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By Whom, all things; for Whom, all things.

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EVIL IN THINGS GOOD.

AN English author with more good sense than poetic faculty has a chapter on "Good in Things Evil." One may wisely reflect on such good as a motive to resignation or even contentment; and where the evil is incurable, or beyond our reach, the line of thought is legitimate. When, however, we take the converse of the title and individualize the evil in things good, it is not resignation but reform, not submission but action, we contemplate. To criticise good things without a practical aim, is sometimes mischievous policy. It discourages the zealous and benevolent, and renders the selfish and indifferent easy in their culpable inactivity. But to own the real worth in good things, and at the same time to point out how it might be widened in its influence—how in fact the good might be made better, is not open to objection, but on the contrary is the principle upon which all safe progress among men has proceeded. We have no right to look for perfection in agencies framed and wrought by imperfect men in an imperfect world; we must be content if on the whole the evil is admitted, and being reduced to a minimum; and, while using to its utmost capacity the machinery of benevolence, we must be ready to consider any well-meant and not obviously irrational suggestions that look towards the increase of its strength or general efficiency.

I. Loose thinkers, especially where a vein of sentiment runs through their nature, are apt to depreciate denominations in the Christian world. "Fine thing, this, sir," said a gushing manager of a general religious movement in a suburban community; "it is breaking down denominationalism." Now, the denominations in the place seemed so broken down already,

their meetings small, their buildings mean and in debt, and their representatives changing almost with the seasons, that it seemed like slaying the slain. The gentleman probably employed denominationalism as the equivalent of sectarianism; but the two words are not synonymes. A hotel that draws its support from the families of a country town, in such a way that each family is a little worse off than it would otherwise be, the heads of the families getting good dinners there, while the household pinch and scrape to pay for them, is an injury to the families and to all the home interests they represent. To abolish the hotel, let the men dine at home, and share a good meal with the family, would be a gain, and only becomes an evil, if such a thing can be conceived of, when inspiring in each dwelling hate, jealousy, and suspicion of neighboring families. Such malignant feelings—not surely inevitable in independent and much-loved homes—are the counterpart of sectarianism in the churches. But it no more follows that a man, because he loves his denomination, shall hate the others, than that a man, because he loves his home, dislikes his neighbors. On the contrary, the sweeter, purer, and brighter a man's life is in his own home, the more satisfaction he will be apt to feel in contemplating other and like homes being formed around him. When a man's life in his section of the church implies ill-will towards other sections of it, it is not wholly sweet and pure. A trade-spirit or a corporation-spirit, or the spirit of self, mingles, as a base alloy, with the Christian spirit.

Perhaps it may be found in the end that the denominations have served a good purpose in emphasizing particular truths, which needed to be kept before men's minds. Perhaps the full-orbed revelation is too many-sided and large to be wholly seen from one point of view. Perhaps Methodists illustrated individual zeal, and a need of a definite turning from evil to the Lord; Episcopalians, the beauty of fixed order, and submission to authority; Congregationalists, independence and personal responsibility; and Baptists and Presbyterians—the whole body of Christians who are at one in general Calvinistic conviction—reverence for God's Word as the unelastic mould of Christian convictions. As for numerous smaller bodies—asteroids in the sidereal system—they have one good use in this, that, if we

may alter the figure, they act as a remorseless external conscience to their neighbors by their keen criticisms and unsparing denunciations. Even "refractory egotism" has its uses, and contented officials and self-complacent denominationalists would deserve the sharp censures that smite them, more than they do, if they received them less.

The independence and autonomy, therefore, of the denominations is not such an inherent evil as it is sometimes represented. There is one evil, however, for which a remedy can be found, to which, if fortunate enough to gain their ear, we would respectfully invite the attention of the brethren. A man holds an office in one of the denominations; he does not fill it; perhaps he brings reproach on it. Intimations more or less definite are given him that he had better vacate it. Immediately he looks around; the body that does not appreciate him must have something defective in it. He makes overtures to another body—mentions the scruples he has had, struggles, convictions forcing him, resolution at length to "cast in his lot with, etc." The clerk, secretary, bishop, moderator, district elder, or whatever he may be who receives these communications, "rather likes the tone of the man." He appreciates the points for which testimony has been borne; he represents a class. He is welcomed as a forerunner of that millennial day when all the Christian world will go and do likewise. No questions are asked of his denomination. He is received with open arms. This continent is broad; its churches are numerous; they are not always well informed as to one another's proceedings; some of them are "roomy;" all of them welcome accessions, and duly report them; some of them are needy. One result is that a man, a minister, can be a Universalist, a Presbyterian, a Methodist, a Baptist, a Congregationalist, an Episcopalian, in about as many years as there are here respectable names; can test literally and personally the discipline of almost all of them, and be in good standing on the Pacific slope at the end, perhaps in correspondence with the Roman Catholic bishop, with a view to "holy orders." This is no mere wild supposition.

Well, what can be done? Simply what sensible business men do, what sensible housekeepers do. When a candidate for a place is seriously thought of, the merchant consults his last

employers. Let the churches cultivate mutual courtesy. Let there be inter-denominational comity. It does not at all follow, because a man can tell me in strong exaggerations of his discovery that the presbytery is the only scriptural church authority, that that imputation on him in Maine, of disregarding its liquor law, is unfounded. My presbytery had better say to him, "We carry out with you a principle which we apply all round. We shall inquire how you stand with your old friends." The report need not bar his claims. It may be only an element in the decision ; but it should be an element.

In law, commerce, and medicine a man who does not stand well with his own class has commonly something doubtful about him. Class feeling is partial rather than otherwise. The rule applies to the ministry. A man who has not gained the good-will of his ministerial brethren will not long keep a "good report of them that are without." We can recall a case where a minister from another land presented himself to an American Protestant Episcopal bishop, and obtained temporary recognition. Inquiry led to the most proper withdrawal of the same. It was an easy thing for the aggrieved man to go to non-Episcopalians and suggest that he was a martyr to High-churchism, a man persecuted for his broad feeling, and catholicity, and readiness to co-operate with other Christians, and so to procure recognition and standing. Now, according to such limited observation as we have been able to make, such sympathy is usually misplaced. Under the aspect of charity and other amiable graces, it does a wrong. In what attitude, for example, does it in such a case place the bishop, who may be presumed to have discharged a painful duty, with a full sense of his responsibility, and under the eye of the public ?

We repeat, then, we would have the denominations consult one another, in the spirit of mutual good-will and respect, in every case of this kind. Why, merchants and insurance companies, with all their trade rivalries, consult and exchange information for mutual protection ; and it is a salutary lesson to a knave to find that he is known to the entire fraternity, a member of which he has managed to cheat with impunity. It suggests to him impressively that honesty is the best policy. Why should not the children of light be as wise ? It compro-

mises no one. I do not, as they say in the language of the great courts, "homologate the claims" of the Right Reverend Bishop Somebody, when the Rev. Erastus Rightyuall, an imperceptible midge in his own denomination, proposes to become a magnificent lion in mine, if I ask the bishop in courteous language to say in official confidence how the Rev. Erastus stands in his diocese. If the bishop, who makes no compromise of his claims by a civil reply, tells me he is a blameless man, but given to informal meetings and irregularly zealous ways, I know where he stands; as I do also if he says that he is *rectus in ecclesia*, but unfortunately at variance with his vestrymen, who are prosecuting a complaint against him. To allege that on this plan the character of men would not be safe, is idle. It is indeed to allege lack of veracity and unfitness for their place on the part of churchmen of every class—a wholesale calumny.

The gains of such a course are obvious. We specify the following: (1) Mutual good feeling would be promoted by the exercise of courtesy. Irritations would be escaped, for few things exercise a more vexatious influence than the changes we describe. If a good man is lost to another denomination, the acerbity is taken out of the transaction by the interchange of gentlemanly, not to say Christian, references on the subject; and if a bad man goes without them, how natural it is for the losing body to say, "We are well rid of him; but what a lot *they* must be to make a fuss over him as an accession!" And as long as the memory of the transaction lasts, the man is a "sore place," and the two denominations cannot touch but with pain where he is concerned.

(2) The restless, rolling stones, that gather no moss, and inflict bruises and hurts as they roll, would be checked in some degree in their movements, while the really evil-living and unfit would be able *only once* to wound Christ in the house of his friends. A. B. could not so easily disgrace the Methodists in Massachusetts, the Presbyterians in Maryland, and then vex the spirit of a brother Baptist minister, the chaplain of a prison in Ohio. Opportunity is to most men one of the strongest forms of temptation; hence the wisdom of reducing, as far as can be done consistently with other interests, the number of drinking-places, of haunts of vice, and of facilities for committing wrong

with impunity. It is a good thing to "shore up" human virtue by reminding it that failure in one place is failure all over. A man should not be able to say, "If I *do* compromise myself with the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians or some others will take me to their hearts." And the scandals that vex good, encourage bad, and puzzle superficial persons would be less frequent than they are now. Ask any leading man in any denomination on the subject, and he will tell you, "The most annoying troubles we have ever had were by men *who came to us from the—*" no matter what.

II. Allusion has been made to the confusion of denominationalism and sectarianism, as if indifference to denominations were identical with catholicity. But surely it is possible for a man to have an intelligent, conscientious preference for his denomination, without being a bigot or lacking in catholicity. Indeed, it is usually the unintelligent adherent who is the bigot. He stands by "his flag" for reasons of which his intelligent comrades would be ashamed. The intelligent man who has examined, while he does not accept, the reasons for other and differing systems, yet knows that there *are* reasons, and he does not deem persons who adhere to these systems either fools or dishonest knaves. He is intelligently tolerant. He allows for diversity of temperament, for varying mental constitutions, for circumstances, for side-influences, for the effect of diverse angles of observation. There is hardly a more hopeless class, religiously, in the community than the unattached, roving Bedouins, who, without the loyal principle of the older Rechabites, yet, like them, "neither build houses, sow corn-fields, nor plant vineyards;" who say truly that all denominations are alike to them, for they are alike useless to all. In some instances, where they are fussy, or wealthy, or vain, they become "honorary members of all denominations." "Yes," said a reflecting lady of one such, "yes, Mr. C. is an excellent man. When there is a chair to be taken or a resolution to be moved, or a popular nice thing to be paraded, he is always foremost; but when any thing is actually to be done, Mr. C. isn't there."

If a human being is not actually religious, the best predisposing internal force of the human kind is the attachment to a body of Christians. "My father and mother were good Metho-

dists." "I was brought up a Presbyterian, and learnt the Shorter Catechism." "I am not what I ought to be, but I was used to go to church, and I can repeat prayers out of the Prayer-book." We say advisedly, and after observation on both sides of the Atlantic, that it is a gain to have persons thus bound in association and in memory to a denomination. The vague sense of strangeness, the timid wonder as to religious ways and observances, which deter so many from making beginnings, do not stand in their way in approaching good influences. For their sakes, therefore, if for no other, we would keep up the denominational feeling. But this is only a part of the argument. The church, the congregation, elevate and sanctify social feeling. It is true the church catholic must be loved; but it is far harder to love an abstraction than to love the people with whom one sings and prays and labors. Even so it is easier for the man who has a happy, healthy home and pleasant connections, to love his fellow-men as a whole, than for a man equally good in himself, but destitute of these advantages. In well-ordered services, also, regular consecutive instruction is given with better results than where men snatch casual desultory morsels of spiritual nutriment as they "go around" the churches. "A man without a country" has been eloquently portrayed by Mr. Everett Hale. Who will give us a corresponding picture of the man without a church?

We do not dwell on the fact that it is those who feel denominational attachment and responsibility that sustain the great agencies which systematically teach and elevate men. It is of no use to point, in rebuttal, to non-denominational societies that do a world of good. Examine their constituency, and you will find the best and most reliable contributors are the regular supporters of their respective churches, who make conscience of their obligations there, as truly as they do of their taxes, or of the secular education of their children.

In view of all these considerations—and others might be named—we would have the blessed grace of catholicity cultivated, without any reflection, implicit or explicit, on a right and healthy attachment to one's own state and city in the great kingdom of which Emmanuel is the anointed king.

III. No one who has definite knowledge of the "former

times" can undervalue the great results effected by the disinterested efforts of the temperance reformers. Impressed by the disheartening record of the crimes of the drunken in our day, we are apt to forget that it is the very sentiment created in behalf of sobriety and self-control by the reformers, that makes us shudder. We do not realize the evils of the time when ministers of the Gospel did not forfeit their position by public drunkenness; when parishes were filled with vice and rottenness, through the intoxicants made and consumed; when abstinence was the exception and drinking—often enough immoderate—was the rule. We may well be thankful for what has been accomplished, while we do not slacken our exertions in the future.

But is it not possible to eradicate some evil from this good—evil not inherent in it, we hope and believe, but mischievously clinging to it? Are there no regions and circles in which taking the pledge is spoken of as "regeneration" and "salvation"? Is there not a tendency to substitute the gospel of reform in this particular for the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Is there not now and then a perilous self-complacency in the men who "rescue the perishing," and are rescued, though confessedly they have not come to the cross of Jesus Christ? Is there not an evil-judging criticism too often indulged regarding churches and Christians who, for any reason, do the work of social amelioration in other ways than the abstinence society's, and on other plans than the sectional? No language can be too strong in the condemnation of intemperance and all that leads to it; but humane and benevolent men and women ought to be as just, tolerant, and patient with Christian people who use their judgment as to the best ways of combating vice, as, for example, sensible Democrats are with Republicans, or Republicans with Democrats, as to the best ways of repressing crime or regulating the currency. It is an undeniable fact, known to every man who mingles with men and not with cliques, and who reads serials and books, that there are good and strong men who keep out of the abstinence lines from no indifference to the cause, and from no Cain's-temper as to their brethren, but because they cannot manœuvre and fight the battle as the most of the temperance army fight it; and they do not know

when they might be fired upon from their own lines. This is a grave evil—bad for the cause, bad for the country, bad even for the men who are thus kept aloof; for a man is never more likely to be a severe critic than when his judgment keeps him from going where conscience and feeling would draw him.

IV. The Ritualist battle, long raging in England, is being transferred to our shores. It cannot indeed assume the proportions in America to which it has risen in England, because the section of the people directly affected by it is relatively small. But it is sufficiently important socially to create some interest in the general community. Ritualism is of two kinds. There is a harmless Ritualism, which copies mediæval, historic, and, to it, venerable church usages. It is, indeed, occasionally puerile, fantastic, and even ridiculous. But it is not learned; it is not animated by any inspiring aim. It is fluent on things sacred and symbolical; but it does not cease to be Protestant. There is another kind of Ritualism which has a principle in it, intelligible enough to its devotees. Its clergy are priests of the *sacerdos* or *hiereus* kind. Its communion-table is an altar. Its communion wafer is "the host." Its holy sacrament is a re-presentation of the offering of the body and blood of our Lord. Its dominant idea is Romish—without the pope. This is a dangerous type of religious effort. But the public does not always discriminate, and especially the public of "lay people" of the Episcopal branch; for this reason, that they have not been accustomed to the preaching of doctrines, and rather pride themselves on not going to church to hear preaching, but to pray. The two classes—the subtle and anti-Protestant, and the innocuous—are apt to be confused in the general mind; and it may happen here, as in England, that a man will be set down and even denounced as a Ritualist who is simply in favor of decency and order in God's house, and of that cleanliness which is next to godliness, according to Mr. Wesley.

Now opposition to Ritualism is good, but it must, of course, be graduated by its quality—for there is a difference between the weakness that is a "little odd about dress," and the deceit that puts on a disguise for sinister purposes. Due care must be taken that slovenliness and meanness do not remain in

church edifices and church services. We can have Protestant worship in buildings that represent the best taste of the people, with fittings for God's house not conspicuously behind the fittings of the worshippers in their homes, and with a decorum and propriety such as mark off any other grave and solemn portion of our lives. A protest against Ritualism should never take the form of organized or tolerated offensiveness to taste, or to the feeling of reverence for all that is associated with the worship of the Holy One. Our church walls are not consecrated by any formal rite; but they are consecrated by every hallowed association, and they may be desecrated by being turned to theatrical uses. Our platforms or pulpits have no inherent sacredness in the pine or walnut; but they have acquired, or ought to have acquired, a sacredness in the thoughts and associations of those who have, in front of them, heard the voice of the Lord. And not in virtue of any church rite, but in virtue of the very laws of association made by God with the human spirit, we hinder instead of helping God's cause and people when the antics of the comedian connect themselves with the place, and when the sacred shrines towards which, according to a well-known hymn, worshippers move, to seal their vows and proclaim themselves the Lord's, are turned into places of rollicking, even though innocent, amusement. It is hard enough, alas! for men to keep store, and ledger, and bargains, and profits and losses, from their brain on the Lord's Day in his house. Why add to their difficulties by filling the holy place with memories and recollections suggestive of any thing else than worship and the Word of the Lord?

And akin to this subject is another, of little relative moment, but yet not wholly insignificant. It does not follow, because a preacher is not a priest, that he is nothing but a paid "speaker," or leader, or lecturer. He is an ambassador of Christ, a minister of the Gospel, a commissioned officer in the Lord's sacramental host, called of God before he was called by the people of his particular charge; and whatever in dress or address will keep this in his own mind and in the mind of his people and the community, is not quite despicable. In the recoil from dead officialism in some parts of the country, it has been accepted as the proper thing for a clergyman to avoid, in

some degree, any distinctive professional characteristics. This, however, may, like all reactions, be carried to the point where some evil begins; and it is just where this policy has ruled, and where sacred things are habitually divested of all sacred concomitants, that we should look for another and opposite reaction in favor of a florid or stately service.

From the side of lay effort, and the current processes of evangelistic work, there is some danger to the ministerial office in another way; but that topic is not quite within the scope of this article, and it may be safely assumed that the ministry which does not vindicate its own claim to respect and confidence as a permanent teaching power will be lowered, because it invites and deserves the humiliation. The individual minister, however, cannot sink below his proper level without dragging down some precious interests which he is pledged to conserve.

V. There is no part of the machinery of the Papacy against which the Protestant feeling is stronger than the confessional. Apart from the theological aspect of the institution, it has a social side, as presented in Michelet's "Priests, Women, and Families," against which the Anglo-Saxon mind is resolutely fixed. But the evidence is ample and at hand, that this determination has not always been intelligent; that subtle and skilful argument is able to produce a revulsion; that Englishmen and Englishwomen have said, "Why, this matter of the confessional has been misrepresented to us; it has been cruelly calumniated; a most blessed means of grace has been falsely stigmatized as an unclean instrument of lust and power." The best friend to a dogma or a rite, next to its intelligent advocate, is its unintelligent and indiscriminating assailant. The upsetting of his overcharged statements is held by the average inquirer to be the positive establishment of the rite or the dogma. So it has fared with the confessional in England.

But there are real objections to it, and of the gravest kind. It assumes that the priest is, *as a priest*, delegated in God's stead to hear the penitent acknowledgment of guilt, to determine the form and amount of atonement the sinner shall make, and to declare and pronounce the transgressor absolved, in such sense that the evil-doer, having completed his prescribed pen-

ance, may confidently say, "This sin is remitted, and so far I am free of all charge in the court of heaven." The real question at issue is not the early existence of voluntary confession of sin to a minister of Christ. We can safely admit that the public and personal confession of sin was in early use in the Christian Church. We can safely admit that Protestant churches at the Reformation left this untouched, and said not one word against it. We refer now to the creeds, and authoritative expositions of their beliefs, and not to the indignant protests of individuals irritated and provoked by the use made of the institution by men who could command the obedience of semi-civilized chieftains with threats; who could say, "We have your God in our hand, and your wives at our feet." The real question is as to the enforcement of auricular confession as an imperative sacramental obligation, to disregard which involves the penalty of absolute sin. The real charge is that the Council of Trent (14th Session, A.D. 1551) lays down "that the universal church has always understood that the entire confession of sin was instituted by our Lord, and is of divine right necessary to all who are baptized." The charge is that it is based on the plea that even contrition, perfected by charity, does not reconcile a man to God, but as this sacrament of confession to a priest alone is also contemplated. In consequence of this teaching in the Church of Rome, confession to God is secondary to confession to a priest, and the former is on the same level with confession to St. Peter and to the angels. Its practical tendency is to make auricular confession the only way of obtaining divine favor, and to give a secondary place to amendment of life; for it abolishes the remorse and uneasiness which sin should produce, and which tend to watchfulness; and it constitutes the man, being a priest, the judge of degrees of good and evil, thus opening up unfathomable abysses of casuistry, and lying in the name of the Lord and of eminent divines, as in the pliable doctrine of "probabilities," of which every reader of Blaise Pascal knows.

These things we mention that we may not seem to treat lightly the unscriptural claim involved in auricular confession, nor the host of evils that follow in its train. We say unscriptural. We need hardly remind our readers that, put what mean-

ing one will on the words of our Lord to the twelve, as to remitting and retaining sins, as to binding and loosing (Matt. 16 : 16 and 18 : 18), there is no more evidence that they handed down the power than that they transmitted the miracle-working energy with which they were endowed. But, in fact, their power was declarative simply, and not executive ; and they were in form and in truth the successors of the Old Testament prophets, rather than of the Old Testament priests, and their commission ran much as did that of Jeremiah (1 : 10) : " See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant." The assumption on the part of this gentle and sensitive prophet to execute in person these great and far-reaching purposes of Jehovah—which he was ordered to declare, with their terms and conditions—would have been as reasonable and as warrantable as the claim, even for Peter and John, that they could remit and retain, bind and loose, in any executive capacity ; to say nothing of the innumerable multitude of men, good, bad, and indifferent, claiming to act in their name. Dislike of the confessional is, therefore, a good and wholesome thing, which, however, should not rest on prejudice, but on distinct and intelligent conviction. But it would be an evil, if that general and genuine pastoral confidence which Scripture warrants, which multitudes of persons have tried and proved, should be thrown in and condemned with auricular confessions. A minister preaches the Gospel to the great congregation, offering, in Christ's name, full and free forgiveness to all who come to God by Christ. A wretched, hardened soul hears the general message, but says, " Ah, yes ! that is for common sinners ; but I am no common sinner. My heart knows its own bitterness. It is too much to think that *I* could share in an amnesty so amazing." After long brooding, perhaps, and unutterable struggles, the heartbroken man says, " I will go and ask him if he really means that his Bible includes such as I am—if his God really is willing to receive ' even me.' I will open my heart to him." And he goes ; is welcomed, pitied, instructed ; he tells his sorrowful history ; he says, " Is there in that Bible any promise wide enough to cover a case like mine ?" He is pointed to the Word, bidden to read and study it for himself, told its

meaning, taught how to pray; asked, perhaps, to kneel down while the pastor puts into articulate speech before God the penitent's cry; and all this is done in tender, sacred pity and sympathy—the sympathy of a man who knows his own corruption and can feel for another, while he points him to the pity and merits of the Redeemer. The crushed spirit is helped. The very confidence of a good man is a relief. To have uttered in words his feeling of remorse and shame has broken the ice and done him good. He thinks, if a good and holy man can listen and pity, it may be that the infinite mercy of God will avail for him in Christ; and so the manifested tenderness of the servant becomes a ladder up which the poor, alienated, paralyzed human soul can climb to the conception of the grace of the Master that brings salvation even to the chief of sinners. All this we must not confound with auricular confession. For all this the Scriptures, and the Protestant churches after them, have made provision, and assuming ministers to be what the Scriptures require, they need not fear the responsibility, nor society the results.

On this same subject, it may not be amiss to say that in many instances admission to the church, and consequent enjoyment of her full fellowship, are not sought by individuals who are true, sincere, and believing, under the apprehension of inevitable formal interviews with bodies of men in "Sessions," or in churches. Many a light and self-confident spirit will deem such self-revelation as this implies an easy matter—perhaps even enjoy it; when deeper, truer, more honest natures will shrink from it—under misapprehensions and errors, if you will—yet being just such natures as it is desirable to bring into communion, and such natures as would be comforted, strengthened, and matured in the warmth of full and true church life. We should regard with nothing but satisfaction the acceptance of the commendation of the minister, after personal and deliberate conference with catechumens, as the basis of sessional or of church action. Cases, indeed, may arise where that is known to elders or to members of churches which renders the profession reported by a pastor incredible; but we do not make rules for exceptions, but for average mankind. The requirement for admission to the Lord's table of credibly professed faith in Jesus and resolve to serve and follow him, the church can never modify;

but surely she has no cast-iron law, and no direction from her Head as to the degree of form, ceremony, voting and public covenanting with which the fact of this profession is to be ascertained.

VI. And, finally, the widely diffused and well-established love of liberty is a good thing; but care must be taken that evil does not mingle therewith. We are all free. We are all anti-slavery. What was once eloquently said of Britain is true of us from sea to sea, namely, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the mouth of the Mississippi to Alaska's northern bound. No eulogium on freedom can be uttered on the 4th July, or at any one of our hundred college commencements, male or female, that we hesitate to indorse even beforehand.

But there are uses of that freedom which have to be watched that they become not abuses. Because we are free, and even equal, it does not follow that I shall be at liberty, on finding Senator X. or Chief-Justice Y. in my railway car, to slap him on the back with, "Hello, old fellow! I heard you at Washington—delighted to see you; my name's Smith, from Greene County, Michigan." We are free, and even equal; but it does not follow that any one or any party can have all the liberty. Others have rights also. Liberty is regulated, or it ceases to be liberty. It implies and requires law. Law, to be effective, is to be respected and upheld. To carry individual rights up to a certain point may interfere with the obligations of the family, and the family cannot be injuriously touched without injuring society. "I sold my farm for what I could get," writes the late Rev. Joseph Barker of the time when he was a pronounced infidel leader in Ohio, "and bought another some seventy miles away, near Salem, Columbiana County, a region occupied chiefly by what in America were called '*Comcouters*'—people who had left the churches and the ministry, and even separated themselves from civil organizations, resolved to be subject to no authority but their own wills or their own whims. Among people so free as those, I thought I should have liberty plenty; but I soon found that they were so fond of freedom that they wanted my share as well as their own. I got into trouble once more, and then I saw that the greatest brawlers about liberty, when they come to be tried, are often

the most arrant despots and tyrants on the face of the earth." ("Modern Skepticism; a Life Story," p. 311.) We must not read anti-slavery as the equivalent of anti-authority. Parents have rights that children have not. Adults have rights not shared by minors. Magistrates have rights to which the people owe deference. Rulers in the church have rights which the members can only disregard by breaking with the apostles. God has rights which men ignore at their peril. Liberty is a great word; but so is duty. And while we assert our freedom and stand up for our rights, we must not forget, or allow others to forget, how much of life's happiness, sweetness, and usefulness is secured by bending to our duties, and being like Him who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

JOHN HALL.