

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JONAS GREEN, No. 100, N. B. STREET, ANNAPOIS.

RELIGIOUS ELOQUENCE: The following eloquent speeches of George Griffin and Peter A. Jay, Esq., were delivered at the City Hall of the City of New York, in May last, at a meeting of the citizens of that city, and were published at the request of the Board of managers of the American Bible Society.

MR. GRIFFIN'S SPEECH.

Mr. Chairman, I am persuaded that there is no person present, who does not feel the inspiration of this occasion. Myself, I congratulate my country, that we now find on her annals the name of the American Bible Society. I hail this auspicious event, with all the devotion of my soul, and with the appearance of this Star in the West. This is an occasion to awaken the best feelings of the heart. We are assembled, not to rouse the spirit of political zeal, not to arrange plans of foreign conquest, to shout the triumphs of victory, we have a nobler object; to witness the march of the everlasting Gospel through the world—to spread abroad a fountain, whose waters are intended for the healing of the nations.

The design of this august institution, is not merely to relieve the wants of our own country, but to extend the hand of charity to the most distant lands—to break asunder the fetters of Mahometan intolerance; to purify the abominations of juggernaut; to snatch the Hindoos wide from the funeral pile; to raise the degraded African to the sublime contemplation of God and immortality; to tame, and baptize in the waters of life, the American natives; to pour the light of heaven into the darkness of the Andes; and to call back the nations from the shores of devils to the temple of the living God. These high objects are to be accomplished by the universal promulgation of the Bible; the Bible, that volume conceived in the counsels of eternal mercy, containing the wondrous story of redeeming love, blazing with the lustre of Jehovah's glory; that volume, preeminently calculated to soften the heart, sanctify the affections, and elevate the soul of man; to enkindle the poet's fire, and teach the philosopher wisdom; to consecrate the domestic relations; to pour the beam of Heaven into the wounded heart; to cheer the dying hour, and shed the light of immortality upon the darkness of the tomb. I reiterate the mighty term—the Bible; that richest of man's treasure—that best of Heaven's gifts. A marvellous volume!—in every of thy pages I see the impress of the Godhead. How divine thy doctrine, how pure thy precepts, how sublime thy language!—How beautiful is the tenderness of an Orator, or an Euripides, when compared with the heart-touching passages of thy David or Jeremiah!—How do the loftiest effusions of Milton or a Homer sink, when contrasted with the sublimer strains of the Isaiah or Habakkuk!—And how do the pure and soul-elevating doctrines of thy Moses or thy Paul sink down, as from the heights of heaven, upon the grovelling systems of a Mahomet or Confucius!—Have this Bible an empire in every heart, and the prevalence of crime and misery would yield to the universal diffusion of millennial glory. Declare this Bible, let the ruthless and of insidious fear this sun from the moral heavens, and all would be darkness and guilt, and wretchedness; again would the blood be shed, and the woe be multiplied through all her works, (give) might.

Eighteen centuries ago the divine author of our religion, about to ascend to his native heavens, pronounced with his farewell voice, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. The hand of Christian heroes opened the heavenly mandate, and in their master's armour, they encountered and overcame the united powers of earth and hell. But the apostolic age did not always last. Seventeen hundred years have since elapsed, and more than three fourths of the human family are still enveloped in Pagan or Mahometan darkness. A lethargy, like the sleep of the sepulchre, had long fastened itself on the Christian world. It was the tremendous earthquake of modern atheism, that roused them from this slumber; and while, during the last twenty years, the vials of God's wrath have been pouring upon the nations, convulsing to its centre this distracted globe, the Bible has recommenced its triumphs. This tree of heaven's planting has stood and strengthened amidst the prostration of thrones, and the concussion of empires. The Apostolic age is returning. The countries of Europe which lately rung with the clangour of arms, are now filled with societies for the promulgation of the gospel of peace. Through those fields but lately drenched in human blood, now flow the streams of salvation. Europe is bending under the mighty effort of extending redemption to a world. Kings and Emperors are vying with the humblest of their subjects, in this stupendous work. The coffers of the rich are emptied into heaven's treasury, and there also is received the widow's mite. But there is one nation which has stood forth pre-eminent in this career of glory. With the profoundest veneration I bow before the majesty of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This illustrious association (its history is recorded in Heaven and ought to be proclaimed on earth) has been instrumental in distributing a million and a half of volumes of the word of life; and has magnanimously expended, in a single year, near 400,000 dollars for the salvation of man. This transcendent institution is the brightest star in the constellation of modern improvements, and looks down from its celestial elevation on the diminished glories of the Grecian and Roman name.

The electric shock has at length reached our shores. Local Bible Societies have been heretofore established in this country; but they wanted extent of means, comprehensiveness of design, and consolidation of action. It was to be expected, and the christian world had a right to expect, that the American nation would arise in the majesty of its collected might, and unite itself with the other powers of Christendom, in the holy confederacy for extending the empire of religion & civilization. This auspicious era has now arrived.—The last week has witnessed an august assemblage of the fathers of the American churches of every denomination, convened in this metropolis from all parts of the country, not to brandish the sword of religious controversy, but to unite with one heart, in laying the foundation of the majestic superstructure of the American Bible Society.—Athens boasted of her temple of Minerva; but our city is more truly consecrated, by being the seat of this hallowed edifice. It is not a mosque containing, or reputed to contain, the remains of the Arabian prophet, but a fabric, reared and devoted to the living God, by the united efforts of the American churches. Fellow-citizens! will you coldly receive this honour, or will you not rather show yourselves worthy of this sacred distinction? I am persuaded that your munificence and zeal in this holy cause will be recorded as an animating example to the nation. For to whom should it be reserved, to electrify this western continent, but to the London of America? Our country has long stood forth the rival of England in commerce and in arms; let her not be left behind in the glorious career of evangelizing the world.

MR. JAY'S SPEECH.

Mr. Chairman, Allow me, sir, to second the motion which has just been made, and at the same time, to congratulate this assembly on the event which has called them together, and upon the unanimity with which it has been brought about. When we consider the multiplied divisions which exist in this extensive country; the animosities of political parties; the multitude of our religious sects; the local interests and jealousies, these have so often impeded or defeated the most salutary undertakings, we have no reason to be astonished at the perfect unanimity which now, in this instance, prevailed among delegates from widely distant parts of the union, and of various political and religious denominations. To mark, indeed, the finger of Providence, that always provides means for the accomplishment of its own great and beneficent purposes.

Under Providence, this unanimity can only be ascribed to a strong sense of duty in those who composed the constitution, which we have heard, and to the singleness of the object, they had in view. The latter, I esteem the great characteristic which I trust will render the American Bible Society an honour to the country, and a blessing to the world.

Our efforts in the great cause of diffusing christianity, when compared with those of other nations, have hitherto been puny. Not that we have wanted means; for, except during a short interval, we have been blest with peace & with abundance. Nor will I impute it to want of zeal for the happiness of mankind. But our efforts have been separately made, and were, therefore, feeble. We have now a common centre in which we can unite: we have now a cause in which all can join. Our object is to distribute the Holy Scriptures without note or comment.—At this, no politician can be alarmed, no sectary can be reasonably jealous. We shall distribute no other books, we shall teach no disputed doctrine. Laying aside for this purpose the banners of our respective corps, we assemble under the sole standard of the great Captain of our Salvation. We endeavour to extend his reign, and in his name alone we contend.

Need I mention the importance of the object we have in view? It has been already so eloquently displayed, that I shall not attempt it. But I may be permitted to notice some minor topics, which have been less insisted on. Do we wish to improve the temporal condition of the human race? Then experience has shown, that christianity is the most efficient agent. Survey the world—Where have barbarism, and ignorance, and superstition, & cruelty, and all the demons of darkness their abodes? Where, but in those unhappy regions that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, deprived of the light of the gospel of Christ. And where do you find knowledge, and humanity, and charity? Where do the sciences and the arts reside? Where does commerce flourish? Where does liberty dwell? No where but in the christian world. Christianity enlarges the mind, while it purifies the heart. It expands our virtues, it animates us with the most powerful motives; and while it teaches that we are members of the great family of mankind, it enables us to perform the duties which that relation imposes.

While Mahometan nations have long been stationary or retrograde; while the inhabitants of India continue to practise their bloody and abominable rites; while most other pagans are sunk almost below the condition of brutes that perish; the christian world has advanced with rapid strides in civilization, in wealth, in humanity, in every thing that contributes to temporal prosperity, as well as in the virtues which fit us for immortality.

It may be objected that what are termed the dark ages succeeded the promulgation of the christian religion. But why were those ages dark? Because the light of the gospel was hid. The Bible was concealed with jealous care from the people. It could be read only in an unknown tongue by the clergy themselves; the laity, like the Abyssinians, knowing little of their Redeemer, except his name; and having no religion but outward ceremonies, and empty forms. At length the reformation dispersed the clouds of ignorance, disenthralled both the bodies and the minds of men; and laid the foundation of civil as well as of religious liberty. The gospel was again promulgated; its doctrines were taught, inquiry was awakened, corruptions were purified, and at length even the church from which the protestants separated has been greatly reformed.—Since that glorious era, knowledge has been uni-

formly increasing, and with it all that adorns society, and all that sweetens life. That gospel light which dawned at the reformation, has since grown brighter and brighter. Its beams, though occasionally obscured by clouds, have become more and more fervent, till at length darting from the meridian, they warm as well as enlighten.

The nations of Europe are now awake and active; they have sent forth the gospel into all lands, and its sound unto the ends of the earth. Their exertions are strenuous and unremitting. They eagerly emulate each other in the glorious strife. And shall we alone be idle? Blest as we are with opulence and ease, shall we be less grateful to Him who gives them, than nations wasted with war? Surely, sir, we shall not refuse to run the race which is set before us, nor to contribute towards the cause of mankind. What charity can be greater, to what can there be stronger motives?

How many are there who thirst for military glory; and what sacrifices would they not make to obtain it! We have long been spectators of the great tragedy which has been acted on the theatre of Europe; and our imaginations have become inflamed. We have beheld mighty hosts encountering each other; desperate battles have been fought and victories won.—We think of the triumphant march, the blood-stained banner, the captured artillery; and all the pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war, till many among us would willingly face danger and death itself, to acquire a renown equal to that of some favourite hero. Yet the laurel of the conqueror grows only in a soil which is moistened with blood. It is stained with the tears of the widow, and it thrives in the midst of desolation—nor is it durable: amid all the annals of destruction, how few are the names which we remember and pronounce! But is there no glory which is pure and enduring, and which deserves to be sought? Yes, the love of fame is a noble passion, given us not to be extinguished, but to be used aright. There is a glory which a wise man will covet, which a good man will aspire to, which will follow him from this world to the next, and there, in the presence of an assembled universe, and of just men made perfect, place a crown upon his brows that fades not away.

It is the peculiar province of the clergy to teach how to acquire this heavenly crown; but I may be permitted to say, that an irrevocable decree has gone forth, an inviolable promise has been made, that they who turn many to righteousness shall shine like stars for ever and ever. But how shall those who are doomed to business and labour, turn many to righteousness?—Such is the constitution of human society, that all cannot be missionaries; all cannot apply themselves to the spiritual concerns of others. This society enables all to contribute to the spiritual improvement of all. The Bible is the best of missionaries. It will reach where no preacher can penetrate; it will preach where he cannot be heard; it will reprove, alarm, advise, console in solitude, where no passion interferes to drown its voice. Of these missionary thousands may be sent abroad, and where the seed is abundantly sown, we may reasonably hope for an abundant harvest.

Though the diffusion of the scriptures is the great end of our institution, yet another blessing will also spring from it. Too long have christians been divided. Sect has been opposed to sect; angry controversies have agitated the church; misrepresentations have been made and believed; and good men, who ought to have loved each other, have been kept asunder by prejudices, which were the offspring of ignorance. In this society, the most discordant sects will meet together engaged in a common cause; prejudices will abate; asperities will be softened; and when it is found, as undoubtedly it will be found, that the same love of God and of man animates all real christians, whatever may be their outward rites, or forms of ecclesiastical discipline, that most of them agree in fundamental

doctrines, and that their differences principally relate to points of little practical importance, there must be an increase of brotherly love, and of a truly catholic spirit.

Sir, I pretend not to see more clearly than others through the dim veil of prophecy; but, if the predictions which foretell a millennial period of happiness on earth are ever to be literally fulfilled, it can only be by the accomplishment of another prophecy, that "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." Let us then be the blessed instruments in the diffusion of this knowledge, that, having contributed to the triumph of the Redeemer's cause, we may be permitted to partake it. Then we shall be entitled to address the christian church in the exalted strain:

The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay; Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away; But fixed his word, his favour power remains, Thy realm forever lasts, thy own Messiah reigns.

Bibles, &c. Printed.

The number of Bibles, Testaments and Prayer Books, printed at Cambridge, (Eng.) during the last seven years, was 1,009,000; at Oxford, including also Catechisms and Psalters, 1,440,000. The value of the whole was 945,350 dollars.

Salem, August 23.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.

A GREAT CALAMITY—has just visited a portion of our town. Yesterday morning, about four o'clock, a fierce fire broke out from a barn standing in the centre of that cluster of buildings on the south east corner of Liberty and Water streets, not unaptly denominated a tinder-box. Before the inhabitants could be roused from their slumbers, and assembled at the scene of danger, it had gained such head, that nothing but a dead calm in the air seemed to afford any hope of setting bounds to the threatened desolation. The building on fire was almost in contact with the distil-house of Messrs. E. and J. Norris, on Water street, the large three story dwelling-house and bake-house of Mr. Ball, all of which were quickly involved in the conflagration, and the flames did not subside till they had swept away these and every other building on the corner, together with a number on the west side of Liberty street. In the extremity of our distress, we received a generous and powerful aid from our brethren of Marblehead, Beverly and Danvers, with their engines, &c. and some came even from Lynn to our succour. Owing to the perfect and providential stillness of the air, the extraordinary efforts of this combination of strength, directed by the good judgment of the fire wards, were effectual in preventing the ravages of the fire into Vine street and onwards: the three story brick-house of Capt. Phillips stood as a barrier in one part, though the wood work upon it was many times on fire; and the flames were often seen curling over the ridge of Mr. Hoffman's wooden house, which nevertheless was saved within a few feet of the buildings burnt.—On the western side of the street, the house of Mr. Dabney was also saved by the greatest care and exertion, the street between that and the burning buildings being very narrow. How this fire was kindled, we cannot ascertain. We do not easily give into suspicion of design, which we have heard suggested: a single spark, a cigar, or a very trifling accident in so combustible a place, might have been sufficient to produce the mischief.

The number of buildings totally destroyed were—19.

From an Ohio Paper.

MAJOR HOWARD.

A man of very imposing appearance, who passes by this name, is now confined in Wheeling jail, upon a charge of swindling. He vilifies the British nation with great bitterness, & cites, Tory, Ultra-light, and Hartford Conventionists, almost as happily as Mr. Wilson himself. Eray, Mr. Wilson is not this conduct some atonement for his other villainies!

Public Sale. The Court of Appeals, in the case of the State of Maryland vs. the State of Virginia, will sit on the 10th day of September next, at the Court House in Annapolis. The day of August is the day of the year when the Court usually sits, and the day of the year when the Court usually sits, and the day of the year when the Court usually sits.

Public Sale. The Court of Appeals, in the case of the State of Maryland vs. the State of Virginia, will sit on the 10th day of September next, at the Court House in Annapolis. The day of August is the day of the year when the Court usually sits, and the day of the year when the Court usually sits, and the day of the year when the Court usually sits.