varied relations of life. Thus it is that even beneath the dead level of a perfect democracy there lurks somewhere a secret influence, by which the powers of government are wielded as effectually as by the will of an emperor or autocrat.

This subtle influence lies back of all forms of government, for while in a popular and representative government we are accustomed to say that the will of the people rules, and that the voice of the majority is all-powerful, yet the truth is that majorities only prescribe the forms by which this power shall be made manifest, and choose the instruments by which its will is made effectual. Majorities do not create or originate the real power of a government, but at most direct its aims, and establish the channels through which it shall flow.

What, then, is the nature of this power, and where is its seat? Beyond all question, its nature is intellectual, and it has its seat in the trained and cultivated minds of those men who, acting upon the masses of the people, transmit their own wills through the channels which majorities establish,

and accomplish their own purposes by the skilful use of those instruments which the popular will has selected. It follows from this that the perfection of a government depends not so much upon the forms through which it is administered as on the nature and character of the intellect that controls and directs it. A government the most absolute and despotic in its form, if administered by a wise and virtuous ruler, is better for the subjects of it than the most perfect republic which has been permitted to fall into the hands of the ignorant, the vicious, and corrupt. It matters not what material evidences of prosperity and power a government may possess, if its intellectual management is imbecile or incompetent,—no collection of physical means or instruments of power, no well-equipped armies or gallant navies, no fertility of soil or wealth of resources will avail to perpetuate its influence, will serve to make it useful to its own citizens, or command for it the respect of the other nations of the earth.

The government established by Oliver Cromwell on the ruins of the British monarchy seemed to have all the outward evidences of internal strength, and to possess inherent power to perpetuate itself indefinitely. Yet how soon after the inspiration of his genius was withdrawn did it crumble to pieces, and the nation relapse into those ancient ways from which he seemed to have permanently redeemed it!

The Republics of Mexico and South America, with constitutions fashioned closely after that of our own beloved country, would seem to possess all the elements to which a superficial observer would attribute our own prosperity and wonderful growth. And yet how signally they demonstrate the inadequacy of the most perfect form of government to promote the happiness and advance the prosperity of a people, without wisdom or virtue in those who administer their affairs and control their destinies!

Yet we in this country have become so accustomed to admire and laud the mere form of our government, that we have come to look upon it as a self-acting agency, which cannot move in a wrong direction, and which, left to itself, will of its own inherent goodness accomplish the greatest good of the greatest number; and we have erroneously attributed to the perfection of a mere system that unexampled prosperity which has resulted in part from our physical advantages, and very greatly from the wisdom and virtue of those noble men who started us in our astonishing career of prosperity and power. The result of this superficial view of the workings of our own system has been to beget, even among the most intelligent classes, an optimism which, leading men to the belief that no amount of bad management can permanently damage the working of so perfect a machine, has brought us to the verge of destruc-

tion in the past, and is fraught with the greatest peril for the future.

I would by no means be understood to advocate the doctrine that forms of government are immaterial, or to adopt the sentiment expressed by Pope in the familiar couplet:

> "For forms of government let fools contest,
> That which is best administered is best."

On the contrary, I hold that, other things being equal, that system of government is best adapted to promote the true happiness and prosperity of a people which admits the greatest number of the wise and good to a participation in its affairs.

Such a system is that under which it is our happiness to live; and if it has not seemed to answer fully the ends for which it was established, its failure is due not so much to defects in the system as to the apathy and indifference of those who, best qualified to take part in its affairs, have deliberately stood aloof from its management, and have failed to bestow the influence of their learning and culture upon the highest human ends to which those qualities could be applied.

This theme, the duties which educated men owe to their country, trite as it is, seems to have a peculiar importance at this crisis of our country's history.

It is to my mind susceptible of perfect demonstration, that the bloody and destructive war

through which we have just passed could have been averted, and the great principles of freedom which by it have been established could have been as successfully vindicated, had the educated men of our country, during all the years in which the terrible storm was gathering, sternly applied their wisdom to resist the beginnings of the evil, and devoted to the preservation of our liberties that "eternal vigilance" by which alone their preservation is possible. The cruel experience of the past should teach us that such vigilance is to be exercised not only against the encroachments of tyranny or the insidious progress of corruption, but that it needs to be exerted against our own selfish apathy and indifference, our exclusive devotion to business, our over-confidence in the perfection of our government, and the numberless other excuses by which men seek to justify their abstinence from a participation in public affairs. It may be unwise to indulge in vain regrets over the desolations of the past, but it is eminently wise to avail ourselves of the experience of the past, to guard against a recurrence of like calamities in the future. For when in our country's history did she so much need the aid and counsel of every intelligent citizen as now? When before did such tremendous problems press upon us for solution as at the present moment?

Ten noble commonwealths, but yesterday the very garden of our country, inhabited by a proud

and gallant people, and marching forward in a career of prosperity without a parallel in any other country, are now reduced to a state of temporary vassalage by that government which it was once their boast that they controlled, and which in a frenzy of insane ambition they vainly endeavored to destroy. Who shall lift them out of the degradation to which they have been sunk, and restore them once more to their true position of perfect equality with their sister commonwealths? Who shall supply to that people, thus "peeled and scattered," the wisdom, intelligence, and statesmanship which they so much need, when all their own citizens who possess those qualities, and on whom such duty would naturally devolve, have been totally disfranchised by that same rebellion which has reduced them to their present deplorable condition?

Four millions of slaves, but yesterday only a little higher in the scale of intelligence than the beasts with which they wrought for their common masters and owners, degraded by two centuries of debasing servitude, have become, not gradually, but "in the twinkling of an eye," charged with all the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, masters of those of whom they were so recently the abject slaves, and admitted to share in the government not of themselves alone but of this whole country, of whose wants few of them have the slightest conception. Upon whom will

rest the duty of educating these wards of the nation,—of restraining their excesses, of protecting them, as well from the reactionary tendencies surrounding them at home as from the arts of designing demagogues from abroad, and of elevating to the ancient standard the average of intelligence and virtue, which so great an infusion of ignorance and incapacity must necessarily reduce to a lower point than it has ever before reached?

Who shall restore the ancient landmarks, and newly define the boundaries of State and Federal authority, which the deluge of war has confounded and swept away?

Whose wisdom shall suffice to elevate our currency, restore our impaired credit, adjust our crude and clumsy system of taxation, and distribute equitably that crushing load of debt now depressing every department of industry?

Who shall check the insidious progress of corruption which seems to pervade every fibre of our body politic, and rid the land of those foul and dangerous reptiles which have infested the soil ever since the subsidence of the waters of civil strife?

These questions, and many others of a similar character, springing out of the bloody ordeal through which we have passed, press themselves upon our attention, and demand an answer from every true patriot; they appeal with importunate earnestness to men of talents and education, to

come forth and assert the rights,—nay more, to discharge the duties which belong to them, as those best qualified to respond to such demands as these.

It is thus that those of our citizens who have enjoyed the benefits of that education which our colleges and higher seminaries afford, become charged with a sacred trust, which, founded upon God-given capacity, is nearly allied to that "divine right" once claimed for kings, to rule the destinies of those around them. It is the only "divine right" of government which we can acknowledge among men, and its possession raises a reciprocal duty, the neglect of which must certainly lead to disastrous results.

For the proper discharge of this duty, it is the aim of a college course, and particularly of that part of it belonging to your literary societies, to qualify the student.

The seminaries of the present day are not subject to the reproach which Bacon cast upon the universities of his time, of which he asserted that "the studies of men in such places are confined and pinned down to certain authors, from which if a man happen to differ, he is presently represented as a disturber and innovator."

The adoption of that system of observation and induction which Bacon introduced has redeemed most modern schools of learning from that bigotry and intolerance, so justly rebuked by the great

philosopher, and which once so greatly hindered the advance of scientific and religious truth. Unfortunately, the same progress has not been accomplished in political discussions. That spirit which once applied the rack and thumb-screw to produce identity of religious opinion is now invoked to stifle inquiry and crush out all freedom of thought in party politics, although in so doing men disregard all the teachings of science and all the analogies of nature. "How foolish," said Charles V. (in substance), "to expect all men to think alike, when the most cunning workman cannot make two watches go together!" Nor is this diversity seen alone in the objects of human skill. The character which nature stamps on her productions, through all their vast gradations, from the smallest grain of sand which sparkles on the sea shore, to that magnificent system of worlds scattered through the fields of space, is that of ceaseless variety. Her excelling hand fashions no two objects alike. Not only does kind differ from kind and species from species, but one individual differs from another. The flowers which bloom on the same stem, the leaves which rustle on the same bough, beasts, which herd together from the impulse of congenial sympathy, birds warmed to life in the same nest, and infants, twin offspring of the same womb, all bear distinctive marks of nature's exhaustless fertility of design. From the lowest to the highest link in her stupendous chain, as far as human

knowledge can extend, this endless diversity is seen. Each mote that dances in the sunbeam has its own peculiar shape and substance, and "one star differeth from another star in glory."

Not less wonderful is the variety which the immaterial world presents. The subtle principle of life is as diverse and multiform in its operations as the innumerable forms of being on which it acts, and in man, that noble attribute which distinguishes him from all other organized existences is modified by perpetual variations in every individual of his race. Mind differs from mind not less than feature from feature. In tastes, habits of thought, and degrees of intelligence, in memory, imagination, in the reasoning powers, and in every separate faculty of intellect, each human being is marked by qualities exclusively his own. Boundless as is the field of knowledge and speculation, there is scarcely a subject that employs the thoughts of men on which the opinions of any two wholly coincide. They worship at the same altar from similarity, not from identity of creed; they unite with the same political organization, not because it fully accords with the political theory of either, but approaches it more nearly than the counter systems which others maintain; and they draw their swords in the same cause, influenced by a general correspondence of opinion, not by precisely coincident views of national honor and right.

A consideration of this never-failing and all-

pervading difference, as well in the material world as in the constitution of intellect, would seem sufficient in itself to teach mankind the duty of the widest tolerance of opinion, and yet difference of opinion has ever been regarded as an occasion for the most vehement persecution. The history of the past ages is a continual narration of the strife of bigotry against the exercise of reason; and in our own days we have the most abundant evidence that this bad warfare has not wholly ceased.

The modified form in which the spirit of the dark ages still lingers among men manifests itself nowhere so grossly as in the field of political discussion. If civilization has extinguished the faggot and discarded the implements of physical torture, by means of which mind sought to establish its despotism over mind, there are still found in the hands of the intolerant other weapons of coercion, by means of which they would retard the progress of truth. Abuse is now substituted for force; opprobrious epithets and terms of derision are the rack and pincers of modern persecutors. On the gravest subjects which affect the welfare of mankind, men enter into conflict armed not with argument, but with invective. They appeal not to reason and justice, but to passion and prejudice. They impugn the motives of their antagonists in place of combatting their arguments, and exercise the baleful arts of a perverted logic to cast ridicule and contempt on the persons and charac-

ters, instead of temperately demonstrating by infallible methods of proof the unsoundness of their positions and the inherent weakness of their cause.

This hateful spirit poisons all our political contests, degrades the press, dwarfs the intellects of our public men, and pervades all the branches of political discussion. In a recent and most notable instance, it forced its hateful presence into the highest temple of justice in the land, and sought to lay its unclean hands upon the very horns of the altar.

The prevalence of this bad habit contributes more than any other cause to deter men of high culture and refined tastes from engaging in political discussions, and the absence of those elements from such discussions greatly aggravates the evil. Why should this be so? Is there anything in the nature of politics that renders them incapable of the calmest and most temperate discussion? If this noxious plant has been eradicated from the fields of science and religion, is there any reason why it shall still cumber the ground in the domain of political truth? If arrogant synods no longer proclaim arbitrary standards of faith, to which men must conform their worship on pain of anathemas and persecution; if the astronomer no longer fears, while directing his telescope to the heavens, that his discoveries will subject him to reproach and derision; if no Galileo is now dragged before an inquisitorial tribunal and forced

to disown the children which his own genuius has begotten; if no Bacon at this day is accused of a league with the powers of darkness for the fruits he derives from a patient investigation of the mysteries of nature,—is there any reason why men shall not acknowledge in political science that the utmost liberty of inquiry furnishes the surest means for the ascertainment of truth; that in all branches of learning truth is single and ever consistent with itself, and that it is its grand and peculiar characteristic ever to come forth from the crucible of discussion, purged from all the dross of error with which passion and prejudice may have blended it.

If such has been the result of the application of learning and culture to other departments of human inquiry, may we not conclude that the same cause will produce a similar result in the department of political science?

I am not unmindful of the popular fallacy that the tendency of a collegiate education is to unfit men for a practical participation in public affairs, especially in the affairs of a democratic government, and to deprive them of all sympathy with the progress of true democratic principles. But a few notable examples may be cited to prove that this is indeed a fallacy. The fact that the Earl of Derby produced the best translation of the Iliad that our language possesses did not in the least detract from the practical ability and wisdom with which he at the same time conducted the

highest affairs of State. The veteran Thiers is not the less a fearless opponent of the despotism of Louis Napoleon because he is at the same time a profound philosopher and learned historian. And Napoleon himself wields his wonderful sceptre with no less tact and genius because he shines in the domain of letters by his life of Julius Cæsar.

The gallant hosts who in England are at this moment thundering at the gates of prerogative are led to the charge not by ignorant pretenders, the Perkin Warbecks and Jack Cades of politics, but by a Bright, a Mill, and a Gladstone,—men whose eminence in the domain of letters has kept full pace with their prominence in political affairs. The whole history of English literature, from its earliest dawn to its present noonday splendor, abounds in the grandest truths of political philosophy, cheering the heart of the seeker by the magic of its immortal eloquence, and in the happiest inspiration of its Heaven-drawn song. The poetry of England, in particular, has wonderfully contributed to swell the mighty current of democratic feeling which is now spreading over the world, and which promises results so vast for the future destiny of the human race. So in France, the soul-stirring lyrics of Beranger, although they were issued from the prison cell to which arbitrary power had consigned their author, electrified the French nation, and gained for him a power and influence in the State which fully illustrated the

wisdom of him who declared, "Let me make the songs of a people, and I care not who makes their laws."

We have but to turn to our own Bancroft, and Irving and Motley, for the most signal proof that the highest achievements of learning are perfectly consistent with the most valuable services in the line of patriotic duty; and it is a well-known fact that the senator in our own Congress who is most distinguished for learning and scholarship, occupies the most advanced position in that party of progress to which he belongs.

It is undoubtedly true that the tendency of refined and liberal education is to beget in its possessors a distaste for the political strifes of the present day, but that distaste springs more from a selfish love of ease and quiet, and a disgust at so much that is disagreeable in public life, than from any unfitness to grapple with the questions which constantly press themselves upon the attention of the citizen.

Our Union never could have been maintained if such selfish considerations had restrained the patriotism of our martyred brethren, who, casting behind them all the comforts and endearments of life, voluntarily relinquished the pleasures of home and the society of friends, and severed the dearest natural ties, that they might lay down their lives for its preservation.

From every battle-field, from every hearth-stone

made desolate by the war, come up silent but eloquent voices appealing to us that never again shall our indifference to our public duties demand so costly a sacrifice of our fellow-citizens.

The voice of their blood cries out to us from the ground, not indeed "for vengeance against the brother hands that shed it," but it proclaims the truth, that beautiful as it is to die for one's country, it is far more beautiful to live for it, and that life is better spent in a steady and perpetual devotion to our country's service than to be poured out "in one anguished and dying effort" on the field of strife; that it will be all in vain that we erect monuments to their memories, or tenderly strew flowers on their graves, if we fail henceforth to guard with the most jealous care the priceless heritage they have bequeathed to us.

"It is rather for us," said President Lincoln at Gettysburg, "to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that the dead shall have not died in vain, that the nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and that governments of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

These eloquent words of our lamented President, himself the noblest martyr of them all, should sink deep into our hearts, and should stir us up to a new

examination of our duties as citizens, and to a new determination to discharge them with fidelity.

Politics, rightly considered, are a branch of morals. The three divisions of religion, private ethics and politics, embrace all the duties of life. Human happiness is the single aim of each of these three great and comprehensive branches of duty, and it may well be questioned whether the obligations imposed by either can be fully performed by him who neglects those which the others enjoin.

If we acknowledge the obligation of that precept which teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves, in what mode can we more effectually show its authority over our minds than by taking a firm and temperate part in political affairs? The right ordering of a State directly promotes the welfare of multitudes of human beings; and it is therefore not only the private interest but the Christian duty of every individual of those multitudes, strenuously to exert his just influence in accomplishing so important a result.

We can never in this country fully obey the Divine injunction to "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," if we withhold from our favored land the benefit of our talents and learning in this hour of her urgent extremity, or fail to stamp upon her institutions the "image and superscription" of intelligence and virtue.

With that duty faithfully performed, we need

never despair of the Republic. If the educated, intelligent, and virtuous among us shall respond as promptly and faithfully to the demands of patriotism as they do to those of private ethics, if they are as scrupulous to discharge every obligation which they owe to their fellow-men in the department of government as they are to the obligations of religion, or even to the demands of business, there would grow up a power which would suffice to restrain the violence of faction, and a skill which would safely steer the ship through all the breakers which lie in her course.

Then, though folly and madness may seem to rule the hour, and the great powers of the State may be administered by incapable or even dishonest men, this "power behind the throne, greater than the throne itself," will hold in check the excesses of ignorance and vice, and assert for itself an authority which the highest officials can neither disregard or defy.

But, on the other hand, if these intelligent and cultivated men persistently neglect the discharge of these duties; if they abdicate the power which to them rightfully belongs, and permit the influence of their learning and experience to be supplanted by the low cunning of demagogues or the corrupt use of money; if they selfishly declare, as they behold their government crumbling to decay, under the combined influence of ignorance and corruption, that "it will last their time;" if they

pay no heed to the deluge which threatens to engulf them and their posterity in a common ruin, but listlessly relaxing their hold on the sceptre of power, suffer it to become

> "——— a barren sceptre in their gripe,
> Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,
> No son of theirs succeeding;"

then will our boasted form of government be as powerless to promote the welfare of the people as it is now capable, under Providence, of securing their utmost happiness.

Let none fear that the course here recommended would tend to build up a privileged class, or found an aristocracy of learned men who would have nothing in common with the people about them. The bond of common intelligence would not be sufficient to unite the learned or cultivated classes into one society or order distinct from all other classes.

The freedom of the press, the prevalence of party divisions, and the other reasons which cause men of less pretensions to differ on public questions, would also divide the more intelligent classes, and prevent them from acquiring an exclusiveness inconsistent with democratic institutions. The very fact that they devoted their time and talents to the promotion of the public good would increase their interest in the affairs of their fellow-men, and greatly enlarge the sphere of their sympathies. The capacity of such men for useful-

ness would rapidly increase under the exercise of their powers in that direction. If now, when the greater imminence of the peril has passed away, men would devote their energies to the same end as when, during the late war, their voices were heard in the columns of the press, at Union meetings, and in every other place where they could be of use to stimulate the patriotism of the people, who can estimate the wonderful results that would be accomplished?

Think not that the necessity for such patriotic action has ceased with the rebellion that called it forth. A rebellion is still in progress, not confined to a geographical section, nor lifting its horrid front and bloody hands in open effort to destroy our government, but its secret, insidious influence is coursing through the veins of the body politic, and if not checked in its career, will bring it to speedy destruction. It is the rebellion of corruption against purity, of the lawless against the law-abiding, of vice against virtue. It is a renewal of that "irrepressible conflict" between the "opposing and enduring forces" of truth and error, and our recent cruel experience has demonstrated the fearful cost of permitting error to obtain even a temporary advantage in the struggle. Men must choose, therefore, whether this rebellion shall be kept in check by the powers of the law, vigilantly and steadily administered, or whether it shall be allowed to gather strength, until vigilance commit-

tees or even more violent measures must be resorted to for the public protection.

To young men collected in our colleges and universities, this subject addresses itself with peculiar force, and especially to those who are about to graduate and enter upon the business of life.

They take but a narrow and limited view of their duties who look upon the education here acquired as for themselves alone, to be enjoyed in the seclusion of the study, or to be applied only to the prosecution of business or the acquisition of wealth.

That noble sentiment—

> "Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto,"

the utterance of a Roman poet, himself an emancipated slave, expresses the very essence of democracy, and although uttered long before the birth of our Saviour, breathes the genuine spirit of Christianity. It teaches that every human being has claims upon our human sympathies, and that those claims can in no way be so fully met as in the department of government, which acts directly upon the destiny of every human being.

The importance of the subject also leads to the suggestion, which is ventured with great diffidence, that more attention should be paid in our colleges to that part of education which bears directly upon the science of government. The scientific, classical, and literary discipline of the ordinary college curriculum is well adapted to prepare the mind of

the student for the elimination of truth in any department of learning to which its powers may be applied, and considered as merely preparatory to an entrance upon one of the learned professions, seems all that is needed to enable the student to engage in the specific studies of either one of those professions to which his attention may be turned. But while only a portion of our college graduates enter the learned professions, all at once enter upon the duties of citizenship, and it would seem to be a necessary preparation for those duties that the student be instructed in the teachings of history, the doctrines of political economy, in a comparative view of the practical workings of the different governments of the civilized nations of the earth, and a comprehensive but accurate acquaintance with our own Federal Constitution, and the true relations which the several States bear to the Central Government.

If a portion of the College course could be devoted to studies of this character, the graduate would enter with more confidence upon the discharge of his duties as a citizen, and would have less excuse for their systematic neglect.

But to enable our colleges to engage in such a course of instruction, it will be necessary that the people awake to the importance of the subject, and place in the hands of our literary institutions the means of imparting education in political science; and as our beloved College of New Jersey is about

to enter upon an enlarged sphere of usefulness, the establishment of a professorship of political science may not be unworthy the attention of those whose liberality is relied on to advance her in her noble career.

The ever widening field on which the American citizen is called to exert his powers demands constantly improving methods of instruction, and a more extensive acquaintance with all those facts of history and principles of philosophy from which the true theory of government is to be deduced. If the influence of the American citizen was limited to the field which our own country affords, it would seem to be broad enough to satisfy the aspirations of the most ambitious. But complicated and intricate as are the questions which are developed by the wonderful growth and progress of our own land, they shrink into insignificance when compared with the influence now exerted by our institutions on the other nations of the earth.

Our country can no longer live for herself alone among the family of nations, but the influence of American thought is rapidly leavening the whole world. The Government of Great Britain is at this moment in the throes of a revolution brought about by our own grand example, which, though bloodless, bids fair to become as thorough and radical as that which severed us from her dominion. Despotic Austria is awakening to a sense of

the antiquated character of her institutions, and is abolishing those traditions which hitherto she has considered necessary to her safety. And even effete Turkey, "the sick man" of history, is beginning to feel in every fibre of his enervated system that life-giving influence which only the magic of American progress can infuse; while, most wonderful of all, ancient China, surrounded as she has been with a barrier of prejudice more impenetrable than her once famous wall, has yielded to the influence of American institutions what she has hitherto sternly denied to the combined powers of the world; and herself the oldest of nations, takes by the hand the youngest of her sisters, and selects an American citizen to introduce her into full communion with the family of nations. Truly may it be said, "Our field is the world."

Upon this magnificent theatre, you who on the morrow shall receive your diplomas from this venerable College are about to enter. It rests with you whether you will well perform the several parts which will be assigned to you in the great drama in which you are so soon to become actors.

The ancient mother, as she sent her beloved boy to the battle-field, gave him a shield, with the laconic injunction to return "with it or on it." So your *Alma Mater* sends you forth to the battle of life clad in the panoply of truth, and armed with the weapons to make that truth effective; and she bids you, with all a mother's affection,

"Suffer them not to rust in inglorious idleness. Cast them not away in a cowardly flight from the duties and responsibilities you will encounter. Quit yourselves like men. Stand up for the cause of truth, right, and good government, and thus become a blessing to your fellow-citizens and an ornament and pride to this beloved institution, whose anniversary we this day celebrate."