

PARTY SPIRIT:

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A D D R E S S

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

LITERARY SOCIETIES

O F

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The Literary Societies of Washington College, before which this Address was delivered nearly a year since, asked permission politely at the time to publish it ; and the request was allowed. As however the Editor of the Pittsburg "Literary Examiner" was desirous to give it entire also in his magazine, and offered to give it at the same time on favorable terms in pamphlet form, the manuscript was put into his hands. Some embarrassment took place, immediately afterwards, in the affairs of the publication office of the Literary Examiner ; so that some months elapsed without the issue of a new number of this periodical. Finally, towards spring, the obstruction gave way, and the Address, after being thus long held in "durance vile," was hurried forth without notice in the Magazine, *without* being suffered to appear in the other form.—Since that time as well as before, it has been repeatedly called for, in various quarters. It may be considered as much in season now, as it was a year ago. The theme is one, which is not likely soon to go out of date in this liberty-loving country of ours, whether in Church or State.—The censure pronounced upon the "Religious Press" must be taken of course in a general way. It has respect to what may be said to have been the reigning tone of *most* of our religious papers, for a few years past.

J. W. N.

Mercersburg, Aug., 1840.

PARTY SPIRIT.

An exercise like the present should aim at something more than a transient entertainment of the ear, or of the imagination. It should be more, too, than a dissertation, in scholastic or abstract style, for the use, simply, of the understanding. Its aim should be practical, as well as speculative. Having this in view, I have declined other topics that might seem to offer a better field for literary declamation, and have selected for my theme, on this occasion, the **SPIRIT OF PARTY**; a subject in some respects of trite and familiar character; but one at the same time, of immense practical interest, especially in our own country, and in our own day, the moral aspects of which are less understood and less considered than they ought to be. I propose to institute an inquiry into the *nature* of party spirit; to show its evil *character*; to point out some of the influences which expose us all to *danger* in this direction; and to offer, finally, some thoughts on the proper *remedy* for so great an evil.

I. The **NATURE** of Party Spirit first claims our attention. And here we encounter a serious difficulty, at the very outset. In morals it often happens that the worst things confound themselves intimately with things that are good, and so find shelter in the very vagueness of the terms that are employed to denote them. Every term, it has been remarked, whether popular or scientific, which may be employed to designate the affections or the individual dispositions of the human mind, is more or less indeterminate, and is liable to many loose and improper extensions of the sense which a strict definition might assign to it. This results, in part, from the nature of these feelings themselves, which are always more or less complex and indefinite, made up of varying elements, qualities and measures, and flowing together oftentimes in such shadowy lines as can hardly be discovered by the strictest and most practised eye. There is, besides, where ethical or religious inquiries are concerned, a secret popular *will*, very extensively at work to promote this confusion. It is felt to be favorable to many cherished sentiments and forms of character, which could not stand the test of strict and fair examination; and thus, instinctively, an interest is created, in opposition to every thing

that looks towards clear conception, or clear definition, in the case. The more effectually things of contrary character can be confounded under common terms, and blended together in the same general notions, the better pleased the world at large is likely to be at having thus an easy cloak always at hand with which to put a show of respectability on its worst vices.

A ready illustration of these remarks is furnished in the popular use of the term *pride*. How various are the particular conditions of mind, comprehended under the one general notion of pride, in its proper and bad sense! And then again, by what fine gradations of light and shadow these fall off towards the primitive sentiment of a just self-respect, in which, originally, they have their root, and which, on this account, is made too often to stand under the same denomination? And how little the world, in general, is concerned to have this confusion avoided or corrected! The spiritual abomination is most willingly ranged, in one category with the pure principle, from which it has sprung only by foul and monstrous corruption; and then we find men easily and openly glorying in their shame itself, and blessing themselves for their *decent*, *manly* or *noble* pride, as though it were the very highest perfection of their spirits.

And just so is it with the subject which I have now taken in hand. The idea, *party spirit*, is one of a very general character, comprehending much that is intricate, and changing, and uncertain. The term, also, is oftentimes extended, (improperly and not without sinister design,) to take in the notion of what is clearly and positively good, the elementary sentiments of a virtuous kind with which the evil in its natural history stands related. Hence the evil itself comes to be strangely palliated and disguised in common estimation; and we are told that Party Spirit is a very good thing in its proper place, without which the interests of virtue could not well be maintained in the world, and which becomes bad like many other good things only under certain conditions and respects, by no means necessary to its existence. When the matter has been placed on this footing, party men of all sorts need have no farther difficulty with questions of casuistry. *Their* zeal, to be sure, in any given case is justified by the occasion and the object. Seen through the medium of selfishness and passion, it has the aspect clearly of an earnest regard for truth, righteousness and honor; and why should they *not* yield themselves fully to its power?

But will those who are serious allow their minds to be bewildered by this confusion, in an ethical inquiry of so much practical interest?

Surely not. Whether we may find ourselves able, or not, to analyze the idea itself, still the idea of party spirit as something which is, in its own nature, wrong, and something well enough understood for the most part by all who use the word, is sure and well settled in our minds. There is, after all, not a whit more of vagueness or uncertainty in the general notion itself, than there is in the notions of pride, and revenge, and a hundred other moral states, with which we are continually familiar under the same general view. Whatever sophistry they may practice on themselves, men are generally well enough agreed, in fact about the word *pride*; and the thing itself which they have in their minds, even when they speak of a virtuous or noble pride, is the very abomination which the word properly expresses, and which religion so heavily condemns. And so in the case before us, what men mean ordinarily by *party spirit*, even where they undertake to speak in its praise, is the thing itself to which the word properly has respect, and which should be regarded only and always as purely wrong. In the end, the controversy in such cases is about the thing, and not about the word.

What then is Party Spirit? *Selfishness expanded and strengthened by means of the social principle, under all, and more than all, the forms of corrupt affection, which belong to it in the individual man.* It is not then zeal simply for the views, opinions, or measures of a certain party. These may be right; and then it is a duty to espouse and promote them in all proper ways. Nor is it simply attachment to a particular community or class of persons, and a concern for their credit and prosperity; this is according to nature in its best character, and may have the happiest operation in the economy of social life, without injury in any direction. There is a patriotism, (very different, to be sure, from the boasted virtue, so named, of ancient Greece and ancient Rome) which is recognized and sanctioned as good, even by the world-embracing spirit of the gospel itself. And in full compatibility, as I believe, with the strictest ethics, there may be indulged, also, social sympathies and affections of a special character, in circles of life still more narrow. The family connection, the neighborhood, the order to which we belong, are all entitled to an interest and devotion which may be called partial. “To be attached to the sub-division, to love the little platoon we belong to in society,” according to that wise observer of human life, Edmund Burke, “is the first principle, (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love of our country and mankind.” Even the “esprit

du corps," as it is called, though always dangerous in a moral point of view, may, I doubt not, be so exercised, under proper circumstances, as to involve no evil. Party Spirit is something different from all this. It clothes itself, indeed, generally, in the same forms, and claims toleration and respect on this ground ; but it is an affection made up mainly of other elements, in which all right tendencies of a social kind are perverted from their proper use, and made subservient only to sin.

The social principle enters essentially into the constitution of human nature. Separated from all society man could hardly be said to be himself. Certainly he could never more than half know himself. Much, very much of his being is comprehended mysteriously in his social susceptibilities, and is never brought into view at all, except as he comes into contact with other spirits like himself. Men are dependent on one another in their thoughts and feelings as truly as they are in their affections and in their opinions. However some may go beyond others in thinking for themselves, none can be altogether self-sufficient, none can break away entirely from the system of thought that reigns around them. There is a common mind belonging to each age and to every country, and to each province or section of society, in some measure, which stretches its authority to a greater or less extent over every individual mind comprised in the general mass. No man, even in this sense, can be said to live either to or from himself. No man in this century is what he would have been in the last. No man in these United States is what he would be if surrounded for a time with the modes of thought belonging to Great Britain, Prussia or France. So strangely and fearfully is the interest of the individual wrapped up in the character of the mass, and the destiny of the whole found to carry along with it, in one vast Time-flood, the separate destinies, in many respects, of all the units that belong to it.

The arrangement itself, however, is wise and good, and belongs to the original constitution of our nature. To feel and own this dependency, with a proper respect to other principles which lead us to recognise also our own individuality, as an interest to be religiously maintained under its true and just conditions, argues of itself no weakness or defect in our moral character. It is by the happy combination and counteraction of our social dispositions and those which engage us to be jealous of the claims of our separate being, that the due order of life should be maintained ; and in no other way, can our whole nature unfold itself, so as to attain to its proper perfection.

But widely different is the working of this social principle, where the mind has lost its true moral poise, and come under the power of a corrupt selfishness, by which the course of nature is, as it were, set on fire, and all the laws of life disturbed and turned aside from their proper action. In such case the principle still asserts its authority; but so far as the selfish temper prevails, it infuses its own poison into the social affections themselves; and then, instead of exerting a refining influence, they do but throw around him who is the subject of them a foul and pestilential atmosphere, where the disease that is already upon him is quickened only into more active violence and more hopeless strength. Bad passions in this way seek expansion and support, as well as feelings that are right. They require sympathy and sit better on the soul when they are felt to be something which we share with a multitude. This serves also to disguise in some degree the nature of the feelings themselves, which nakedly considered are not pleasant, and sheds over them at the same time some charm for the imagination, such as solitary selfism is too poor to furnish. In the case supposed, however, these social tendencies must soon find a limit; for the power of selfishness by which they are ruled, is, at the bottom, unsocial and malignant, and cannot be satisfied without something to hate and oppose. In all this diffusion of itself, reference is had from the beginning to some interest lying beyond, which it is thought desirable to resist, and if possible to depress in order that the sense of self exaltation may be realized in the triumph thus secured. Thus have we the spirit of party fairly developed, as the bond of union in social organizations, on a larger or smaller scale, embraced and adhered to, on the principle simply of an anti-social opposition to other organizations, representing and embodying a different will. Self has identified itself with an organization which it can now call its own, only that it may act out its bad dispositions as before, on a wider scale and with new force. It is not simply kept in countenance by this means as the vice of an individual mind, which might be the case if the world generally sanctioned it, without any aid from party feeling strictly so called; by such social diffusion it becomes, in fact, a new sentiment, carrying along with it the same constitution substantially in a moral point of view, but acquiring at once, as it were, a liberty and extension, commensurate with the basis on which it has come to rest.

Such I conceive to be the proper idea of Party Spirit, by itself considered. Its manifestations, however, are widely diversified, by the combinations into which it readily enters with other principles,

whether good or bad in their nature. Its phases, in this way, may be as various, as the workings of individual selfishness itself. In the politician, it may often be modified materially by some genuine patriotism, or some real love for truth and right. In the religionist, the living spirit of the Gospel may come in to limit and qualify its operation still more. External circumstances and relations also may greatly affect the manner and form of its development. Thus at times, the spirit of party may operate as a sober quiet force, that shall be scarcely distinguishable from private prejudice or self will. But in other circumstances again, when moral restraints are out of the way and the needful impulse has been given to the corporate mind, it puts on the form of an ungovernable frenzy, and all individuality is borne down and swept away for the time by its whirlwind course. Then, also, as the imagination becomes quickened and inflamed, it runs more and more into the character of a dark and malignant fanaticism, and is ripe for the most cruel excesses.

According to the view now given, Party Spirit does not derive its quality in any measure from the cause which it may profess to espouse. That may be right or wrong, without affecting its nature in the least. The right side in politics, the true theory in science, the orthodox interest in religion, may be maintained with as much of this bad zeal as the systems of opinion to which they are opposed; and in every such case it must be held to be a bad zeal still, not to be sanctified by any occasion or by any end. The world has abounded in all ages with party spirit of the worst kind enlisted in favor of the truth ; and endless abominations have been wrought by it in this sacred cause.

II. We are now prepared to look at the **EVILS** of Party Spirit whether as comprehended in this state of mind itself, or as flowing from it in the way of necessary consequence. These are of no light kind.

Party Spirit is itself a wrong state of mind. Its very constitution, morally considered, must be pronounced evil, only and always evil. It belongs not to our original, healthy nature ; but appears only as a foul and monstrous perversion of affections and tendencies that were designed for very different ends. Selfism, the prime heresy of our fallen nature, is the moulding, informing, vivifying power, to which it owes its birth and being. Whatever elements are made to enter into its composition, all are transmuted by this influence into its own corrupt complexion ; and the result of the combination is, as we have seen, but one vast exaggeration of the selfish principle itself, expanded and furnished with new powers by means of the social principle,

made subservient by over-mastering strength to this purpose. Is selfishness, in its simple form hateful? Does it involve a curse upon the soul? Hateful and hurtful then is Party Spirit too, the same evil in its more complex social form. Here, indeed, the virulence of the affection may be said to be specially seen, "working death by that which is good;" for the social nature of man *should* minister only to his happiness and virtue, and here this itself is by a strange prostitution made to act strongly in an opposite direction. Here, too, the affection becomes susceptible of a new terrific force, as compared with what it was before. The incalculable strength of the social feeling has become allied to its constitution; and though in ordinary cases this may continue quiet as the silence of a sleeping volcano, yet still the bosom force of the volcano is there, and on due occasion it may burst from its unknown depth with such fierce explosion, as may throw all the common agitations of nature completely into the shade. Yes, hateful and terrific is the Spirit of Party, in its own nature. For selfishness, as we know, is the spring-head of all malign social sentiments. Pride, envy, jealousy, wrath, hatred, malice and revenge, in one word all that is contrary to the heaven-born charity of the gospel, may be said to lie hid in this evil principle as their root and germ. These are its natural and necessary forms of development in the history of life; and by such fruits of bitterness is its malignant character fully made known. But do we find any abatement of this maleficent energy, where the principle comes to be incorporated with the social feeling? By no means. The Spirit of Party, in all its ultimate aims, is supremely anti-social. Some disguise is thrown over its character in this respect, by the way in which it is found to diffuse itself at first, as it were, over a general interest; but this is only a disguise, and so far as it prevails at all serves rather to enhance the mischief, by making it more insidious as well as more refined. Where, in fact, shall we meet with pride and all uncharitableness so loudly proclaimed, or so unblushingly indulged, as where the Spirit of Party rules rampant over the inward man? Self-glorification and self will are carried here to their utmost pitch. Malice finds its largest scope. Hatred may reach its most fanatical extreme. Wrath and jealousy may burn from their lowest depths. Revenge may enjoy its most fiendish triumphs. All this, I say, belongs to Party Spirit, in its own nature. It may be but with a partial development of these sins against charity that the evil ordinarily shows its power; but their entire strength is there, at the same time, as a latent possibility. All these fires are carried always

in its womb, and only wait for proper occasions to give forth the most frightful births that belong to Time.

Fearful truly is this spirit, when the full force of the social principle is let loose to carry it forward in its natural way. The soul of a single man, isolated from his species, is full of deep unfathomable mystery ; but man in society, working and wrought upon by the laws that bind him to his fellow and make him part of the common whole, is an abyss, on the shore of which the wisest may well stand aghast, as they think of measuring its bounds or sounding its depths. Here especially are unfolded susceptibilities and powers belonging to our nature, which in other circumstances might seem to be impossible to it altogether. So it is found in great social movements, inflamed by the rancorous spirit of sect, or clan, or party. To calculate the course of these, would be to calculate the path of a tornado or the throes of an earthquake. As with the force of such convulsions in the natural world, they bear down all opposition, and carry every thing their own way. Individual will is for the time overthrown and annihilated. Each man lives in the *animus* of his party. This with blind force draws all into its roaring vortex, and those who are supposed to lead, together with those that follow, are hurled forward to their fated end, by a power which they can neither understand, nor resist. Let me quote a passage, as applicable here, from a somewhat eccentric, but certainly very original writer of our own times, Thos. Carlyle, in his History of the French Revolution. A man once committed to a great social movement in this way, he tells us, "becomes as it were enveloped in an ambient atmosphere of transcendentalism and delirium ; his individual self is lost in something that is not himself, but foreign though inseparable from him.—Strange to think of, the man's cloak still seems to hold the same man : and yet the man is not there, his volition is not there ; nor the source of what he will do and devise ; instead of the man, and his volition, there is a piece of fanaticism and fatalism incarnated in the shape of him. He, the hapless incarnated Fanaticism, goes his road ; no man can help him, he himself least of all. It is a wonderful, tragical predicament ;—such as human language, unused to deal with these things, being contrived for the uses of common life, struggles to shadow out in figures. The ambient element of material fire is not wilder than this of Fanaticism ; nor, though visible to the eye, is it more real. Volition bursts forth involuntary—voluntary ; rapt along ; the movement of free human minds becomes a raging tornado of fatalism, blind as the winds ; and Mountain and Gironde, [party]

names,] are alike astounded to see where it has flung and dropt them. To such height of miraele can men work upon men ; the Conseious and the Unconscious blended inscrutably in this inserutable Life ; endless Necessity environing Freewill !"

This is indeed an extreme ease. But it is under such full grown development only, that we come to understand fully the genius of the Spirit, which we are here concerned to study. To sueh fanatical delirium it always tends. The sanetions of patriotism or religion are ever ready to be grasped by its saerilegious hand, and flung around the symbols of its zeal ; and then its worst passions acquire for it a hallowed character, and are made to burn with unextinguishable flame, upwards to the very heavens. So naturally and so soon may Party Spirit wed itself to Fanaticism under all its forms.

But the injury inflicted on our moral and religious nature by Party Spirit, reaches beyond the range of the soeial affections, properly so called. Uneharitable dispositions can never be indulged habitually, without perverting our conceptions of right, and impairing our virtuous sensibilities generally. The Spirit of Party, just so far as it prevails, and especially after it begins to assume a fanatical complexion, holds the soul which is the subjeet of it always in an atmosphere of unholy passion, where all its ideas of truth and virtue are exposed to danger. The eause of the party, as it is ealled, is clothed with exaggerated importanee. Zeal for *this* comes to be looked upon as the first of duties. Other moral interests, espeially if they should be unhappily associated in any way with the views of the antagonist party, carry with them a cold, and perhaps suspieious aspect, as challenging regards which cannot willingly be spared from that whieh has now identified itself with the heart. The mind yields itself, more or less, to the dominion of one idea ; verges, as we say, towards monomania. Alas, how all duties suffer, when it comes to this ! How the boundaries of right and wrong are unsettled ! How men's eyes begin to see all things awry, and under false colors ! Truth in the end is treated with as little respect as charity : honesty, and simplicity, and godly sincerity, do as it were make to themselves wings, and fly away like an eagle towards heaven. Wrong dispositions quickly generate wrong practices. Evil communications too are here and evil sympathies ; for the cause ineloses men of all stamps, and entitles them to its spiritual intimaeies ; and all this works powerfully to corrupt good manners. No wonder that the morality of parties is lax. Who in truth looks for integrity and fair dealing where party spirit runs high ?

And is it not equally unfavorable to all intellectual freedom, and sound knowledge? In the investigation of truth, how much depends on the right state of the affections! These are always more or less the medium, through which the various objects of knowledge are contemplated. Let them become diseased or exorbitant in any way, and at once every thing that stands in connection with them is made to appear in a false light and under a distorted form. How then must the Spirit of Party, being such as has been described, confuse and bewilder the eye of the soul, in the case of all truth with which it may happen to be concerned! Men in this case not only look through a colored medium in their own minds, but under the reflected light also of the social opinion of the party itself, powerfully inclining their judgment in its own way. Opinion is always mighty, where a man has come to move and have his being in its mystic circle; where it flows from that common mind, by which he is held sympathetically in union with his fellows, in organizations of whatever sort. Such opinion not only sways the will; it becomes the very light of thought itself. In this way parties often create for themselves both reason and right. What they will to be truth, and choose to call so, in the light of such wilful opinion itself is made to *seem* truth. What doctrines may not be approved as sound, what measures not justified as good, which it has become the interest of a violent party, in politics or religion to adopt? A Bartholomew massacre may seem only a fit occasion for chanting a *Te Deum* in all churches.

A mind enthralled by the authority of a party, is in a false position for seeing truth. Its inquiries are continually subordinated to another interest. Hence it contracts also a narrow and illiberal character, which goes with it in all its speculations. Freedom, comprehensive energy, and clear strong vision, are not to be looked for in circumstances like these.

This is a ease to which may be applied most significantly that pregnant symbol-speech of Jesus Christ: "The light of the body is the eye. If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light: but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, *how great is that darkness!*"

Thus it appears altogether, that the Spirit of Party is opposed to all true greatness of soul. The soul takes its quality and complexion always from the objects with which it is accustomed most intimately and habitually to converse. If these be large and lofty, such will its inward frame be too. If these be mean, or narrow, or false, the soul

will take its image accordingly. Such is the law of our moral life. It is only then by communion with what is absolutely true, and great, and right, that the original grandeur of our nature can ever be evolved, in its full and just proportions. It is by gazing on the Holy and the Beautiful, as they are in themselves, that we recognize in the first place our own con-natural interest in the skies, and are then “changed into the same image, from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Whatever may operate to restrain or hinder such contemplation, causing the eternal, the necessary, the universal, to make room in our minds for the transient and the particular, and circumscribing our vision by the visible horizon of Time, must be deprecated as an influence fatal to a true spiritual education. It would be so, even if it might be conceived of apart from all perverted and morbid views, in its domination. An exclusive communion with time-things, cannot fail to dwarf the soul, however honestly and fairly maintained. What, then, must it be in its injurious operation, where all false conceptions and all wrong feelings come in, as here in the case of Party Spirit, to aggravate its power, exaggerating, coloring, stealing fire as it were from heaven, to animate dead clay into every imaginable show of fantastic life ! Ah ! how the spirit must sink, and become shrivelled in its dimensions, in circumstances like these ! What aliment for an immortal mind to feed upon ! What types, in which to mould its thoughts ; what forms, to be mirrored in its affections ; what elements to be compounded into its life !

Then again, how are the most important social interests made to suffer and languish, where this spirit prevails. It is a mistake to consider it beneficial in any case ; except as it may occasionally counterbalance and neutralize to some extent on the one hand, the evil which it is itself at the same time creating and upholding on the other. Selfishness may thwart selfishness, and pride may counteract pride ; and so the violence of one party may at times stem the mad course of another. But let it not be said, that in all this the evil has in any sense itself become a blessing. Its proper natural operation is to curse, and not to bless. At the best, it can do nothing more than furnish an inadequate compensation in certain cases, for its own mischief ; while in general, without any such mitigation, its influences are purely and notoriously bad.

Let us listen to the Father of his Country, on this subject, as his voice is heard in his solemn *Farewell Address* to the American People. “The common and continual mischiefs of the Spirit of

Party, are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it. It serves always to distract the public councils, and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foments occasional riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.” Again, “This Spirit,” he tells us, “unfortunately is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.” Wise and magnanimous Statesman! Would that the legacy of thy counsels and thy example were more prized by the nation at large; more regarded especially in our Senate chambers and Halls of Legislation!

Is it necessary to dwell upon the unhappy fruits of Party Spirit, as it is felt in the region of politics! In such a country as ours, they are of a character to be known and read by all. At what expense of virtue, with what wreck of principle, are not our party struggles ordinarily conducted, through the entire nation! The very earth is as it were made to shake at times, by reason of the commotion. Evil passions are let loose; false tongues vibrate; words full of poison, fly as arrows; pens dipped in gall, strike like angry serpents teeth; the press becomes an “Infernal Machine,” scattering in all directions coals of juniper, grapeshot and death. No character is sacred—no principle is safe.

Ill must it fare, in such hurly burly of the passions, with the real interests of the country, which are made the ostensible cause of all this excitement. Zeal for these is in truth generally the smallest element, in the composition of the moral whirlwind. They are sacrificed and trampled under foot, more or less by all parties. The idea of a party truly patriotic is a solecism. Woe to the nation, where the administration of affairs is made to hang always between two such organizations of selfish ambition, struggling only for the mastery.—There liberty has already perished. The voice of the people is no longer heard. The structure of the government has begun to give way. Intrigue, stratagem, and corrupt conspiracy, stretch themselves with endless intrication, like a huge arachne web, from the centre

out to the utmost limits of the state ; over which the bloated genius of Party continually presides, making all bend to its own voracious appetite. Legislation, measures of State, economical policy, nominations and elections and appointments to office, in one word, all public interests, fall hopelessly into the net. Well, if even the seat of judgment can escape.

Science too may have her parties ; at least *has* had them ; with like effect. Sad for her indeed has been the fanatacism of creeds, alike sworn to do her homage. The time has been, when it lay like an embargo on all free use of Mind. "No process of nature," to use the words of a highly gifted writer, "no mechanic law, could be investigated or discussed apart from the interference of the fierce jealousies of rival schools. A chemical mixture could not change from blue to red, from transparent to opaque ; an apple could not fall to the ground, nay, the planets might not swing through their orbits, without kindling angry feuds in colleges. Not only was the method of obtaining knowledge utterly misunderstood ; but it was not believed, or not felt, that Knowledge is always the friend of man, and his coadjutor ; Error his enemy."

"Can it be conceived of as a thing even possible," the same writer afterwards asks, "that pure reason should have had sway in philosophy, so long as the interests of sects were to be cared for ? Those two powers, Truth and Party, were not in fact contemporary scarcely a year ; or contemporaneous only as Night and Day are so, through the hasty moments of twilight. Indeed the mere existence of factions in any department of opinion, is a conclusive proof that the method of inquiry, in that department, has not yet been found ; or at least is not generally understood."

Happily the rage of the Schools has passed away, and literature, philosophy, and science are left in a great measure free, to develope themselves as they may ; except so far as they may happen to be implicated with other subjects of sectarian interest. And not altogether free yet, however, even on their own account. Theories are still found serving at times, as the rallying points of genuine party zeal. In Medicine particularly, it may be long before either science or art shall cease to be embarrassed from this cause.

But what Science *has* suffered from parties, Religion suffers in full measure to this hour. Need it be said, that the Spirit of Party is directly opposed to the Spirit of the Gospel ? The one destroys what the other would build. Charity, meekness, patience, gentleness

and peace, cannot tabernacle along with such an affection. They flee away from its presence. It drinks up the life blood of the Church; cuts the sinews of faith and prayer; blunts the edge of all spiritual motives. The “still small voice” of the Spirit, cannot be heard where it reigns. Its power is but the wrath of man, which worketh not the praise of God. Truth also finds no mercy under its hands. Shorn of her vital spirit, she is retained and honored at the best, only as an embalmed corpse; a bandaged mummy, stiff and still; with a creed for its sarcophagus. Dogmas are substituted for ideas. Words absorb things. Symbols rule faith. Theology, springing always from the brain only, stands forth Minerva-like in complete armor, belligerent, ripe at all times for battle. The Church is known mainly as a scene of death-dealing strife. The chief care is for her munitions and magazines of war. All her learning and discipline look this way. The very Bible itself is turned into an armory. Exegesis must bend to the authority of system. Exposition becomes *imposition*; sense put *into* the text, not drawn *out* from it; and revelation is used only as a mirror, where a man may see the forms of his own previous thoughts, reflected back upon him as oracles from God.

“Factious religionism,” says the writer lately quoted, “how much soever it may have been tamed and curbed, will not fail to be encircled by wide spread impiety, and infidelity, as the direct effects of the scandal of division. Factions, moreover, benumb the expansive powers of Christianity, and prevent its spread. They create too a universal confusion, entanglement, and perversion of religious notions. No inquiry can be calmly prosecuted, no results of solitary meditation can be safely reported, nothing can be looked at in its native form, so long as the jealousies and the interests of eight or ten ancient and corporate factions spread themselves over the field of theology.”

It enhances the deformity of this Spirit, that the most sacred and venerable interests are so usually forced to do homage to its will. Though it be in its essence altogether selfish and malignant, it must always identify itself with some public good, as its guardian angel sent to bless the world. “Oh, Liberty!” exclaimed the heroic wife of Roland, as mounting the guillotine-scaffold she looked on the statue of Liberty planted hard by—“Oh, Liberty, what things are done in thy name!” History must often repeat the same exclamation; or at least some similar one. Liberty, patriotism, religion, truth—what

enormities has not each of them been made to encircle, by the profane hand of Party ! Marius and Sylla are always patriots. Every Marat is an "ami du peuple," friend of the people. No Robespierre, but is sworn to die, if need be, on the altar of his country. Who so loud for liberty as your leading party politicians every where, and the whole tribe of drilled fuglemen in their service, who are seen in all streets and places of public concourse, showing off with prompt gesture, before their several companies and platoons, the lessons they have been taught ? Listen to the brazen-faced, thousand-throated party Press ! What everlasting changes rung on the same themes, virtue, honor, truth, the constitution and the public good ! Have we not here the very shrine of Patriotism, where her priests stand always ministering at the altar, and devotees come every day to worship ! These holocausts of passion, where character is incessantly slain, flayed and dissected, and then burned before heaven ; these bacchanalian orgies, in which all decency at times gives way to low licentious blackguardism ; these belchings of wrath, these wild war shouts, these rabid howlings and hungry rushings towards blood ; are they not all sacrifices and rites offered here to Patriotism, such as Patriotism owns and loves !

And then again, what place shall be found so holy, what truth so awful in religion, that the same Spirit of Party, shall not invade and occupy it for its own bad ends ? It takes its seat, pontiff-like, in the temple of God, as though it were his vicegerent on earth, and then thunders out its anathemas always in his name. Its most unhallowed fires claim to be of heavenly origin. Your party zealot must ever be also a saint. It is the zeal of God's house, which consumes him. He glories in truth and orthodoxy ; and when most full of all bitterness and wrath, he is but contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. His cause is always a *crusade*, in which he follows the cross as a standard. Whatever may bleed or burn before it, must be held an *auto da fe*,—faith-offering or sacrifice to orthodoxy.—The most awful names are invoked, the holiest symbols profaned, to uphold the worst passions and the most violent deeds. What a foul thing must that needs be, which can thus find provision for the flesh in the most sacred interests of the spirit ; making the sanctuary a retreat for base lusts ; fetching food from heaven for every unholy passion !

Finally it deserves to be considered, that the evil is always contagious and diffusive. It is a spirit which grows upon a man by in-

dulgence, and works in a community also like leaven. And still as the general mind has been wrought upon by its power in one instance, it is prepared and disposed to yield to it in another. Thus in the end it comes to be a diseased habit. It enters educationally into the entire social character, and transforms a whole people permanently into its own complexion. Mind at large is made restless, irritable, morbid; craves excitement; rushes always to extremes. The deep, silent forces of the spirit are no longer understood or relied upon. All must be carried by action, organized opinion, and angry tumultuating passion. "*Agitate, agitate, AGITATE,*" is the horseleech cry from all sides. In such humor, occasions for splitting and fighting can never be wanting. And so the disease goes forward, undermining always the moral constitution of the people on whom it has fastened, and gathering strength from its own ravages. Who shall say in what fanatical excesses, in what revolutionary horrors, it is destined to terminate in the end!

III. The subject requires, in the next place, a notice of the influences which expose men to this evil; that knowing our **DANGER**, we may set ourselves the more vigorously against its power. If we would be safe, we must neither make light of the enemy itself, nor take it for granted easily that we are beyond its reach.

The Spirit of Party, be it remembered, is always congenial with our fallen nature. This appears from the natural history of it, as already given. Man is necessarily social, and if he can make this part of his constitution, at the same time, tributary to that principle of selfishness which has usurped the supremacy in his soul, he cannot fail to be pleased with such an order. His own separate being is too poor and narrow, to be made the exclusive ground even of his selfish emotions. It is a real relief, when he finds himself enabled, by means of the social principle, to dilate this reigning idea of himself, and thus to widen as it were the basis of his being, while at the same time it is invested with a more liberal show. Much as he may boast himself, it has been well remarked, he is by far too poor *at home* to maintain the expense of his own splendid conceptions and personal greatness. "It is found that the imagination refuses to yield itself, except for a moment, or in a very limited degree, to those excitements that are drawn from the solitary bosom of the individual." Hence the charm of this diffused selfism, with its imaginative emotions and fair plausible illusions. The social nature of a depraved mind predisposes it strongly at all times to Party Spirit.

This predisposition often falls in with the reigning tone of thought and feeling, in the world at large. Even in heaven, it would call for factious excitement. What then is it likely to prove on earth, where the very air it lies upon is like itself? Society is always ready, as occasion may offer, to divide and quarrel. Life has a tendency, more or less at all times, to form itself into whirlwinds, that take up and carry along with them whatever may chance to fall in their vor-tiginous path. We are strangely at the mercy of that mysterious Mind, which incorporates us with our fellows. In such a case as this then, who can calculate the force of sympathy, brought to bear on a heart, not only tremulously responsive to the vibrations of the great social heart, but already of itself inclined to beat in the same-way? The voice of a public moving opinion, which is always *poluphloisbos*, like the sound of many waters—what may it not be expected to accomplish here! No man in such circumstances, (unless indeed, as one has said, he have his foot somewhere *beyond* time,) can be truly and steadily himself. Say not thou, I would have been this or that in any given state of society, which thou hast not yet tried: or at least say it, only as thou hast faith in God. And be fully sure, that without this faith strongly at work, thou hast even now a factious life, made up of the mere reverberations of opinion around thee, far beyond what thou hast ever dreamed.

Consider also the false insidious character under which this Spirit of Party always appears. Hell-born though it be, it transforms itself into an angel of light. We have seen already how it links itself with the most precious interests of humanity, (disguised under the show of its social attributes,) and seats itself, with true demoniacal possession, in the fairest forms of truth and virtue. These become henceforth the unwilling organs of its unholy power. It utters its voice through their lips, pours its passion into their eyes, works with infernal strength in their limbs, and at its pleasure hurries them away frantic, into the wilderness or forth among the tombs. Here it is Patriotism; there it is Religion: Zeal for orthodoxy, to-day; Zeal for liberty, to-morrow. Whig or Tory, Democrat or Federalist, it always dearly loves the nation. In morals, it is ever *anti* to all that's bad be it in the radical or be it in the conservative way. In the Church, as all sects can testify, it is the bosom friend and champion of true Christianity, all the world over. How easy to be deceived and led away, by a Spirit, (world-caressed as we have seen) that comes to us in such specious guise!

But this is not all. This spirit comes to us, with flatteries, and promises, and bribes. Credit and interest both join, or at least *seem* for the moment to join in its favor. Where parties prevail, they engross more or less the opinion and sympathy of the community, on one side or the other ; and a man must take his side, or have his sect, and enter actively too, into its passions, or be content to live for the time comparatively without notice. It will be well also, if he be not charged with secret disaffection to the truth, indifference to public interests, moral cowardice, or trimming bisfaced policy. But let him have his party, and go with it heart and hand, and it becomes the easiest thing in the world, within the sweep of the party at least, to gain attention and even to carry away applause. Your party man can rise in credit, on the most slender capital. He has only to foam, and spout, to be very confident, and to go always ahead for the cause, and all will be well. It requires no extraordinary resources or skill, even to take rank among those who are known as leaders, especially in the seasons of great excitement. It needs no special supply of brains ; no rare combination of qualities, intellectual or moral. The talent, says Carlyle, is one of instinct rather. "It is that of divining aright what this great dumb whirlwind wishes and wills ; that of willing, with more frenzy than any one, what all the world wills.—To stand at no obstacles ; to heed no considerations, human or divine ; to know well that of divine or human, there is one thing needful, triumph of the Republic, (or party) destruction of the enemies of the Republic (or party.) With this one spiritual endowment, and so few others, it is strange to see how a dumb inarticulately storming whirlwind of things puts, as it were, its reins into your hand, and compels you to be leader of it."*—So it works, with regard to character or distinction, generally. But in the State especially, how can any man expect to rise in importance, where parties exist, without consenting to be sworn to one side or the other ? Even in her calmest mood, the Spirit of Party will have no favors to bestow, except on the men who carry her seal on their foreheads.

In addition to the general influences, we must take into consideration, in our own case, another form of danger flowing from the character of the particular country and particular age to which we belong. Party Spirit has been called the disease of Republics. The structure

*Applicable also to this case are the words of Plato, *De Rep. Lib. IV.*, p. 135, Ed. Tauchn. which might seem almost to have been in the writer's eye, in the above description. [Quotation omitted for want of Greek type.]

of such governments lays them peculiarly open to its invasion, and allows the fullest scope for its ravages when they have been commenced. Our own country has already furnished abundant illustration of this truth, if examples were wanting otherwise, in history ancient or modern. With the birth of the Federal Constitution, the spirit broke in upon the nation, with a force that threatened its dissolution. And from that time to the present, it has always been more or less actively engaged, not only among the few but among the many; until it may be said to have become at last wrought into the very texture of our social character. Religion too, always the field of party strife to a greater or less extent, has been surrendered here to the aeroethes of sect as never in the world before. Not only is religious faith left free; it is under the force also, as it were, of a strong antagonism to the ecclesiastical despotism of the old world, the refluent tide of former custom, which will not suffer it to rest in its proper limits. Our religious freedom has become, in this respect, religious licentiousness; the wilful pride of independence, rather than a manly homage done to conscience. We have now our seats in every direction, and the number continually increasing, all contributing in their measure to confirm and extend that spirit of separatism, out of which they grow. It fared badly enough with the protestant faith in this respect, in the days of the English Commonwealth, when half a dozen platforms of belief were erected on the same basis of the Bible, for the support of separate communions. But what would such a man as Richard Baxter have thought, could he have foreseen that the time would come in America, when *one* of these platforms alone, (the Westminster Confession,) would be counted broad enough to support six separate communions again of its own, as mutually jealous and distrustful one of another as the primary seats themselves! We need not travel thirty miles however, from the place where we are now assembled, to find such a spectacle at present in the bosom of a single city.

Then the age itself has a character, which falls in strongly with these political and religious tendencies of the country. It is time when mind is awake, when the free interchange of thought is rapidly extending, when opinion is coming to be regarded more than ever as the mistress of the world, when the progress of society is continually furnishing new occasions for popular inquiry and debate. A feverish restlessness has begun to communicate itself to the general mind, even in the long established anti-popular governments of the old world. Need we be surprised then, to find a similar spirit still more

extensively and powerfully at work, on our own side of the Atlantic? The spirit of the age, as it is called, wedding itself to the genius of the country, has gone far already to strip us of every thing like quietness in our character, and to convert our very existence into a process of endless spiritual fermentation. In such a frame, divisions and conflicts come to seem a necessary part of the social state; and it is with difficulty a man can save himself, in any circumstances, from the ever changing eddies and whirlings of such party strife, however little he may be pleased with it in his heart.

Only cast an eye over the living sea of thought, as we find it actually surrounding us far and wide, at the present time. What a surface of billowy agitation, rolling, swelling, rising, and breaking in every direction, does it not present! To what a pass have things come already, by reason of parties, in the wold of politics! There may have been in earlier times of our history, occasional seasons when the zeal of parties had full as much violence as now; but it may be well questioned whether it has ever before appeared, even occasionally only, in a form so unmixedly bad, so mortally gangrenous shall I say, as that which it has come to assume latterly as its ordinary character. There was an element of true patriotic feeling, an infusion of honest political principle, belonging to parties of the old school, and operating to qualify somewhat their moral influence, which it is to be feared has well nigh vanished from the constitution of our modern parties altogether. There is far more of a deliberate systematic, all-engrossing, and all-subordinating policy, involved in these combinations, than there was formerly; all energized by the Spirit of Party, and ministering to it continually, as such. Already may we not say, ours has ceased to be a government of the people? Is the voice of the people heard in our elections? Is the mind, then, of the people, as such, embodied in our public measures? Certainly not in a free and natural way, to say the least. We live, move, and have our being, politically, in a circumfused malaria of Party Spirit. All healthful individuality is gone. No room is left for the free play of patriotic principle. It has become professedly, and openly, and shamelessly, a standing struggle between opposing systems in the State, which, as a matter of course, are expected to divide and exhaust, for their own ends, the entire interest of the nation. Is not this the fair form of Liberty, in the folds of a boa constrictor?

In the region of morals, we are met on all sides with similar manifestations of this unquiet spirit. We have been pronounced the most

fanatical people in the world ; and there is certainly much in our character, at the present time, to sustain the charge. On all subjects relating to conduct, we are ready under the fall of a spark to go off in a loud explosion. Public opinion has become our great Diana ; and every question must be carried, pro and con, by noise and clamor, and all sorts of agitation, adapted to secure the interest of this potent deity. Of the state of things in the Church, it is not necessary particularly to speak. I may be allowed, however, to make a pointed reference, in this connection, to the reigning tone of our religious papers.

This, it seems to me, must be regarded as decidedly favorable to the spirit we are now considering, and is so far worthy of severe reprobation. In such a country as ours pre-eminently, the periodic press must have always an immense influence for weal or for woe.—In Church affairs, as well as those of the State, the press now may be said to govern public sentiment, forming it always to its own complexion. Who, then, may estimate the amount of evil which must result from a religious press, resembling in character at all the secular party press of the day ? or who will show us rightly the danger that is thus created in Christian communities, which have always so much to apprehend at any rate from the insinuating character of the demon of party ? Such a press can only be a curse to the Church. The blessings it may scatter with one hand, are dearly purchased by the dragons' teeth it strews from the other. What then shall we say of the religious press of this country ?

In the nature of the case, a religious press constituted as ours, cannot deserve to be invested with the authority, which it is found in fact to possess. It is almost necessarily identified with the interest of some particular creed in religion or morals, in a way that is sure to induce a narrow and one-sided habit of thought, wherever it prevails. In such a posture, how may it be supposed to possess the requisite wisdom, for guiding and controlling the general mind, especially in seasons of excitement ? Are its oracles, (poured forth on the spur of each occasion from heated, hurried brains,) likely to partake largely of the pure inspiration of truth ? “The very dispositions we most need in difficult seasons,” says the author of *Spiritual Despotism*, “are those that ought not in fairness to be looked for in that scene of flutter and necessity, the editor’s room. Our reformation from popery was not concocted or carried through in any such temples of confusion. Great minds, carefully nurtured, came out to meet that

great occasion. The press did, indeed aid the reformation ; but the press was not then, as now, in a condition to distract it. The men who thought, spoke, argued and suffered, did not spend their days and nights under the vcry roofs that shake with the weighty throes of the printing engine. If the same reformation is to be carried forward to its consummation, the band of editors and contributors must wheel off from the ground and give room to artizans of another order."

As an instance of the temper of our religious press, (and yet who needs particular illustrations in a case so openly clear ?) I may refer to the use made by it not long since of Dean Swift's description of a *No-Party Man*. A shallow display of wit without sense at the best ; but coming from such a source, it may be looked upon as the veriest hypocritical malice-cant of your lowest sort of scribbling politicians. Yet was this precious morceau heralded about, in I know not how many of our religious newspapers from one end of the land to the other—newspapers of different sects and parties—evidently with the design of sheltering their own character under *such* authority, whilst it was employed to hold up to reproach all who might not sympathize with them in their acrid humor. It was, indeed, a most curious characteristic symptom of the times, comprehensive of meaning far beyond what it might seem on first view to carry. No wonder that such a press should stand foremost among the influences, which in this day are found to operate so powerfully in favor of Party Spirit. No wonder that its shadow should be, like that of the deadly upas, hostile and fatal to every thing that is truly catholic, everything that is profoundly spiritual, in religious sentiment !

IV. But where shall we find the proper *remedy* for this corrupt affection, whose germ lies hid in our very nature from the beginning, and whose developement is promoted by so many genial influences, always at work upon us in our course through life ! This is the last inquiry called for in the discussion of our subject, involving we may say the main practical interest of the whole.

It is highly important, in the first place, in order to our being properly armed against this affection, that we should be thoroughly persuaded of its essentially evil character. Much vague and confused sentiment prevails in society, with respect to this point. Party Spirit is too generally regarded as a feeling, which becomes wrong only by reason of accidental attributes and connections ; while on proper occasions, and with reference to right ends, it must be considered as worthy even of the highest commendation. With views so indistinct,

it is not to be expected that men should seriously seek to have the principle itself eradicated from their bosoms. It becomes an easy thing for them always, to excuse the most unhallowed forms of such zeal in themselves, by exaggerating the occasions and ends with which it may happen to be concerned. As pride always affects to be of the decent and manly sort, and even duels must be denominated *par excellence* "affairs of honor;" so your most virulent partizans always "do well to be angry," and in their own eyes seem to burn with purer flame, exactly in proportion for the most part as their zeal is found to wax more fervent. Now we must look well to this popular hallucination, if we propose to avoid the danger to which it leads. Analyze carefully the thing itself, naturally and ordinarily intended under the term—Party Spirit. Make a fair moral estimate of its character. Give no heed to the sophisms, with which your ears may be stunned on this subject, from the ranks of party itself. Be not blinded by the specious forms the evil is found so often to assume, especially in the Church, and in connection with the holiest truths of religion. Trace its natural history, study its constitution and be able in this way to speak your hearty, unhesitating, unqualified reprobation of it, as a corrupt affection, wherever it may appear. Learn to hate it, whether in the Church or in the State, whether on the side of truth or on the side of error; though it should come surrounded with applause; though it should walk abroad in the solemn cloak of the schools, or issue in pontifical robes from the very depths of the sanctuary itself.

In the next place we may be fortified against the power of Party Spirit, by reflecting at large seriously and earnestly on the nature of its constituent elements, and the results to which it always tends. It is only as the native deformity of the affection is kept out of view, that it can be looked upon with favor by those who have any regard for virtue. The moral ingredients out of which it is compounded, are foul and loathsome; and require only to be distinctly perceived, and steadily contemplated, that they may stir disgust in every mind possessed in any manner of sound feelings. The same may be said also of the operation of the evil, and its effects generally, when these come to be steadily regarded in the same manner. A generous mind will shrink from the contamination of what is seen to be so entirely bad. Party Spirit will be looked upon as something that must always belittle and degrade the soul in which it dwells; a mental condition incompatible with all true spiritual freedom, and hostile always, more

or less, to the best aspirations of our still high though fallen nature. Cultivate these right views, by proper reflection, apart from the influence of exciting occasions and corrupting associations. Ponder well the supremely selfish character of the sentiment in view. Lay to heart its malignant tendencies. Consider how it blinds the judgement, perverts the heart, and entrals the will. Mark its false, insidious, ensnaring character, its insinuating hypocrisy veiled under the most specious forms, its illusory charms for the imagination, all tending to intoxicate even to delirium the whole man. Follow it out also, with manly resolution in its effect on society at large. Fix an eye of calm philosophic thought on the shape it carries in that huge tossing sea of politics, with which we are all surrounded. Study its practical bearings, in the social economy considered under other aspects. Especially observe with serious care, in the light of religious feeling, its most deplorable action in the Church ; the endless divisions, jealousies and prejudices, to which it has given, or is still giving birth ; the opprobrium it heaps on the Christian cause ; its ruinous results for religion, whether found heaving with the violence of actual religious controversy, or resting in the form of quiet sectarian bigotry as an incubus simply on all the living powers of the soul. Due meditation of this kind, frequently renewed, may go very far to make us both ashamed and afraid of indulging in ourselves a spirit, in whose womb are carried mischiefs so dire.

But after all, our safety must be sought mainly in positive communion actively maintained in our own souls with truth and virtue. So it is always with a just spiritual education. It aims to correct wrong judgments, and to expel low affections, not so much by dealing with them on the footing of their own character, as by forming the soul at once to higher views and sentiments, which, of themselves, so far as they prevail, purify and reform it. In this way, and in this way only, through the assistance of God's Spirit, may all low, narrow and defiling affections, be effectually subdued and shut out from the human mind. Through such discipline then, we should chiefly endeavor to save ourselves from this unclean spirit in particular. No man can converse intimately with the pure forms of Truth itself, without having his nature so far refined, and raised above whatever is low and grovelling around him.

Cultivate earnestly this communion. There can be no freedom without it. Soar in spirit above the region of sense and particular opinion, always darkened by the mists, if not agitated by the storms,

of passion ; and let your home be, mainly at least, in the empyrean sphere of absolute and eternal truth. Much may be accomplished towards this end, by the right use of mere science only. All true knowledge elevates, expands, rarifies, if I may say so, the life of the soul. But especially is this the case with that divine philosophy, whose organ is the pure reason, and which has for its contemplation mainly the original and everlasting ideas of religion itself. Even apart from revelation, such philosophy, as it meets us in the towering thoughts of the Grecian Plato, may well be denominated the proper mistress of an immortal mind. With him all inward illumination and stability are found in communion only with the *ta onta*, as opposed to the *ta phainomena* ; and nothing less than the idea of the absolute *to agathon*, the self-evidencing light of the truth itself, will serve as the medium by which such communion is to be maintained. Conversing only with the world of time, through the medium of the senses, the soul is represented as always reeling, in a sort of drunken delirium, with the fluctuating show on which it looks ; but in the use of its own higher vision it becomes itself again. [Phædo, Vol. 1, p. 126. Ed. Tauchnitz.] Thus exercised, as he tells us in another place, it cannot afford to stoop to the trivial interests with which men commonly are employed, so as to be filled with all malignant affections in struggling with them for such things ; but aims rather in the steady contemplation of what is always the same and always right, to be transformed into the same image. [De Republica, Vol. v, p. 230.]

But if this philosophy be of so excellent a nature, even as it stood darkly revealed to the mind of this gifted Pagan, what must be its worth as it appears in full orb'd splendor in the everlasting gospel itself ! Here, indeed, the soul finds her true vision, faith in opposition to sight, unscaled and cleared, with such a revelation of life and immortality as may well satisfy its most active contemplation. Here then, especially, endeavor to have your interior life raised and etherealized, in such a way that no room shall be left for sordid and illiberal thoughts. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Have your citizenship in heaven ; so shall you tread this world beneath your feet, and spurn the fellowship of its grovelling passions as unworthy of your high estate. "If the truth make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Not only however, must we commune with truth in the abstract, we must find out the best life-patterns, under which it has appeared in

the history of our world, breathing, speaking, working, in the actual relations of time. It is by such examples most of all, that the idea of the holy and the beautiful is brought vividly home to our bosoms, and we are moved with the desire and hope of realizing it as a part of our own existence. Happily such examples are not wanting in history, though they be rare.

One name from the political world may suffice for mention now; but, it is a name which cannot fail to carry with it a sacred authority, before an audience like the present. Go, young men of America, and study the character of WASHINGTON, the true patriot, the pure statesman, the glory of his country, the wonder of the world. The example of such a man is more for us, as a people, than all he accomplished in war. It is a living fountain of virtue still, from which a salutary influence may be expected to flow in perennial streams, through all time. Every young man should read Marshall's Life of Washington carefully. It is a pure atmosphere in politics, such as is not easily met with elsewhere, which no one can breathe in without being the better for it, at least for a time. Sympathy with the mind of Washington may be recommended especially, as a most excellent antidote to the vile Spirit of Party.

Leaving this sphere, however, (always more or less earthly at the best,) let us for a moment glance at exemplars, which look down upon us from a yet loftier height. The philosophy of the skies embodied in the mind of PLATO, or transcribed from the life of his master SOCRATES, is found to have a wonderfully plastic power on all who converse intelligently with his writings to this day. Let me recommend them, as a liberalizing discipline in the case now under consideration.—But more especially be exhorted to converse with the mighty spirits, which in different ages have drunk most deeply of the inspiration of evangelical truth. In proportion as this has been true of them, you will find them soaring always above the bigotry of sects and parties; and in their company you can hardly fail to come yourselves, in some measure, under the power of those broad, catholic principles of christianity, which appear so full of majesty and worthy of all reverence in their persons. Such virtue is found still embalming as a fragrant odor, the memory of the meek and gentle MELANCHTHON. Such influence, as a sacred stream flowing fast by the oracle of God, yet lives in every page of the seraphic, peace-loving LEIGHTON. Such energy still wakes in the soul-stirring thoughts, that break over us like an echo from the far depths of eternity, when

we listen to the voice of the profoundly spiritual Howe. Look on such patterns,—these, and more like these,—till through communion with the spirit which animated them, you find yourselves panting at least after the same order of perfection. Such aspirations are naturally excited by their society ; and such aspirations thus excited tend powerfully to realize the object towards which they reach.

But why should I dwell on names like these ? Take PAUL himself as an exemplar, to be studied, admired, imitated, even to the end of life. Where will you find among mere men, a more splendid exhibition of living greatness ? His mind still lives, the shrine of all that is lofty and large in human character, in his history and more especially in his letters. Possessed of the finest natural endowments, he rose, subsequently to his memorable conversion, to an intimacy with the great themes of religion, which imparted the highest vigor to all his faculties, while it purified and refined his affections, and established the most complete order and harmony in his whole spirit. Faith with him was allowed to do its proper work. It embraced, with strong, clear, steady vision, the great truths of religion, as made known in the gospel. In the exercise of a firm manly judgment, he gave to these their proper weight and authority, as compared with the things of the present world. And so with healthful flow, his affections took their course accordingly, calm, deep, energetic, carrying life through the soul. The result of all was a complete crucifixion to the common interests of the world, and a life steadily consecrated to the great ends of religion ; in the face of all opposition ; with a conviction that bore down all authority ; with a resolution that made light of every danger, and shrank from no hazard or expense. Who can come into the presence of such a man and not be affected with the sublime dignity of religion, as it shines through his whole spirit, and stands embodied in his very person ? And who can gaze on such a character for any time without feeling that it belongs to a region high above the common agitations of the world, and at the same time wishing to ascend the same pure height !

And yet we are gravely told at times, that Paul was a party man ; and his example is appealed to by every angry religious polemic in the country, in justification of the most contentious temper or most uncharitable bigotry, which he may be pleased to show in behalf of his own narrow sect. Most pitiful, truly ! Just so your wild enthusiast every where, is found sheltering *himself* under the same authority. So too your veriest fanatic, so far as religion may at all en-

ter into his account. In the same spirit the Jacobins of Paris went still farther, and supposed themselves complimenting Paul's Master, when they called him the *bon Sansculotte*. But enthusiasm, fanaticism, radicalism, party spirit, were alike foreign from the character of Paul. He *had been* a self-willed zealot once indeed; but not after his conversion to Christ. Such a supposition is belied by every glimpse we have into his heart. Simplicity and godly sincerity, in opposition to all fleshly wisdom, carnal policy, and low selfish aims, characterized his whole walk. Parties in the Church catholic he regarded with abhorrence as the pest of religion; as the bane of that heaven-born charity, in which essentially he supposed the power of the gospel to consist. Most assuredly Paul was no party man, in the modern sense of that word; and Party Spirit must ever shrink abashed in his presence, just so soon as the man himself is truly known and his presence felt.

In one word the genius of the gospel itself, is irreconcileably at war with the Spirit of Party. The genius of the gospel is lofty, large and free. It owns no affinity with whatever is selfish or malignant, in thought or life. Its home is in the heavens; and it will not be bound by the narrow conceptions of men, nor stoop to please their illiberal passions. Study it; embrace it; make it your spirit-mould, where you may take your proper shape for time, and also for eternity. It is the MIND of JESUS CHRIST himself. There was no Party Spirit there. As well might we expect to meet with it in Heaven!