

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE EVANGELICAL SOCIETY

OF THE

COLUMBIAN COLLEGE, D. C.

APRIL 6, 1835,

BY STEPHEN CHAPIN.

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1835.

COLUMBIAN COLLEGE, D. C. *April 7, 1835.*

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

The undersigned have been appointed a Committee, by the Evangelical Society of this College, to tender you their sincere thanks for your very able and highly interesting Address, delivered before the Society on the 6th instant, and to solicit a copy for publication. In the performance of this duty, we indulge the pleasing anticipation that you will comply with our request. We are anxious to circulate the discourse among the young men of our country, who are more particularly concerned in the future welfare of the Church; and we feel confident that a perusal of it will afford as much pleasure and profit as we experienced, while listening to its delivery. Accept, dear Sir, an assurance of our constant prayers for your success in the discharge of the arduous duties devolving upon you.

With sentiments of christian affection, we are, &c.

WILLIAM CAREY CRANE,
BENJAMIN F. BRABROOK,
JOSEPH S. WALTHALL,
FREEMAN G. BROWN,
ROBERT G. EDWARDS, } *Committee.*

Rev. Dr. CHAPIN,
President of Columbian College.

COLLEGE HILL, D. C. *April 14, 1835.*

MY YOUNG BRETHREN:

I comply with your request for a copy, for publication, of the Address, delivered before your Society on the 6th instant. I do so, because you are anxious to circulate it among the young men of our country, who are more particularly concerned in the welfare of the Church.

Praying that it may be the single purpose of your life to advance the cause of truth and righteousness,

I am, very affectionately,

Yours, in Christian bonds,

S. CHAPIN.

Messrs. WM. CAREY CRANE,
BENJ. F. BRABROOK,
JOSEPH S. WALTHALL,
FREEMAN G. BROWN,
R. G. EDWARDS, } *Committee.*

ADDRESS.

You have, my young brethren, assigned me a difficult subject. I will, however, out of a regard to your good, comply with your wishes, and address you this evening on the Spirit of the Age. By this we are to understand that moral habit, which so generally prevails at a given time, as to distinguish it from every other period. One epoch has been called the golden age, because in it the people were free, enjoying a perpetual season of blooming and fruit, and cultivated the spirit of peace and harmony. Another, the silver age, because it was licentious and wicked. Another, the brazen age, because it was violent, savage, and bloody. Another the heroic age, because its wars were conducted by national laws, and their evils greatly mitigated by civilization. And another, the iron age, because in it justice and honor had forsaken the earth. And we may add that, in modern times, one period is called the classic age, because it was distinguished by taste for studying the models of fine writing in the Greek and Roman literature. Another, the age of chivalry, because men were then distinguished for their heroic exploits in defending life and honor. And another, the age of discovery, because the success of Columbus in finding this new world, roused all Europe to go out in search of new regions of golden mines. Thus different moral habits, which have prevailed at different times, have divided history into separate ages, each bearing a name descriptive of its specific character.

What, then, is that leading feature, which now, in common, belongs to Pagans, Mahometans, Jews, Catholics, and Pro-

testants. In reply, I would say, that the history of all these communities has produced a general expectation among them, that some great change in human affairs is fast approaching. I am aware that expectation has ever been a powerful spring of conduct. The present day, then, is not, in reference to this general fact, distinguished by any newness in the principle of action. But still, I believe, that it is marked by the high degree of expectation which now prevails, respecting one common subject. I would, therefore, say, that the present unusually strong expectations concerning some momentous change in the moral condition of man is,—

The Spirit of the Age.

This expectation is excited among Pagans by the decaying influence of their religious systems. It is manifest, on a superficial acquaintance with their history, that they have lost their pristine power, and have long been on the wane. Multitudes have renounced them, as degrading follies, and multitudes more are equally convinced of their absurdity, but who still observe them, out of motives of private or public interest. Besides, Christianity has, at many points, made powerful attacks on the idolatrous world. The light of revelation has shot its beams into her dark dominions, and many of her nations have forsaken their temples, and embraced the Gospel as their only hope. The Bible is already translated into the most extensive languages of Pagan countries, and missionaries are going forth, distributing this word of life throughout their possessions. And this spreading light is to them a harbinger of ruin, as was the presence of the ancient ark of God among the Philistines, to Dagon and all his worshippers.

In the same way, a similar belief has been excited among the Mahometans, that some mighty revolution is approaching. The time was, when they made rapid strides towards universal dominion. But long since, this towering course has ceased, to be followed by a descending movement. Compare the present decrepit and shorn condition of the Ottoman Empire

with what it was, when the formidable Almansor sat on the splendid throne of Cordova in Spain, and threatened the overthrow of Christendom; and you will not wonder that a decay, so rapid and extensive, should be viewed as prophetic of final dissolution. Ever since the battle of Navarino, and even before, Mussulmen themselves acknowledge that their power and faith are fast declining, and will soon become extinct, unless prevented by some miraculous interposition. But these same facts awaken different expectations in the christian church. They view them as the fulfilment of ancient prophecy, making known, that the power of Mahometanism is to be gradually weakened by the force of public opinion, and thus, at the time of the end, to be broken without hand.

It is now about twelve hundred years since the Roman religion began its sway. By the most artful combinations of principles and ceremonies, it has taken a firm hold upon the human heart, and become mighty. For many centuries all the temporal sovereigns of the world received, at the foot of the papal throne, the terms on which they were to hold their sceptres. The Pope, in the zenith of his glory, wore his triple crown, to indicate his claimed dominion over heaven, earth, and hell. But the Reformation, under Luther, hurled him from this arrogant summit, and ever since that period his power has been gradually declining. What is the Catholic church now in any country within her pale, in speculating Germany, in infidel France, and in the priest-ridden Spain, Portugal, and Ireland, but a shattered engine, kept in feeble motion by artificial stimuli. This decay is so manifest, that it is acknowledged by their own adherents. But, instead of viewing it as a precursor of speedy death, they view it only as the lowest point in the ebb of their history, and that the returning tide will soon carry them to higher ground than they have ever yet occupied. It is under the expectation, that her youth is to be renewed like the eagle's, that the mother of harlots is now collecting all her remaining strength, and directing it to

bear on points, where there is the greatest prospect of success. It is under this delusion that she is now pouring out her treasures, and sending out her troops of well-trained Jesuits and Priests, to save civilized heretics from the pains of eternal death. Our own country is flooded with her agents, who openly avow their purpose to erect a line of churches from the Gulf of Mexico to the St. Lawrence, and another, crossing it at right angles, extending from the Atlantic to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and thus to save this whole land from the doom of heresy by erecting upon it the Catholic cross.

But how differently is this whole matter viewed by Protestant believers. Knowing from the word of God, that the man of sin is to reign twelve hundred and sixty years, and that we now cannot be far from the close of this period, they view all the movements in the mystic Babylon, as the struggles of expiring life. And they already antedate the song of Heaven and of the holy apostles and prophets, when God, with violence, shall cast down the great city Babylon, that it be found no more at all, and with prophetic eye they see the pure church rise upon her ruins in endless perspective.

If we turn our attention to the Jews, we shall find that they also are indulging stronger hopes than ever, that the time of their dispersion will soon close. For nearly eighteen hundred years, they have been scattered to the four winds of heaven. But their own scriptures lead them to believe that they are soon to be gathered, and restored to their ancient land, where they are to become the principal agents in spreading the Gospel among those Gentiles, who have not heard the fame, nor seen the glory of God.

If we look abroad over the political community, we shall find that now, more than at any former time, it is agitated by strong expectations. The privileged ranks and adherents to legitimacy, are looking with intense anxiety to the movements of the friends of reform. They fear that the thrones, which they are so anxious to guard, will be overturned by the mighty

heavings of free principles. Hence, their unholy alliances to resist a shock, which they know they must feel, but cannot endure while standing alone. On the other hand, those who maintain that man is capable of self-government, know that they have to struggle with formidable enemies. They know that a great portion of wealth, and rank, and talent, is arrayed against them—that, to carry their point, they must demolish, or greatly modify, systems, venerable for antiquity, and which, by their imposing forms, and occasional munificence, have taken fast hold of the lower orders of men. They know, too, that each of the parties are fighting under a deep conviction, that they have a mighty stake at issue—on the one hand, the secured succession to all the splendors of royalty; and, on the other, the undisputed possession of all the blessings of civil freedom. How, then, can it be otherwise, than that they should be strongly agitated with the alternate sway of hopes and fears.

In taking this brief survey, we must not overlook the state of that portion of the human race, which have formed themselves into an atheistic kingdom. They, too, have their high expectations. With them, every species of religion is the result of human weakness and folly. Overlooking, as they do, the unobtrusive character of pure Christianity, and looking abroad upon the antiquated state of all the corrupted forms of religion, they flatter themselves, that the darkness of superstition will soon pass away, and that idols and altars will be viewed as the toys of infancy in the human family, and that, in all coming time, the generations of men shall be free from the burden of feeding a crafty and tyrannical priesthood.

Nor will we entirely forget the scientific world. So important have been the discoveries in chemistry, and in almost every branch of physics—so rapid have been the improvements in machinery—so great the spirit of enterprise in constructing canals, railways, and ships; and so wonderful has been the increase of skill in fabricating the conveniences of

life, and in forcing the earth to yield her full strength for the support of man, that they are delighting themselves with the belief that the drudgery of the hands is to be mostly transferred to physical agents, that distance is to be virtually annihilated, so that the most remote nations are to be brought into convenient neighborhood, to enjoy together that plenty and leisure, which will constitute another golden age.

Thus, my friends, I have shown that the present state of the world has produced a general expectation, that some great change is about to take place in its moral condition. But you wish to gain a knowledge of what is the spirit of the age, for a nobler purpose than to gratify a vain curiosity. You wish to learn what are its distinguishing moral traits, that you may thereby know how to prepare yourselves to serve God in your generation, and what are your peculiar encouragements for action. You have seen that the expectations, which now prevail, are of no ordinary character—they respect great good or great evil—changes of the highest moment, in reference both to the present and future world. On the one hand, hoary systems are about to be broken up—systems, which, for ages, have exerted a mighty influence over the destinies of man; and on the other, the kingdom of Christ is to make rapid advances until it attains universal dominion. Most of the present forms of government, are corrupt and oppressive, presenting strong barriers against the prevalence of civil freedom, and the diffusion of Christianity. What then will be the consequences of that radical reform, which they must soon undergo. Public opinion, respecting free principles, is daily gathering fresh strength from the lights of experience and revelation, and will never cease in its march, until the arm of every oppressor is broken—till every despotic sovereign is either hurled from his throne, or converted into a nursing father in the church of God, and the whole power of the magistracy be chiefly concerned to advance the triumphs of the cross. These changes, whether civil or sacred, are near

at hand. Who can estimate what will be their results. What a deep feeling, then, ought they to awaken. How are they viewed by the inhabitants of glory. They hail the return of the Jews as life from the dead. At the destruction of idolatry, the Holy Spirit represents the whole inanimate world in raptures of praise, hills breaking forth into singing, and the trees of the field clapping their hands. And, at the downfall of papacy, the same Spirit calls on them to exult, saying, Rejoice over her, thou heavens, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.

But it is more important to inquire, what are the duties of believers in view of these approaching changes.

They ought to prepare themselves for corresponding action. The church, above every other community, is under special obligations to render these changes productive of the greatest good. What other body is expected to collect the scattered remnants of Jacob, and to labor, to the utmost, to save the breaking up hosts of Gentiles and Mahometans. Now, above every former period, ought the work of evangelizing the world to be conducted on an extensive plan.

She ought to consider herself as a general missionary society. The Son of God, during his stay on earth, was a missionary, and His Father has promised that he shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment, or mercy in the earth. He constituted the church for missionary purposes—to be the chief instrument in preparing laborers to preach the gospel to every creature. Hence he compared it to a light, lighted, not for her private benefit, but to enlighten the world; and to salt, imparted, not simply for her own preservation, but for the purpose of redeeming the earth from moral corruption. Until the church entertains this view of the design of her existence, and cherishes a deep and practical conviction of her obligation to act up to this design, the work of converting the world will make but slow advances—a work which should be the object of all her labors, and charities, and prayers.

But feeling this object as the high purpose of her being, she would form a society, that nothing could confine—she would be perpetually breaking forth, on the right hand and on the left, enlarging the place of her tent, and stretching forth the curtains of her habitation, until she enclose every Gentile kingdom.

The church ought now to possess, in an eminent degree, the power of holy zeal in the cause of missions. The work which she has to perform is, at once, the greatest and most difficult ever assigned to mortals. The field is the world, now worse than a vast waste. It is full of the habitations of cruelty. But as bad as it is, it must be turned into a blooming paradise. And now, every thing in the word and Providence of God, in the state of the church and world, indicates that this work must soon be accomplished. But to do it, will require zeal of the highest character. In human affairs, nothing great is achieved without enthusiastic ardor. It is so in religious matters. The zeal of God gave up his Son to die for a lost world, and the zeal of the Lord of Hosts is pledged to secure to Christ the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. The zeal of the apostles spread the gospel over the Roman empire. The zeal of Luther broke the power of the Pontiff, and gave existence to the Protestant world. And the church now must possess a similar degree of zeal, before she will gain her millennial rest. To gain this, will make such high demands upon interest, upon courage, and personal services, that she will never seek it, unless she is urged to it by a quenchless zeal. Without this, her charities will be scanty, her prayers faint, and her labors inconstant. It is comparatively easy to give our gold, our counsels, yea, and our bodies, and our formal prayers, too, to advance this work; but a hard thing to give to it our whole soul. We act, I fear, too much on the principle that if the church will contribute, liberally, and give up her sons and daughters to make known the Saviour's love in distant

nations, all will be well—that those whom she has sent abroad, will, every where, plant the standard of the cross, and make the wilderness as Eden, while she, at home, enjoys her repose, and is indifferent about possessing, in her own bosom, the power of religion. But this is a serious mistake. A lukewarm church will never plant missionary colonies, that will be zealous, or flourish to any great extent. If the heart be faint, the pulse must be feeble at the extremities. Zion must lift up her voice, she must never rest, but travail in birth for a world that lieth in sin, before Christ be formed within them the hope of glory.

Besides, there is now special need of union in council, and of resources in missionary efforts. The field for harvest is broader and whiter than ever. But the church is only a little flock, when compared with the unconverted world. Her strength, then, ought not to be diminished by diversions to things comparatively of little moment. I am not here pleading, that the different sections, which now compose the visible kingdom of God, should give up their distinguishing forms. These they may retain, and yet be united in conquering a common enemy. The ancient tribes of Israel were marshalled under different banners, yet they had but one object in view—the conquest of Canaan, and their different standards indicated the approach of but one host. Hence the dukes of Edom were amazed, and sorrow took hold on the inhabitants of Palestine. So, let the disciples of Christ be united in their spiritual warfare, then, though they may choose to form themselves into different companies, still they would be viewed as one combined force, and their discriminating flags would be regarded alike, as the signals of a united onset on the empire of darkness. The chief burden of our Saviour's memorable prayer to his Father, was that the apostles and all believers might be brought into a perfect unity of faith and of object; and the reason he assigned for his importunity was, that such a union would convince the world of the truth of his own legation,

and that they were the objects of his Father's love. And were the disciples of Christ now united in their prayers and labors to save a lost world, this, above every other argument, would convince unbelievers of the power and the Divine origin of the gospel. It is not enough, however, for Christians to be united and zealous in this great work.

But they now, more than ever, need a great increase of spiritual wisdom. It is, at all times, a work of great difficulty to convert individuals and communities from false systems of morality to the pure religion of the Bible. But this work they will have to carry on in a period of great changes and commotions. The sea, on which they are embarked, is stormy and full of counter currents. Hence they must have far higher skill, than what is demanded to navigate, amid the ordinary dangers of the ocean. The bodies of men, which have long been swayed by false theories, are not to become extinct. But the spirit of their creed is to expire soon, and leave these great masses of population without any principle of union. These facts will present new difficulties to the missionary, and render his labors more severe, and, in some respects, more uncertain. How much heavenly wisdom, then, will the Church need to win over the scattered elements of these broken up communities to the kingdom of Christ? before they have time to sink down into the death of atheism, or to reconstruct themselves into some new, and still more corrupting forms of worship.

In what I have hitherto said in the application of this subject, I have had reference to the Church in general. But in conclusion, it is my duty to say something, specially applicable to the members of the Evangelical Society in this College. Your object in attending to the services of this evening, is that you may know and feel, more fully than ever, what are the peculiar duties, which you owe to the present generation. I have been much gratified in witnessing the interest, which, from your first formation, you have continued to mani-

fest in the missionary cause. I was particularly pleased, when invited to address you at this monthly concert, because I indulged the hope, that I might be enabled to say something, that would be useful to you in your after life. What duties, then, does the present crisis in general history demand of you individually? In answer, I would say,

1. You need a deep and practical conviction, that the great changes, which you now anticipate, and which are near at hand, are doubtless intended by God himself to open before you a wider door of usefulness in spreading the gospel. The waters of the mystic Euphrates are to be dried up, that the way of the kings of the East may be prepared. The overthrow of Babylon is designed to accelerate the flight of the mystic angel, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them, that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people; and the destruction of the armies of antichrist in the valley of Jehosaphat, is intended to give a new impulse to the missionary enterprise. Those who escape it, God will convert into heralds of the cross, to declare his glory among all heathen nations. And such will be their success in winning souls to Christ, that they will put in requisition every mode of conveyance to bring them for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and on litters, and on mules, and upon swift beasts, to the holy mountain Jerusalem. We are not certain, that the heretic, when convinced of his error, will, therefore, be ready to embrace the truth. But when we see, that pagans are now casting away their idols to the moles and to the bats, that Turks are abandoning their Koran, or holding it with a wavering faith, and the Jews turning their faces toward their ancient land, holding themselves in readiness to return, and looking out for some great change in their favor, we, certainly, have higher reasons to hope for success in attempts to spread the gospel among them, than we should have, if we now saw them adhering to their respective formu-

laries with increasing veneration. The General chooses for the time of onset, when he knows, that his enemy are either faint or divided, or are losing their confidence in the goodness of the cause for which they took up arms.

2. You ought to have a deep conviction, that it is your duty to devote your life to the missionary service. If you have read your Bibles aright, you have learned, that it is the duty of the whole Church to consider herself as a missionary body, and that it should be the grand object of all her efforts to spread the spiritual blessings, which she enjoys among the destitute nations. If this be true of the whole Church, it must be so of each particular member. It is not now left optional with you to say, whether you will enter this work or not.—God has settled this duty upon you, and you cannot cast it off. For this you were called into being—for this you have been converted—for this you are enriched with gifts and graces—and for this, your life is continued. So that it is left for you simply to say, whether you will perform this duty, or run the hazard of neglecting it. The only question in which you may have any choice in this matter, respects the place, where you will perform your missionary service—whether in the bosom of the Church, or among those who are perishing for lack of vision. The decision of this question, is not so material, as you may fancy. It is only to determine, whether you will hold the rope, or descend upon it into the pit of sin and wretchedness. And those who hold it with all their strength above, may have to toil and suffer as much as those do, who labor below. Carey, when he left his brethren in Europe, said “I will descend the rope, if you who stay above, will hold it.” They engaged to do so. And in doing it, Pearce, and Fuller, and Hall, and others, wore out their lives at home, sooner than did their brethren, whom they supported in distant fields. If you have good reasons to believe you can accelerate this work most by preparing agents for it, you will stay at home; but if you feel yourselves qualified to serve

it in the dark places of the earth, you will hasten to your foreign field of labor. Let it, then, settle down in your hearts, my brethren, that you are missionaries, and that you must remain so, or rebel against your Maker. From henceforth the world is to be your field, and you are never to cease to labor upon it, until you are taken from it by death, or see it converted into the garden of the Lord.

3. You need a great increase of that faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The promises, respecting the universal triumphs of the gospel, are many and emphatic. Take up the sacred volume, and you will find something in almost every page, respecting the future enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom. Indeed, so full is it on this subject, that the Holy Ghost hath said, that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Whenever the prophets strike the joyful harp of Zion, we hear the songs of millennial glory. He, Christ, shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the end of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him—the kings of Tarshish shall bring presents, the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, and nations shall serve him. All nations shall call him blessed. For, from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts. For the gods, that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. Now, faith in these promises will change them into the quickening nourishment of the soul, and prompt it to act with a zeal and a constancy, proportioned to the infinite value of the good to be obtained. But to you, they will never become springs of action, if your faith in them be feeble and inconstant. A sword may as well rust out in its scabbard, as to be given to

a soldier, who has no confidence in the elasticity of its strength, or the keenness of its edge.

Besides, the evils which you are to relieve, and the blessings which you are to impart, are not the objects of sense, but are alike invisible and distant. It is in the far west of our own country, on the gloomy shores of Africa, or on the distant plains of Hindostan and Burmah, that Moloch now reigns over degraded millions, torturing his subjects with cruel rites, and daily consigning them by hundreds and by thousands to an inglorious grave, and to the pit of endless burnings. But as all this wretchedness and death are felt, many thousand miles distant, we are but little affected by them. We enjoy our repose, and neither weep nor feel the throb of anguish over these remote regions of misery and ruin. Ah! my brethren, how much do we need that strong faith, which would bring around our feet, this remote scene of sin and death. How much do we need the living faith, which animated the Apostles and primitive believers. When they had received the Spirit at Pentacost, they left their upper chamber, where they had prayed and sung together with holy delight, and went forth as missionaries of the most High. They displayed the banner of truth, they blew the great trumpet of the gospel, and it was heard afar off. Arrayed in gospel armor, they abjured the world, and in the name of Christ, waged war with the powers of darkness; and their weapons were mighty to the pulling down of strong holds. The world fell before such combatants, and its pomps and vanities, its riches and honors, its science and learning, its arts and arms, its potentates and gods, were subdued by the doctrine of the cross.— Let Christendom now be animated by the same spirit, and go forth in the strength of their Redeemer, and how long would it be, before the great voices in heaven would say, 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.

My brethren, how responsible is your present station. God

has brought you upon the stage of action at a time, more interesting and eventful, perhaps, than has been any past, or will be any future period in the history of the world. Certainly the Church cannot be far from her millennial reign. To this conclusion we are led, both from the present attitude of the world, and the light of prophecy. I know that prophetic language is obscure and hard to be understood. Indeed, to answer its end, it must not be so plain as to abridge the freedom of the impenitent, and yet sufficiently clear to guide and comfort the people of God in all their duties and sufferings. The Scriptures have clearly revealed to us, that the man of sin is to exist only twelve hundred and sixty years, and that his overthrow, and that of the false prophet, will nearly synchronise. But they have not thus revealed to us the exact date of his origin. Hence it is difficult to determine, precisely, when his reign will expire. But we know that these powers have long existed, and that, upon every principle of calculation, they have far passed their zenith.—For several hundred years, they have been on the decay, and they must soon be overthrown, and, on that event, the fullness of the Gentiles will come in. The long promised rest of the Church, then, must be near at hand, and fast approaching. Before the young men of this generation, scenes are opening, which, more than any preceding, are deeply to affect the history of man in all coming time. The day cannot be far distant, when the Lord will consume the beast and the false prophet with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming—when he will utterly abolish every idol under heaven—when he will convert and gather into his kingdom the outcasts of Israel, the descendants of Abraham. For God, within comparatively but few years, has shed down upon his people, in an unexampled degree, the spirit of missions. He has prompted them to put in operation a train of the most appropriate and powerful means to regenerate the world. These he will certainly bless, far be-

yond our highest anticipations. He has graciously promised, that the richest effusions of the Holy Ghost shall rest upon the Church in the days, immediately preceding her long and triumphant reign upon the earth. Now there are only scattering drops, compared with this plentiful shower. Now the Church is slowly increased by separate and individual conversions. Then, a nation will be born in a day. "Then the wilderness will become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest: then all the powers of nature, all the resources of Providence, all the advantages that are possessed by men in every variety and state, will jointly contribute to aid the general triumph. The multitude of camels shall come up; the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah: all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense, and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. Kings shall offer their gifts, and the majesty of all earthly sovereigns will bow to the majesty of the Saviour. All the spoils of earthly grandeur will be laid at his feet, and none will be exalted in that day, but the Lord and his Messiah." These are the scenes fast opening before us. Yes, my young brethren, you may live to see more than their incipient dawning. Certainly you will have much to do in hastening their accomplishment. Are you, then, prepared to enter upon them? Have they come up before you, in all their overwhelming consequences? To act such an exalted part in the day, when God shall arise to shake terribly the earth, you need, more than any preceding race of Christians, the high qualities of holy courage, Christian fortitude, self-denial, and the spirit of prayer. The Scriptures fully apprise us, that the time, which shall introduce the millennium, is to be a season of unexampled suffering and peril. Are you, then, let me repeat, prepared for action? Are you prepared to enter on this momentous and closing drama of time? Have you that courage, which no dangers can appal—that enthusiastic devotedness to your work, which would lead you to sacrifice every earth-

ly interest to advance it? Are your desires so intense to spread the good news, that Christ died to save sinners; that in doing it, you are ready, if need be, to meet martyrdom in its most frightful forms? Have you that faith and fervor in prayer, which will bring down for your help the Holy Ghost, and retain him for your aid—that agent, which alone must give life to your soul, and make all your labors triumphant. Privileged young men, I almost envy you your station and your prospects. Long after your fathers are sleeping in the dust, you are to be employed in a work, pre-eminently fitted to ennoble the mind and assimilate it to God. Go then, and count not your lives dear to yourselves to make known, among the most barbarous nations, the love of Jesus; and may you win many a poor pagan to satisfy the travail of the Redeemer's soul, and enrich his crown of glory.

