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THE DUTY

OF PRAYING FOR OUR RULERS;

A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE CITY OF
NEW-ORLEANS, ON SABBATH THE 21ST MAY, 1843;

BY THE

REV. W. A. SCOTT, A. M.

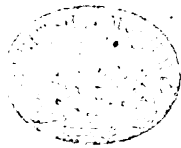
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PASTOR OF THE SAID CHURCH.

NEW-ORLEANS.

TOY, PRINTER, LAFAYETTE PRINTING OFFICE.

1843.



CORRESPONDENCE.

AT an adjourned meeting of a portion of the members of the Presbyterian Church and congregation of the City of New-Orleans, held at the office of C. C. Lathrop Esq. on Wednesday afternoon the 24th May, 1843;—C. C. Lathrop in the chair, and George O. Sweet, Secretary.

THE following Preamble and Resolutions, offered by Mr. C. D. Buck, and seconded by Mr. L. M. Spring, were unanimously adopted.

Whereas, It is the opinion of the meeting that the publication, and distribution of the sermon delivered by the Rev. W. A. Scott, on Sabbath morning last, "On the duty of praying for our rulers," would greatly conduce to mitigate the vices prevailing in our city—to correct erroneous impressions abroad, as to the character of New-Orleans—and especially, to promote the interest of good government and of religion, wherever its pages might circulate, therefore,

Resolved—That a committee of three be appointed to wait upon the Rev. Mr. Scott, in behalf of this meeting, and to solicit a copy of the Sermon for publication.

Resolved—That Messrs J. W. Stanton, E. Macpherson and C. C. Lathrop, compose the committee;—and that the committee, if Mr. Scott grants a copy of the same for publication, be and is hereby requested to collect such subscriptions as may be necessary to publish one thousand copies, and to direct such publication to be made,—and that the Sermon be distributed among the Subscribers in numbers proportional to their subscriptions, after reserving for the use of Mr. Scott, one hundred copies of the same.

Resolved—That the committee above named, be and is hereby requested to transmit to Rev. W. A. Scott, a copy of the foregoing preamble and resolutions.

On motion, the meeting then adjourned.

CHAS. C. LATHROP,
Chairman.

GEORGE O. SWEET,
Secretary.

REVEREND W. A. SCOTT,

DEAR SIR,—In pursuance of the foregoing, we have to request, that you will favor us with the manuscript of the discourse referred to, at your earliest convenience.

And much oblige,

Yours, very truly,

J. W. STANTON,

EDW. MACPHERSON,

CHAS. C. LATHROP.

} Committee.

New-Orleans, May 26, 1843.

New-Orleans, 29th May, 1843

GENTLEMEN.—I have the happiness to acknowledge your favor of the 26th inst. communicating to me the resolutions of a number of my fellow-citizens, concerning my discourse on the *duty of praying for our rulers*, and requesting a copy for publication. Deeply sensible of the many imperfections of the discourse, but relying upon your judgment, and being sincerely desirous of contributing all within my power to the well-being of our city, and of my fellow men, I herewith submit a copy to your disposing.

I am, gentlemen, your fellow-citizen,

With much respect,

W. A. SCOTT.

MESSRS J. W. STANTON,
E. MACPHERSON,
C. C. LATHROP,

} Committee.

P R E F A C E .

THE following discourse was prepared and preached after the author's usual method, in the midst of numerous pastoral duties. It was written without any thought of its publication. In permitting it to come before the public, the author departs from the general rule, which he thought best to adopt for himself in the beginning of his ministry. The reason of this departure may be found in the foregoing correspondence.

May the divine blessing be richly multiplied upon all our rulers and our beloved country.

THE DUTY

OF PRAYING FOR OUR RULERS.

I EXHORT THEREFORE, THAT, FIRST OF ALL, SUPPLICATIONS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSIONS, AND GIVING OF THANKS BE MADE FOR ALL MEN: FOR KINGS, AND FOR ALL THAT ARE IN AUTHORITY; THAT WE MAY LEAD A QUIET AND PEACEABLE LIFE IN ALL GODLINESS AND HONESTY. FOR THIS IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR; WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, AND TO COME UNTO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.

I Timothy, II; 1--4.

THE learned Jeremy Taylor, in his rules and advices to the clergy, gives the following admonition: "Let every minister be careful to observe and vehement in reproving those faults of his Parishioners, of which the laws cannot, or do not, take cognizance, such as are, many degrees of intemperate drinking, gluttony, riotous living, expenses above their ability, pride, bragging, lying in ordinary conversation, covetousness, peevishness, and hasty anger, and such like." If the good bishop had lived in our times, he would doubtless have put into this catalogue, pertness of children, want of reverence for gray hairs and respect to superiors, profane swearing, duelling, desecration of the Sabbath, breach of trust, seduction, treachery, peculation, cheating, repudiation, bankruptcy with full hands, and the not honoring and praying for our rulers, *and the such like.* The reason which he gives is this: "For the word of God searches deeper than the laws of men; and many things will be hard to prove by the measures of courts,

which are easy enough to be observed by the watchful and diligent eye and ear of the guide of souls.”*

First of all, (ante omnia, Beza,) signifies not so much the order of time in prayer, as the importance of the subject.

The Apostle uses four words, *supplications*, *prayers*, *intercessions*, and *giving of thanks for all men*.

By *supplications* we may understand, prayers for averting evil.

By *prayers*, pleading with God for those things temporal and spiritual which are useful to us.

By *intercessions*, prayers in behalf of others.

By *giving thanks*, praise to God as the giver of every good and every perfect gift, for all the mercies which we and our fellow citizens have received—especially for our liberty, laws and institutions—for our national character and prosperity, and for the wisdom and virtue of our statesmen, and the courage and patriotism of our soldiers, and the peace and purity of our churches.

We may learn from the various parts of prayer of which the Apostle speaks, that no set form of words has been given in the Sacred Scriptures, which we are bound to use and no other. *First*, because, we find no such form in the Scriptures, nor in use by the disciples and early christians. The Lord’s Prayer is not given exactly alike by the Evangelists. The first Christians prayed as the Spirit gave them utterance and enlargement of heart according to their necessities and circumstances. There is no prescribed liturgy in the Bible.—It may be a help to our infirmities to use a form of sound words and pious petitions in our prayers. There is certainly no objection to the use of the Lord’s Prayer, and other forms, if the individual is unable to pray without them, or to give proper expressions to his own

* His Works, vol. III. p. 712.

thoughts. But we are not straitened to any form of words, human or divine, in our religious exercises, for *secondly*, here the Apostle enjoins supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, and yet neither he nor any other of the inspired writers has furnished us with the form of words in which these divers acts of worship are to be performed. A duty is enjoined, but the form or manner of doing it is not specified—it is to be ascertained from the spirit and examples of holy Scripture.

In the text, a duty is enjoined and the reason given. *The duty is to offer prayer for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority.* The relation of subject and magistrate resembles very much in kind, if not in degree, the relation of child and parent. The very same reasons in part, which bind the child to reverence and obey the parent, bind the subject to obey and pray for the magistrate. Many of the old divines, especially among the Puritans, were of opinion, that the commandment which says, “Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,” includes our rulers. It is certainly true that the duty of praying for rulers, implies the duty of praying for all properly constituted authorities in the church and the world—parents, teachers, legislators, judges, officers of the army and the navy—and for all that are possessed of wealth, learning or talent, or any other consideration that gives them influence among their fellow-men.

The reason given for enforcing the duty is very similar to the reason given for obeying parents—temporal as well as spiritual blessings are promised. First, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Secondly, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. To offer prayer for constituted

authorities is good in itself, because it is useful to ourselves and to the public, and it is acceptable, accompanied with a godly life, in the sight of God our Saviour. This is the highest of all sanctions; and what is well pleasing to God, is the supreme good and happiness of man. Duty and interest are always united.

A third reason is the encouragement offered.

That God *will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.* That is, *God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.*

Divine mercy is offered alike to the beggar and the prince, to the slave and to the master, to all without money and without price. And since salvation is offered to all, that some of all classes, every one that repents and believes, may be saved; therefore God wills that the Gospel should be preached to every creature, and that all men should be the subjects of our prayers.

It is assumed in this discourse, there is a God, who is the Supreme Governor of the Universe; that prayer is instrumental in procuring his blessings;—that our forefathers were Protestants, and that they were men of prayer. Their school-houses, judicial benches and legislative halls, and battle-fields were consecrated with prayer. It is assumed also, that what Cicero and Montesquieu call virtue, but what bible-taught politicians call religion, is essential to the well-being of society. Religion and virtue are the main pillars and foundation of public peace and prosperity. If any doubt on this point, let them read, not the rantings of a bigot, nor the superfluities of a schoolman, nor the harangues of political clergymen, but the “Vindication of Natural Society” and “Reflections on the Revolution in France” by Edmund Burke, and doubt no more.*

* These papers are as remarkable for philosophical acumen, profound research, extensive and minute knowledge, as they are for eloquence. See the works of Edmund Burke—New York, 1836, vol. 1, pp. 13 and 456.

Although it is not my purpose to consider the character of our rulers, nor to examine their leading principles as politicians, nor to discuss the theory of government, nor to enforce the duty of obedience to civil authority, still it is here assumed that civil government is necessary to the welfare of society. That it is the guardian of the public peace and the security of every man's person, property, and privileges. It is by the exercise of civil authority that we are secured in our civil rights, public interests and domestic institutions. My chief purpose is to insist upon **THE DUTY OF PRAYING FOR OUR RULERS.**

Whether phrenology or animal magnetism can account for it or not, it is certainly true that man is prone to go from one extreme to another. The safe medium he is rarely content to observe.

Whenever the Church and the State have been united, manifold evils have resulted, alike disastrous to civil liberty and ecclesiastical purity, wherefore since the church has been happily freed from the trammels of State, she has ceased to feel sufficient interest in the State. Pious men have given up the management of political affairs too much to the irreligious, and the members of Christian churches have not looked for sound principles in the men seeking their suffrages, nor have they sought, as was their duty, the divine blessing upon their rulers. It is not agreeable to a pious man to forego the quietness of his home and the devotions of the altar, and bear the heat and burden of political strife, yet some should certainly be found of self denial and grace enough to engage in political life, and yet preserve their Christian character above suspicion. Pious men must seek offices of power and trust for the public good, or our government will fall into the hands of the ungodly, and then the curse of the Almighty will rest upon it. I would not be misunderstood. I do not say that any denomination of Christians should array themselves as a

political party, and cast their votes for such candidates only as can pronounce the Shibboleths of their sect. I say no such thing. This is to be deprecated. I only say that pious men of ability and sound principles should be selected to administer affairs of state. There is no one that would go further than myself to keep the Church of Christ free from all connection with the state. No body of men are more earnestly and zealously attached to the institutions of our country than the Presbyterian clergy. Presbyterians at the time of the American Revolution were ardently attached to the cause of liberty. Nine of the bravest and best officers of the southern division of the revolutionary army were elders in the Presbyterian Church.*

Not a few of our pastors left their pulpits and led their congregations to the battle-field for their country. One of the signers of the Declaration of Independence was John Witherspoon, President of the College of New Jersey, and Doctor of Divinity in the Presbyterian Church. The historian Bancroft† says “the faith of Calvin has ever been feared as the creed of republicanism.” And Bishop Andrews saith, “Calvin neither liked a pope-king, nor a king-pope, nor do we.”‡

The bible, and the bible only is the religion of Presbyterians. They believe that “God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary

* Gen. Morgan, Gen. Pickens, Cols. Campbell, Williams, Cleaveland, Shelby, Sevier, Bratton and Major Dickson, were all elders in the Presbyterian Church. Nine braver and better officers never bore arms for their country, or led braver and better troops, the body of whom was collected from Presbyterian settlements. Marion and Huger were Huguenots. In further proof of the part Presbyterians took in favor of the American Revolution, read the patriotic addresses of the synod of New-York and Philadelphia, then the highest body in the church, to the people under their care, encouraging them to patience and endurance for conscience' sake, and calling upon them to stand fast to their country's cause as the cause of God and man.

† See Bancroft's *His. U. States*, Vol. II, Chap. xiii, p. 174. Vol. III, Chap. xx, p. 121,

‡ Calvinus autem ut papam-regem, ita regem-papam non probavit, &c.

Andrew's *Tortura Torti*, quoted in *Baxter's Works*, vol. vi, p. 85.

to his word, or beside it in matters of faith or worship. They consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable. They do not even wish to see any religious constitution aided by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security, and at the same time, be equal and common to all others." "Synods and councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical: and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth."*

If left to her choice, the Presbyterian Church in the United States would have no relation with the state.— Her history for near three hundred years is replete with struggles for liberty. There is not a sect of Christians in the world, that has so little Jesuitism among them. They have none of the clanish spirit. There is no denomination so exempt from sectarianism; none so free from a proselyting spirit; none more ready to unite with all evangelical denominations in benevolent and literary enterprises; and none more signalized by deeds of patriotism—none whose escutcheon is emblazoned with more noble acts of heroic suffering, and instances of triumphant dying for conscience' sake.

Witness the martyr-like stand taken by the Church of Scotland. She has most nobly given up all but truth and conscience for the Gospel's sake. She has voluntarily exiled herself from her houses of worship, the venerable piles of her sainted worthies, and gone into the fields and vales and caves and mountains, and sepulchres of her fathers to worship God in purity, rather than have the patronage of a corrupt and ambitious government. O Scotland, thy gory conventicles, the bleached bones, the dying orisons of thy saints, and the self-sacrificings and sufferings of thy people, shall come up for an ever-

* Confession of Faith and Form of Government. Chap. xxxi, sec. 4, and Chap. i, sec. 1, pp. 159, 402.

lasting memorial for thee before the Lord of hosts, and He will appear for thy deliverance!

The duty of praying for our rulers.

1. We believe neither in the supremacy of the pope, nor in the divine right of kings; but we do believe that the *powers that be are ordained of God*. "The Heavens do rule. The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will. Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another. A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps. The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."*

Statesmen and politicians cast up crowns and play for kingdoms, and calculate upon their chances, and boast of their acumen and foresight, but Jehovah alone is King of kings, and the Most High alone is the Supreme Disposer of thrones and powers, principdoms and dominations. The flight of the tallest archangel before the Eternal Throne, and the immense sweep of comets and planets through the highest heavens are not more certainly directed by an Almighty hand, than are the evolutions of the sparrow. It is a hand Almighty that crowns the angels with goodness and glory, and it is nothing less that paints the tulip and the rose, and feeds the young ravens when they cry. It is the all-seeing eye that directs the torch of discovery which philosophy bears round the globe, and kindles up on the outskirts of creation beacon lights for the advancement of coming generations; and it is nothing less that takes knowledge of and supplies the wants of the pious. The Lord knoweth them that are His. He approveth of their way. He numbereth the hairs of their head. His ear is ever open to their cry, His eye is ever upon them for good, and his hand is always stretched for their relief.

* Dan. iv, 32. Ps. lxxv, 6, 7. Prov. xvi. 9, 33.

The powers that be are ordained of God. That is, pious rulers are raised up as God's ministers for good; and wicked rulers are permitted as a scourge and chastisement for their people's sins.

In the world we often see the poisoned chalice emptied by those who drugged it for others.

He that diggeth a pit falleth into it. Haman's gallows for Mordecai was the instrument of his own execution. The very effort of our own evil thoughts—of the vaulting ambition of wicked men—

“O'erleaps itself

And falls on t'other side—”

so it was with Pharaoh, with Nebuchadnezzar, and with Pilate, and with many others. Wicked men may be raised to power, and they may propose to themselves mighty schemes by which to extend and concentrate their influence, and they may labor most perseveringly for their accomplishment, and with the consciousness of success walk in the palace of their imagination and say: “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?”* But there is an over-ruling Providence, just and good, that guides, nevertheless, the wheels of the universe, and brings harmony out of the seeming chaos of human affairs. Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar were as truly the servants of God, in accomplishing his will as Moses and Daniel. Surely the Lord maketh the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he restraineth.

“There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hue them how we will.”

The civil power is in some sort the representative of the Divine government. Our rulers are the image of the Supreme Ruler. Magistrates are God's officers. To render them that respect and homage which is well

* Dan. iv, 29, 30.

pleasing in his sight is to acknowledge His Providence. It is an act of religious worship. It is an act of homage to God from whom all power emanates. It is an act of adoration. It is then a duty as well as a privilege to offer thanksgiving to Almighty God for our laws, liberties and institutions, and most worthy praise to His holy name for the warriors and statesmen, patriots and pious men that He has raised up for us, and to pray fervently for our rulers—for their personal welfare and the happiness of their families, and for the divine blessings to rest upon their official labors.

2. *To pray for our rulers is an act of loyalty.* As it is our duty to reverence and obey them, so it is our duty to pray for them. No external form of respect can so fully demonstrate our affections for them as the pouring out of the desires of our heart before the Lord for their welfare. Nothing can be a stronger argument of the esteem and consideration in which we hold them than the practice of praying for them. It is a practice without fee or emolument. It is difficult to conceive of any act so purely free from sinister motives, as the making of intercessions to Almighty God for our rulers.* Even heathen princes have required the prayers of their subjects in their behalf. Thus, in Ezra we find a decree of the king of Persia, charging his officers to furnish the Jewish elders with sacrifices—all “that which they have need of, both young bullocks and rams, and lambs for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven; wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: that they may offer sacrifices of

* “As he who is not loyal to the king, can never well obey his officers; so he that subjecteth not his soul to the original power of his Creator, can never well obey the derivative power of earthly governors.” “Magistrates are as truly God’s officers as preachers; and therefore as he that heareth preachers, heareth Him, so he that obeyeth his rulers obeyeth Him.” See much more on this point, in Baxter’s Works, London, 1830, vol. vi. pp. 37, 38, et Seq.

sweet savours unto the God of Heaven, and pray for the life of the king and of his sons.”*

And so, also, Pliny informs us concerning the Roman emperors, even in their heathenish state. “We have,” says he, “been wont to make vows for the eternity of the empire, and for the welfare of the citizens, yea for the welfare of the princes, and in their welfare for the eternity of the empire.”†

Pious rulers, and all who acknowledge the Supreme Government of God, desire an interest in the prayers of their people. And even those who seem not to feel their dependence upon the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, are pleased to have their people pray for them, for it is an act of loyalty that few will perform who are not sincere. It is a decent testimony of respect towards them, and greatly tends to establish their authority and secure obedience to their commands. How can we sincerely honor and reverence our rulers, if we have no heart to offer up prayers for them to Him who has required us to pray for all men, especially for rulers and all that are in authority? It is the Divine command, that “*every soul* be subject unto the higher powers, not only for wrath, but also for conscience’ sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.” It is an act of loyalty and patriotism, and of gratitude and obedience to God, and of justice and charity towards our rulers to pray for them. How can we be faithful to our rulers, if we are not obedient to the Most High, by whom princes rule and judges decree justice”

* Ezra, vi. 9, 10.

† “Nuncupare vota et pro æternitate imperii, et pro salute civium, imo pro salute principum, ac propter illos pro æternitate imperii solebamus.”—PLIN. PANEG.

If we sincerely and habitually pray for our country, we shall daily grow in attachment to it, and if we daily remember our rulers in our devotions, we shall not fail to love and obey them. To neglect this duty is to be wanting in patriotism and loyalty, as well as in obedience to the Divine commandments. The best Christian is the best patriot, the most faithful subject and the bravest warrior. A Christian is truly "the highest style of man."

I exhort that—prayer be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3. It has been the practice of the Church in all ages to pray for magistrates, and to hold them in all due consideration. It is a duty taught in the bible both by precept and example. God commanded the people by his prophet, when the Jews were conquered by the king of Babylon, and carried away captives, "Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." The Scriptures abound in instances of the efficacy of prayer, both in regard to public and private blessings. Thus Abraham's prayer healed Abimelech and his family of barrenness; the prayers of Moses quenched the fire and cured the bitings of the fiery serpents, and so of the prayers of Joshua, of Hannah, of Elijah, of Elisha, and of others. The prayers of Asa discomfited a million of Arabians, and those of Jehosaphat destroyed a numerous army of his enemies by his own hands, and those of Hezekiah brought down an angel from heaven to cut off the Assyrians, and those of Manasseh restored him to his kingdom, and those of Esther saved her people from the brink of ruin, and those of Nehemiah inclined a pagan king's heart to favor his pious designs, and those of Daniel obtained for him visions, and the interpretation of dreams. Noah and Job and Samuel, and a host of

saints have been powerful through much prayer, and as princes have prevailed with God. "All things," says the blessed Saviour, "whatsoever we shall ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive—He that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." "As the good bishop," says Dr. Barrow, "observing St. Austin's mother, with what constancy and passionateness she did pray for her son, being then engaged in ways of error and vanity, did encourage her, saying, *It is impossible that the son of these devotions should perish*: so may we hopefully presume, and encourage ourselves, that a prince will not miscarry, for whose welfare many good people do earnestly solicit; *Fieri non potest ut princeps istarum lacrymarum pereat.*"*

It is a remarkable saying of a Jewish master, "Pray for the happiness of the kingdom or government; for if it were not for the fear of that, men would devour one another alive." And Josephus tells us, that "when the Jews were made subject to the Romans (though it was by conquest) twice a day they offered up sacrifices for the life and safety of the emperor." The apostle in the text directs that first of all "prayers, supplications and intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority." Here is a positive command. The apostolic constitutions, a very old work, although not the work of the Apostles themselves, speaks of the prayers of the Church, on communion occasions, for rulers. Tertullian assures us the "ancient Christians always prayed for all the emperors, that God would grant them a long life, a secure reign, a safe family, valiant armies, a faithful senate, a loyal people, a quiet world, and whatever they as men, or as emperors, could wish. This they did," says he, "even for their persecutors, and often even in the pangs of the most cruel suffering and death."

* Dr. Barrow's Works, vol. i, serm. x, p. 95. Et sic etiam. "Si Stephanus non orasset, ecclesia Paulum non habuisset."

Chrysostom says of the Christians of his time: "That all communicants did know how every day, both at even and morning, to make supplications for all the world, and for the emperor, and for all that are in authority."*

Lactantius saith to Constantine, "We with daily prayers do supplicate God, that he would first of all keep thee, whom he hath willed to be the keeper of things; then that he would inspire into thee a will whereby thou mayest ever persevere in the love of God's name; which is salutary to all, both to thee for thy happiness, and to us for our quiet."†

So Cyprian: "We pray to God not only for ourselves, but for all mankind, and particularly for the emperors."

And Origen: "We pray for kings and rulers, that, with their royal authority, they may be found possessing a wise and prudent mind."

So also the ancient liturgies contain divers prayers for the emperors. And the confessions of faith and directories for public worship of all Protestant Churches recognize due obedience to magistrates and the duty of praying for them.

"We are to pray for the whole Church of Christ upon earth, for *magistrates*, and ministers, for ourselves, our brethren, yea, our enemies, and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter; but not for the dead, nor for those that are known to have sinned the sin unto death."—*Larger Cat. ans. to 183 ques., and also the ans. to the 127 ques.*‡

4. It is but common Christian charity to pray for our rulers, *first*, because they are but men—our fellow-men, and *secondly*, they are more in need of our prayers than

* For the originals of Tertullian and Chrysostom, see Dr. Barrow's Works, vol. 1, p. 97.

† Lactant. vii, 26.

‡ See Vindications of Protestants in the point of obedience &c., by Peter Du Moulin, D. D. An excellent work, which should be re-published in this country.

common men. "There are no men," says Dr. Alexander, "among us who would be rendered more useful by Christian piety, than those who are entrusted with power and official influence. They are exalted above their fellow-citizens, and should be exemplary, in proportion to their elevation. Those who are delegated by the people to make laws for the protection of life, property, and liberty, have an authority given them which is accompanied with a fearful responsibility. So few who engage in political concerns are governed by a regard to the glory of God, and the best interests of men, that the requiring that such would be pious men, sounds strangely and will appear unto many a novelty. That ministers of the Gospel, and other chief officers should be religious men all will admit, but that legislators and lawyers should be such seems not to be evident. But there is no class of men in society to whom piety is more necessary and important than civil rulers. They need this ennobling principle to enable them steadily to pursue those objects which are connected with the public welfare."*

There are people who seem to consider riches and titles and offices of honor and trust, as vices of themselves, and that poverty and obscurity are much the same thing as godliness. They presume on the goodness of God to give them eternal life in the world to come, simply because they have evil things here. They persuade themselves that all men above them are like the rich man in the Gospel, who fared sumptuously every day and was clothed in fine linen, but who died and lifted up his eyes in hell being in torment; and that they themselves are like Lazarus. As though God would send men to perdition merely because they were rich and possessed of influence and standing among their fellow-men, and save the poor and wretched, mere-

* See New-York Observer, 1st page, Feb. 4, 1843,

ly for being poor. This class of individuals consider themselves as the supporters of the rich, whom they look upon as the caterpillars of society. To use their own style, the rich or those entrusted with wealth and honors live upon their labors, like drones in a hive, and salaried officers, whether in the state or the university, or on the bench, they consider as mice and vermin that eat the honey, which they, the poor laboring bees, have long been gathering. Such envious—I should have said wicked thoughts, are as far from truth, from just views of society, and from the principles of the Bible, as they are evidence of a mean and contracted spirit. These very persons by indulging such jealousies show that the grapes are sour. They would act on the dog in the manger principle if they could. They would themselves be what they suppose the rich and the great to be if they knew how to attain it. The most domineering and haughty are usually such as have been by some freak of fortune raised to wealth and power from humble circumstances. The most cruel masters are such as have once been slaves, but are now set over their *quondam* fellow-servants. The most haughty aristocrats—those that make the loudest pretensions, are often the merest upstarts. Families of the greatest pride are not unfrequently such as have once been overseers, and chambermaids and stewards. I am not objecting to every one improving his condition, if he do it honestly. I am not opposed to the apprentice becoming master, and the overseer, owner. I only mention these cases, to show that the prejudice and ill will, which the laboring classes are too prone to indulge against the rich, the learned or the professional classes of society, are unjust, for there is no royal road to knowledge and power. The door is open to all. The highest gift of the freest, greatest nation on the globe, may be obtained by the poorest free-born man child of America. These prejudices too, I

am sorry to say, are proof of as much depravity in the laboring people, not as may actually exist among office-holders and the learned professions, but as they are supposed to possess. Those who are most apt to complain know not their own hearts. *Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?* And yet says an old writer, "the dog did do that very thing." The bird flies high, but the arrow can bring it down; the fish swims deep, but the hook can bring it up: but the human heart, who can comprehend? It is an exceeding deep, who can find it out?

The Bible teaches us that riches and worldly consideration are not absolutely inconsistent with piety; but that it is more difficult for a man to be pious, who is encumbered with the possessions and honors of this world. This is perfectly obvious. But many of the pious men named in the Bible, as Abraham and Lot, Job and David, were men of great wealth. Many kings and politicians, and lawyers and physicians and philosophers and scholars, have been eminently pious men. Such instances may be rare, but they are by no means impossible. Poverty is not always accompanied with godliness, but rather the reverse. *Godliness with contentment is great gain.* Rags and filth and sin are much oftener found on the same person, than that a righteous man should be found begging bread. A man is not to lose his soul because he has estates, but for placing his affections upon them, and the neglect of his duty toward God and his fellow-men. Nor is a man to be saved, because he is as poor as Lazarus, but because he is pious in his poverty. The Gospel knows no distinction of persons according to the flesh. All are concluded under sin. The same terms are propounded to all, whether rich or poor: namely, repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.

And as it is in grace, so it is in society. We are all members one of another. We are all parts of the same great web. We all have need of one another. I have need of you, and you have need of me. The happiness of each one is included in the well-doing of every one. Every one is his brother's keeper. In this great family there is, however, a great diversity of gifts and offices. One is the head to do the thinking, and his thinking is really as much to the productive industry of the country as the ploughing of the farmer. Another is the hand to do the working, and his working is as essential to the political and moral well-being of society, as is the thinking of the other. And they are both equal.

Our rulers then are doubly entitled to our daily intercessions at the throne of the heavenly grace. They are *bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh*. They are the creatures of the great public. They are of us, but they are above us. Being of us, they are but men, fallible like ourselves. Being above us, they are by that very elevation, the more in need of our charity and prayers.

First. Their duties are peculiarly difficult. The affairs which they are called upon to guide and settle are of great weight and importance, involving in their decisions the well-being of hundreds and thousand and millions of their fellow men. Measures of great consequence have to be examined, discussed, proposed, adopted. And even when there is much wisdom and ability and courage, and the purest intentions, it is not always an easy matter to hear a cause upon its true merits, and render a righteous decision. The burdens of office to a high minded virtuous man are never light.— They that are great among their fellow-men, are servants of all. Those possessed of estates and honors, talents and influence are also possessed of vast entailed responsibilities. Nor can they escape from responsi-

bility. It is as inseparable from them as their identity, and as lasting as their immortality. *He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.* Much more does he increase his cares and labors that increaseth his riches and heapeth up honors, and runneth after and gaineth the homage of his fellow-men. Our rulers are more to be pitied, to be loved and prayed for than to be envied. "The world continually doth assault them with all its advantages; with all its baits of pleasure, with all its enticements to pride and vanity, to oppression and injustice, to sloth, to luxury, to exorbitant self-will and self-conceit, to every sort of vicious practice. Their eminency of state, their affluence of wealth, their uncontrollable power, their exemption from common restraints, their continual distractions and encumbrances by varieties of care and business, their multitude of obsequious followers, and scarcity of faithful friends to advise or reprove them, their having no obstacles before them to check their wills, to cross their humors, to curb their lusts and passions, are so many dangerous snares unto them; wherefore they do need plentiful measures of grace, and mighty assistances from God, to preserve them from the worst errors and sins; into which, otherwise, 'tis almost a miracle if they are not plunged."—"All princes having many avocations and temptations hindering them to pray enough for themselves, do need supplemental aid from the devotions of others."—*Dr. Barrow, ib., pp. 93, 94.*

Secondly. They are exposed to peculiar dangers. As their field of labor is enlarged, so are the facilities for the gratification of appetite and passion increased, and the sources of temptation multiplied. And just as they are elevated above their fellow-men and above their former condition in society, they are apt to forget their responsibility. Sometimes the height makes them dizzy. Sometimes even a trip to Washington makes our repre-

sentatives forget their constituents and their kindred.— Sometimes a voyage to Europe absolutely turns the heads of republicans. They come home full of lords and ladies, fêtes and routs, and stars and ribbons and buttons, and all such anti-American trumpery. Now their own dear native land grows nothing worthy of them. Their dress and china must be purchased in London or Paris. Alas, poor human nature! It is not every one of us that can bear elevation. He that can swim in his father's mill pond, may be carried down with violence by the muddy turbulence of our own magnificent river. It is an observation of old Humphrey, that "like paper kites in the air, we do pretty well while checked with a strong string; but cut the string, and let us have our own way, and, like the poor kite, we come tumbling down into the mire." He that does very well with a thousand, may be utterly ruined by a hundred thousand. "It is harder," says some one, "for that bird to fly, that hath many pound weights tied to keep her down, than that which hath but a straw to carry to her nest. It is harder mounting heavenwards with lordships and kingdoms, than with less impediments." Even those that can bear an elevation to power are under temptations to make their power the license for doing whatsoever they will. Whereas in fact, the greater power and authority any one hath, the less liberty he hath to do any thing that is wrong or of questionable integrity.* For the greater the power and authority that God hath invested any man with, the greater are his obligations to be good himself, and to do good to his fellow-men, because the greater is his influence and means to do good to others. The more influence a man's example has, the greater are his obligations to set a good one. What a delightful sight would it be to see those, who are eminent in place and power, continually setting an example

* *In maxima quaque fortuna minimum licere.*—CICERO.

of godliness! What would it not do for the moral character of our city, if our authorities would all respect the Sabbath day and the institutions of the Bible?

It will be admitted that those who are most worthy of our charities, are the proper objects of benevolence.— So also, it is our duty to pray for all men, then especially for our rulers, for they are *men*; they are burdened with peculiar labors and trials, and exposed to peculiar dangers. They are like sentinels placed upon the top of a barren mountain, exposed to the merciless peltings of every storm for your safety, while you dwell quietly in the flowery vale below. The most fortunate of them have open enemies and insidious foes; surrounded by the jealous, the narrow-minded or by disappointed office seekers. Beset by the officious servility of parasites and flatterers, who soothe them in their faults, and humor them in their passions, and fire up their corrupt and vicious inclinations, whenever there is a possibility of advancing their own selfish designs.— Exposed to violence and treachery, the cares of office, and the temptations of place and power, who are so much in need of our prayers as our rulers?

Has not the ablest of them need to pray with Solomon: "Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this so great a people."— It is not by mere human wisdom and strength that man prevails. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Salvation is of the Lord. "There is," says the psalmist, "no king saved by the multitude of an host." Except the Lord keepeth the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain. Except the Lord preserve our laws and liberty and institutions, our army and navy, patriotic and brave as they are, will be but as chaff before the tempest.

There are peculiar reasons at this time, why we

should pray for our rulers. *First*, elections for the legislature and for congress are just at hand. The contest for another presidential election has already commenced. And yet it is due to ourselves to say that from ourselves, we have nothing to fear but our supineness. The American people are pre-eminently a law-keeping people.— This is proven by their reluctance to sever themselves from the mother country, and by their whole history since. In 1840 the whole country was in a political ferment. The very elements of republicanism seemed ready to melt. But the day for the election of the Chief Magistrate came. Millions of freemen cast their votes. The largest vote was cast that was ever given on the globe by freemen for a ruler. The crisis past. A well organized, powerful party were defeated. But no blood was shed. Every thing was quiet. The sovereigns having made their magistrate, returned to their palaces, to dwell under their own vine and fig tree, and do whatsoever was good in their own eyes. Such a spectacle men and angels had never before witnessed. With all the steel-clad keepers of the peace despots can feed to burn powder and burnish bayonets, a little borough election or country fair cannot be gotten through with in Europe, with as much quietness and decorum, as the election of an American Chief Magistrate. A hundred European subjects cannot elect a corporal with as little danger of bloodshed as seventeen millions of Americans can elect their president.

True, the world talks of our Lynch law, Mississippi gamblers, Arkansas tragedy, repudiation and want of public faith. True, a convent has been burned, a protestant minister has been stoned for preaching against Romanists, one or two printing establishments have been demolished; a few editors assaulted, and an abolitionist or two have been whipped or killed. These occurrences are indeed causes of pain and mortification. But

they do not prove that our institutions are a failure.— They do not prove that as a nation, we are not a law-abiding people. By no means. For

1. Observe, such occurrences are rare, the extent and character of our population considered.

2. Our press is trumpet-tongued, and our citizens are opened-mouthed to proclaim their own shame. The excesses of our countrymen are caught up and retailed with a hundred fold exaggeration to suit the purposes of ignorant or selfish politicians. But what do we know of Austria, of Italy, of Spain, of Russia—or even of Ireland, England and France? How much of the doings of arbitrary power is chronicled in those countries? nothing in the former, absolutely nothing, and in the latter but little that reaches us.

3. Our people are not restrained by the presence of an armed and numerous soldiery. Hired battalions are not quartered in our houses, or at the corners of our streets, nor are regiments of artillery ordered out on election days, after the manner of European countries. Our people are restrained by the majesty of law—by reverence to principle—by self-respect and a consciousness that they are commissioned in behalf of the unalienable rights of their own sovereignty to keep the peace. It is love of country, love of liberty, reverence for principle, the naked majesty of law, and not the point of the bayonet that preserves American institutions.—Intelligence and virtue and piety are our glory and our only defence.*

Secondly. It is foreign influence that we have to fear. European powers are jealous of us. Their aristocracies are declining. 1st, because their races are greatly diminished in numbers and enfeebled in intellect by their profligacy. The English peerage would scarcely

* Since writing this discourse I have met with an address by the Hon. Albert Gallatin, before the New-York Historical Society, Feb. 7th 1843, which contains some excellent thoughts on this point. They are recommended to the reader. AUTHOR.

have existed to this time, but that it is annually renewed by grafts from the people. And *secondly*, European aristocracies are declining, because the people are rising.—“The School-master” is indeed abroad, and with a lighted torch in his hand. The mass of mind is becoming enlightened, and as it becomes enlightened it begins to move and to speak. It hath already a millioned tone voice. The day will dawn when it shall call for a Luther or a Knox, a Cromwell, a Napoleon, or, which Heaven grant, a Washington; and when it calls it will be answered. Feudalism has long since gone down the skies. Despotism has lost its giant strength. The old foundations of consolidated king-craft and priest-craft are rocking to and fro, and must fall, and when they fall they will be as *water spilt on the ground, that cannot be gathered up again*. The chains of ignorance are broken. The literary millenium has begun. The march of society is onward. Power is leaving the hands of the few for the hands of the many. The day of the people’s power has come. Think not, however, that it will be a day without strife. Far from it. “Coming events,” have already “cast their shadows before.” “Would,” says one of your daily papers,* in one of those able editorials which occasionally electrify the public mind, “would that we could either dispel the deep forebodings of future evil that haunt our imagination, or awake our fellow-citizens to a participation in them. There are signs in the political firmament that augur events of startling magnitude, and treason is the dog star of the constellation in which the horoscope of republics is cast.” The times are in themselves peculiarly exciting. It admits no longer of doubt, that it is the settled purpose of Europeans to overturn the republican institutions of America. Our example is “pestiferous.” It is dangerous. What they have not been able to do as open enemies

* New-Orleans Bee of May 20th, 1843.

by fire and sword, they are now trying to do by intrigue. By exciting sectional jealousies, by meddling with our domestic institutions, and by colonizing whole bodies of their subjects amongst us;—not to become of us—not to become Americans, but to preserve their own language, prejudices and priest-craft as separate communities in our midst, states within states, to obtain the privileges of American citizens, and then become the tools of foreign despots in the midst of our country. The pope of Rome is still a temporal prince, and has more spiritual power at this moment than he has ever had since the reformation. The order of the Jesuits has been revived, and they are in our midst. It is believed that a large portion of the Church of England is essentially popish, and will unite with the Church of Rome. And strange as it is, there is even in republican America, an alarming sympathy for Oxford. We have seen a Roman bishop of this country lead the faithful penitents of his confessionals to the ballot box, and array his denomination as a political party for the accomplishment of his own sectarian purposes. I allude to Bishop Hughes of New-York. In our papers, Texas, Mexico, the Sandwich Islands, slavery, the tariff, British steamers and Paixhan guns are stereotyped paragraphs. In foreign papers, the Church of Scotland, Russia, China, Affghanistan, chartism, and the fortification of Paris, are the themes of the leading articles. The political horizon is by no means clear. There are many points to be adjusted between this country and England, and between the United States and Mexico. And it is more than probable, if the torch of war should again be lighted up between this country and Great Britain, that the watch-fires of the battle-field would burn around the globe. The battle-shout between England and America would be the call of all Europe to arms. And the result the Almighty only knows; most probably the downfall of one or both governments,

if not the entire remodelling of every government under heaven. And will not every philanthropist and every Christian pray that by these turnings and overturnings, the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, may be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose dominion is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. (Dan. vii, 27.)

5. To pray for our rulers is a duty to ourselves, as well as to them and to the public. The good of the commonwealth is greatly affected by the principles and character of its rulers.

Where the people are the sovereign, rulers are the creatures of their will. The nation lives and has its breathing in its rulers. In oriental style, a ruler is compared to a tall cedar, whose shadow is for protection and comfort; and his death is likened to its fall that shakes the earth. That is, the death of a wise and virtuous ruler is a great public calamity. It is an interrupting of the regular administration of the affairs of state. It is a loss to the public of precious experience, well-tryed abilities, patiently acquired confidence, and the consequent peril of putting public interests into hands untryed. Hence king David is called the *light of Israel*, and hence the people once said to him out of the overflowing of their patriotic hearts, *Thou art worth more than ten thousand of us*. And so also, Nehemiah and Daniel each complimented his sovereign by saying, *O king live for ever*, which is translated in England into *God save the Queen*. As when the sun shines brightly, the day is clear; as the ship is in good condition when out in open sea, with a good pilot, and sails crowded with properous breezes hastening toward the destined port, so the people are happy and prosperous when wise and good men guide the affairs of state. But wo to the land whose ruler is a child—weak, wayward, fickle.

The public welfare is essentially connected with the character and well doing of rulers. The honor and prosperity of rulers should be the glory of the people. They are inseparably united. The people cannot live happily, if their rulers are in peril. They mutually partake of each other's fortunes. They make but one civil and political body, and what part soever of it suffers, all the other parts sympathise.

Thus Tertullian* says, speaking to Gentile magistrates, "We pray for you, because with you the empire is shaken: and the other members of it being shaken, assuredly even we, how far soever we may be thought removed from the calamity, are found in some place of the fall." The very same consideration the apostle introduces as the reason why we should pray for our rulers, "I exhort you to make prayer for kings—that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

The connection between the moral character and prosperous administration of rulers and the happiness of the people is obvious, *first*, from their influence upon the people. Their example has great influence. "A king sitting in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes." "His power is the shield of innocence, the fence of right, the shelter of weakness and simplicity against violence and frauds. His very look is sufficient to advance goodness, and suppress wickedness." The example of a pious man in power is a living law to the people, and does more than ten thousand statutes in precept alone, to mould and fashion public sentiment. The political opinions, the moral sentiments, and the manners of our rulers are caught up, imitated and followed. If they are wise and good, sin is rebuked, and the righteous are encouraged. If they are duellists, if they are profane, Sabbath breakers, neglecters

* Tertul. Apol. c. 32.

of religion and given to much strong drink, the pious mourn, and the wicked are emboldened in their iniquities.

How lamentable that an Ex-President of the United States, and an Ex-Vice President, and a candidate for the highest office in the gift of the American people, should so far forget the respect, which they owe to the thousands of Christians in these United States, as to violate the sanctity of the Sabbath day when visiting our city! How much to be regretted, they should thus offend against the national character, and offer violence to the religious feelings of so many of their fellow citizens—not to say any thing of their conduct as a transgression of one of the positive commandments of Almighty God! It is impudence—it is an insult, fellow-citizens, to our moral character, as a city, for public men, itinerant lecturers and play actors, when they visit us, to take license to sin against the moral feelings and refinement of the city, and the laws of God. They take liberties here, they take no where else. They offer the most flagrant insult to the public sentiment of New Orleans, by presuming that it is ten times more depraved than it is. It is true, there is no other city in the Union where the Sabbath is desecrated by military parades as it is here—in what other city is the theatre opened on the Lord's day—where else has any one presumed to outrage public sentiment by dramatizing the end of the world, personating ineffable characters, and representing the most awful events spoken of in Holy Scripture, in the theatre.*

In what other city have science and philosophy been laid under contribution to raise and support a falling stage†—in what other city, do so large a number of the

* See theatrical advertisements for April the 20th, 21st, 23rd.

† Dr. Lardner delivered his lectures in the St. Charles Theatre, opened and closed with theatrical entertainments.

Our Council has granted 100 lbs. powder to Professor Grant, to make the experiment of a sub-marine explosion—which he takes occasion to use on the Sabbath day. See his advertisements in the papers.

daily prints defend the desecration of the Sabbath? And these things are so, because the citizens of New Orleans have not rebuked them. My fellow-citizens, these liberties taken with your moral sentiments under *pretence of respect to public opinion and a desire to please our inhabitants*, while it is a pandering to vice, is in fact a slander upon our character. Wicked as we are, we are not so wholly depraved as to scoff at holy things.

It is not so much the citizen, as our floating population, that gives us so unenviable a reputation. There is not deeper piety and greater moral worth and purer sentiments on the globe, than are to be found in New Orleans. The fault is, that they have not been embodied. Our citizens have not been jealous of their good name; they have not frowned upon those offering insult to their moral principles. Let every foreigner and distinguished individual that visits us, and endeavors to gain popularity by setting at naught the laws of God, be sternly rebuked. Decency, and self-respect, and religion require this at our hands.

How much like the moral courage and integrity of the man, and how much to his own praise and the character of the nation, was the conduct of the Hero of New Orleans, when on his late visit to the scene of his glory, he refused to assist in laying the corner stone of the monument to be erected to his memory on the Sabbath day. Instead of thus desecrating that holy day, his venerable head was seen reverently bowed in humble worship in your midst. For he had respect to the commandment which saith: "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work—but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work."

Secondly, the influence of rulers upon the people is obvious, from the close connection there is between their moral character and the happiness of the people.

Righteousness exalteth a nation, and establisheth the throne—when it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth, for by the blessing of the upright the city is exalted. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom. For the elect's sake, our Saviour informs us, the days of vengeance were shortened. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much—it is a munition of rocks for national defence. Now, since the Scriptures say so much of the piety of private persons, then how much more important is the example of pious rulers. Is it not said in the Bible, that God for David's sake, preserved Judah from destruction, even in the days of Hezekiah, when the king of Assyria invaded the land? God by the mouth of Isaiah declared: *I will defend the city of Jerusalem, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.* Who can tell how often God has spared our guilty land for his servant Washington's sake, and for the sake of the Huguenot and Pilgrim Fathers, whom he winnowed out from Europe, and brought over to this then wilderness continent, to give it the Gospel, and to make it blossom and bloom as the garden of the Lord.

There are numerous instances in the Holy Scriptures which teach us that there is a moral connection of merit and guilt between rulers and their people. Mutually each is rewarded for the virtues, or punished for the vices of the other. For the people's sin, sometimes misfortunes fall upon their ruler, and he is removed from them, or he brings upon them some calamity. Thus, Samuel said to the Israelites: *If ye do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.* And so, on the other hand, for the sins of rulers, the people are afflicted. Thus Solomon's iniquities brought evil to all Israel. And so also in the case of David, when he numbered the people; and of Aaron, when he made the golden calf and so also in regard to the sins of Saul and

Jeroboam. And of Manasseh, it is said, *notwithstanding all the good deeds of Josiah, still the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations wherewith Manasseh provoked him. And Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.*

We are too apt to impute all our misfortunes to our rulers, and take all prosperity to ourselves. We often blame the administration of affairs, when we are ourselves chiefly in fault. Where, as happily with us, the people elect their own rulers, there the people are more to blame than the rulers. If they place over themselves a weak and wicked man, they become partakers in all his evil deeds. If they give power into the hands of a wicked man, they sin themselves, and they cause him to sin, and partake in all his sins. Where there is such sovereignty, there is a fearful responsibility.

It is our duty to do good to all men as we may have opportunity—and to pray for all men; and, therefore, to do good to, and to pray for our rulers, for they are not stocks, nor stones, nor angels; but men—our fellow-men, and the more in need of our prayers, as their labors and cares are increased. To pray for our rulers is the cheapest, and yet the most effectual way of doing them good. However rich a man may be, he cannot dispense alms to every one; but he may enlarge his heart in prayer for the whole human race. “Our prayers can reach the utmost ends of the earth; and by them our charity may embrace all the world.” By prayer the widow and the orphan may become benefactors to the rich, and the humblest citizen heap the choicest gifts upon his ruler.

Since the breath of all men is in the hands of Him who fashioneth and turneth their hearts whithersoever He will, it is our duty and privilege to pray to God to direct our rulers in the right way, and incline their hearts to what is well pleasing in his sight—that they may so

administer justice with mercy as to secure peace of conscience and the approbation of the judge of all—that in health and prosperity they may long live; and finally after this life, attain everlasting joy and felicity where all the pious shall reign as kings for ever, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

In conclusion, my beloved hearers, as it is according to the Divine will that we should use means to obtain the blessings of Providence, so prayer is one of the appointed ways in which to seek the favor of God. As without prayer for ourselves, we cannot hope for the blessings of heaven; so without prayer for our rulers, we have no right to look for public blessings. Any person who is so wicked as not to ask for the Divine blessing, shows that he cares nothing about it. The city, legislature, or nation that does not acknowledge God in their official capacity as a civil and political body, by calling upon his name in prayer, and observing days of public thanksgiving and humiliation, and honoring the institutions of the bible, publicly declares that it sets no value upon 'he protection of Almighty God.* The hand of our God, says his holy word, *is upon all them for good that seek him, but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake Him. Them that honor me, I will honor, saith the Lord God of Israel, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* 24 JU 68

If it is our duty to pray for our rulers, certainly it is our duty to pray for ourselves. How pitiable is the condition of the man that lives without prayer—who prays not in his family—for his children, and for his own soul. If he continues prayerless he cannot go to heaven. No prayerless person can be saved. But it **“SHALL COME TO PASS, THAT WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD, SHALL BE SAVED.”**

* It is with much pleasure, and great respect for his feelings as a man and abilities as a Chief Magistrate, we observe that his excellency, Gov. Fitzpatrick, of Alabama, has appointed a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer. It speaks well for his head and his heart. It is to be hoped our own excellent Governor will also call upon the good people of Louisiana, each according to the rites of his denomination, to acknowledge and implore the protection of Almighty God.