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THE  
BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

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ARTICLE I.

THEODORE DWIGHT WOOLSEY.

BY PROFESSOR JACOB COOPER, D.C.L., LL.D.

THE force of character a man possesses is measured by the depth and permanency of the impression made upon those with whom he comes in contact. For any kind of power exerts an influence in exact proportion to its amount, whether acting on material or spiritual nature. Weak forces may by a sudden effort create an impression greater than is justified by their amount; but this is evanescent, since there is not enough in reserve for continued action. And strong forces by an unsteady application disappoint, because what is gained at the time of their exertion is lost by intermission. But that which continues without abatement, calm and steady, never loses what it has gained; and further increases the effect of each act by the constancy in the pursuit of one unaltered purpose.

These facts are very apparent in the influence which men exert upon those who are closest to them and can test their real nature. So far from the adage proving true in such cases, that "familiarity breeds contempt," the closer we get to a really strong nature the more are we moved by its power, because it is not bolstered up by pretense.

If these principles be true, Theodore Dwight Woolsey was a great man, no matter what be the standard by which we measure greatness. For among the very large number of pupils who came under his influence and with the best opportunities to observe him closely, there has been, so far as the writer's knowledge extends, but one opinion. Of this multitude there have been strong characters; men who have filled most exalted positions in every department of life, and have given their best services to the betterment of mankind. These with one consent acknowledge their indebtedness to this instructor with a heartiness which has been seldom equaled, and perhaps never excelled. Among the many great teachers we have had in our country to whom multitudes rise up to render homage, we can safely say there has not been his equal. Nor do we believe that Jowett, Arnold, Cousin, Schleiermacher, or Abelard left a stronger or more abiding impression upon those whom they instructed. At this lapse of time since his life as a teacher ended, it cannot be the glamour through which youth views its favorite; for most of his pupils have passed middle life, and many are old. Yet the feeling toward him is more strong, if that were possible, than when they sat as learners at his feet. The question naturally arises, Where were the hidings of this man's power?

In a casual meeting with President Woolsey at the period of his greatest vigor, one saw nothing striking in his personal appearance; or, if so, not in the way of attractiveness. To such as did not know him he seemed a very quiet man; much stooped; of rapid and not very graceful movement; deeply absorbed in his own thoughts; and, as a consequence, somewhat oblivious to what was going on around him. If he was seen in any public place where his official duty did not require him to lead, he was modest and shrinking, taking a low place almost to the extent of hiding himself. Where it was his duty to lead, whether in

a public service or in the classroom, his look was calm, his movements noiseless but rapid, his manner nervous but fully self-possessed, and his eye piercing, as though, when directed toward you, it would read your inmost soul. His dispatch of business in pushing forward the matter in hand, and avoiding extraneous issues or long talks, was conspicuous. His speech was low and hesitating, but so penetrating that it reached every portion of any audience. There was nothing of witchery in the tone or manner of delivery to prepossess or captivate by any oratorical grace in speech or gesture. Those who had formed their impressions from his writings or from his public reputation would probably be disappointed, and possibly prejudiced, when they saw him for the first time. Hence his power did not arise from any of those gifts and graces which usually win popularity. Yet with all who have known him in his work, who have come in close touch with his real nature, he commanded such respect as they never gave to any other man, and won their hearts so completely that the writer feels sure many of his pupils would have made any personal sacrifice in his behalf—even to giving their lives to save his. Nor was this feeling the mere enthusiasm of youth, a transitory loyalty to a teacher who enabled them to think and act as men, and aided them in securing places for their life-work. It grew while they lived, and ended in a veneration which is perhaps too near to idolatry.

There must have been some adequate cause for this in the man himself.

President Woolsey was the impersonation of the idea of Duty. He felt the responsibility of his position to such a degree that he was overwhelmed rather than elated by any dignity placed upon him. Kant summed up ethical wisdom in the memorable words, "Reverence thyself!" Woolsey would have changed the motto a little by saying, "REV-

ERENCE DUTY!" Why? Because this is the voice of the ever-living and ever-present God. When he was a student in Paris, about the year 1825, he took lessons in Arabic from that eminent orientalist, Garcin de Tassy, who had inscribed over his professorial chair, *Dieu est ici*, "God is here." And so He is, consciously, to every man who feels that the Great Master has sent each soul into the world with a work to do which no other can do for him, and which, if not done by himself, will be left undone forever. Hence, if such a thing as a selfish motive or desire to be remiss in work had come to tempt Theodore Woolsey, he would have said: "Get behind me, Satan, for thou art an offense." Always present for duty exactly on time, always busy, never in a hurry; with a calmness which showed complete mastery over himself, he gave every energy of body, soul, and spirit to that work unto which he felt himself called of God. Hence he never did any work slovenly, nor deputized some one else to do a service, however small and thankless, which he could do himself. The amount of drudgery he performed was enormous: such undesirable tasks as others would have been only too glad to have relieved him from doing, he did alone, without permitting it to be known how hard he labored. He was one of those few persons for whom you could render no service. Always helpful to others, he did not permit himself to get into a position where he seemed to need assistance. He lived as seeing Him who is invisible, and the motto of his Arabic professor appealed to every fiber of his nature. To do you good, to help you because a stranger inexperienced and ignorant, to advance you in virtue and knowledge, was ever uppermost in his thoughts. He always had time enough for your errand, but his manner made it evident that when your business was done with him, he was done with you; and if you had time to throw away he had not. This was made so evident by his look, that we doubt if

any man who ever approached him failed to discern the fact. Yet this did not arise from any lack of kindness, but from the strong feeling that the time of each man ought to mean much both to the world and to himself; but to the latter chiefly, because of his obligation to the former. Hence in his view nothing was to be done without an adequate motive, and whatever talents a man might possess, or the circumstances in which he might be placed, they must be made subservient to that work for which he had a special mission among men. And since example is the most efficient teacher, President Woolsey as a living embodiment of that principle which makes life worth living was preëminent in ability as an instructor.

He was born to be a ruler. Those who knew him most intimately said he had a hot temper, though all admitted it to be under complete control. That he had a strong will no one can doubt, and this is a quality absolutely necessary to a leader among men. A strong character if it has a weakness knows this, and gives heed to supply what is lacking. Irascibility must be under control, else it will expose the possessor to folly and mortification. Whatever may have been his predisposition to anger, he got the complete mastery over his temper. The first requisite for the control of others is self-control. Without this a man may be feared when he is in a position to do us harm, and will be despised or hated when we escape from his power.

But the government by inflexible law is demanded everywhere. It is seen complete in material nature. Here reason has absolute sway, and bends everything to fixed laws, working out a plan which embraces the universe. The same is true in the moral world. For this also is a universe of goodness, except in so far as rational beings who are endowed with responsibility choose to pervert this freedom to their own ruin. Responsibility involves law and obedience; ruler and subject. Implicit obedience

is always demanded of us. It will be secured through our voluntary yielding or our forcible subjugation. And nowhere is this implicit obedience more necessary than in college life. For this embraces the transition period between parental government and that of the state. The former is secured insensibly by the condition of dependence on the love and care necessary to the child's life and nurture. Here the helplessness of infancy precludes the necessity of the rule being felt at all, except in rare cases. But, during the period of pupilage, the passions are strong, the reflective powers yet weak; and there is for the first time the sense of personal freedom because the natural restraints of home are removed. Obedience must now be learned from appeals to reason, or secured by resort to force. Here the pupil will find the initiation into that which is to follow in his intercourse with men in society. For in the world which he must soon enter, neither the love of the parent nor the allowances made by the teacher for his escapades will avail him longer; but obedience must be rendered at his peril. It is better, therefore, that the pupil be subject to inflexible discipline, in order to become accustomed to that which will surely meet him among his fellow-men.

President Woolsey emphatically ruled. It was, in his estimation, quite as much the student's duty to obey law and shape his conduct by a rational system of subjection to authority, as to get intellectual culture. Indeed, the latter would be a curse without the former. For it would make him able to do wrong, and shrewd to escape its consequences for a time, only to harden the character by offenses sure to be discovered and punished at last.

Authority cannot be divided in the court of last resort. Some one person, or a majority of a body, must be clothed with final responsibility. The fewer the number thus clothed, the simpler the administration of law, and the

surer its success, provided the executive be competent. If the ruler were thoroughly capable, the true idea is that of the *τύραννος* as understood in the Greek sense. But there is likelihood, from the frailty of our nature, that there will be lack, either of the knowledge requisite to see what is just, or power and calmness to exercise the prerogative without fear or favor. Hence the experiment is hazardous. It is for this reason that men everywhere are usually governed badly. Those who need governing most are least conscious of the fact; and as the ruler must usually be of the same lineage or community he is not likely to be much above his subjects in capacity for rule. Hence government cannot be complete until knowledge and arbitrary power are lodged in the same person.<sup>1</sup> That this is possible was verified in the case of President Woolsey. For he was autocratic to as complete a degree as ever was realized, yet his government was thought so fair by his pupils that we do not believe the wrongdoer who suffered most ever called in question his justice.

Of late there has been an experiment tried by calling in the coöperation of representatives from the student body to assist in governing. This has been followed by disastrous results where it has been continued for any length of time, and has therefore in most cases been abandoned. The idea of such rule is absurd on the face of it, since it is directly contrary to all natural forms of government,—whether in the family circle, in business corporations, or in the state. So long as there are no offenses, any plan of rule will do—even none at all. But as soon as the laws are broken, the judges and executioners in this unnatural system are taken from among the offenders; and often indeed the ringleaders in the disorders are the ones who sit in solemn judgment on their own offenses! The absurdity

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Repub.*, 487, E, Οὐ πρότερον κακῶν πάσωνται αἱ πόλεις πρὶν ἢ ἐν αὐτοῖς οἱ φιλόσοφοι ἀρξῶσιν. Compare 473, C, D.



again appears at once when we consider that the indispensable requisite of government is that it should be by a body of superior wisdom and experience; and from its constitution as far removed as possible from partiality. If the student in college, with his *esprit de corps*, be called upon to judge his fellows, he will always be swayed by this feeling: even though he possessed the experience and sobriety of judgment which age furnishes. College life is one where instruction and discipline are required in pretty nearly equal quantities, and if the student is capable of the latter, which demands a higher power than the former, he is at least as well fitted for teaching as governing, and therefore the pupil and instructor should change places. It is especially requisite that the governing-factor be free from bias and "know no man after the flesh," which requires a sagacity and equipoise of judgment which is one of the rarest gifts in nature. Every pupil and colleague of this great teacher will be ready to admit, that, if in any qualification he was preëminent, it was as an executive officer. For while his system of government was intensely rigid, its fairness was so manifest that it was accepted with a degree of respect which nothing could shake; while the certainty and swiftness with which offenses were visited, were a powerful antidote in preventing them.

#### AS AN INSTRUCTOR.

President Woolsey wrote much. His earlier work in this line was chiefly review articles on classical and theological subjects, and in editions of the Greek tragedians and Plato for college use. Many of these text-books were so popular that they superseded nearly all others in their line in our country. Later in life he wrote almost exclusively on social and political topics, in the latter of which he took a very keen interest during and after the War of the Rebellion. After his elevation to the presidency, in

1846, his line of instruction was changed. Hence, while not abandoning the Greek language entirely, his duties were now to teach history and political economy. This change of work was doubtless the main cause in diverting his authorship into new channels. It is not germane to our purpose to speak at length of his writings. They have a secure place of their own, standing at the head of treatises on social questions and international law, and used throughout the world. The verdict of universal use has fixed their rank.

While he taught in every way,—by the pen, from the pulpit, and in frequent public lectures,—his work was emphatically in the professorial chair. For in this service he was most engaged, and here doubtless he wielded his most potent influence. What were the qualities which rendered him preëminent in this field?

First, the mastery of his subject. The ability to teach is, according to competent authority,<sup>1</sup> the criterion of knowledge. There are various ways in which a person may be said to understand a subject. He may have an accurate knowledge of the separate elements, and yet fail to see their union and bearing on each other as an organic whole. He may have clear insight into the leading principles, gleaned from others; yet these, being second-hand, have not become a part of his intellectual life. These *dissecta membra* are not articulated so that the skeleton snatched can have living flesh and sinews to show the beauty of the whole body, and dependence of each member on all the rest. His knowledge was founded on that painstaking accuracy which is involved in the mastery of data, and the wide sweep of vision which discerns the unity of the parts organized into complete system. The subject lay before him as unity in plurality. There was nothing hazy in the atmosphere through which he looked;

<sup>1</sup> Arist., Met. i. 9, \*Ὅλως τε σημείων τοῦ εἰδότης τὸ δύνασθαι διδάσκειν ἐστίν.

nothing insecure in the ground on which he trod; and so there could be nothing weak or slipshod in his treatment of a subject. He was a student through life, reading other people's opinions, and an independent thinker who invariably formed his own. Equipped with such resources, he came to his classes, either to lecture, or conduct a recitation by testing the student on his mastery of a lesson assigned. In his lectures there was not a redundant word. He gave a clear-cut presentation of the facts, with no attempt at elegance of language or oratorical display. His style was not merely such that you could understand, but rather that which could not possibly be misunderstood. The tones were quiet, sometimes hesitating, as if from the desire to get that word which would give the fairest presentation of the truth. There was an entire freedom from mannerisms, from tautology, and from repetition. While there was no apparent effort at originality of expression, yet it was a noteworthy fact that he neither employed the language of others treating of the same subjects, nor repeated himself.

The latter trait was conspicuous in his religious services—for he often preached in chapel by request, though this was not the duty of his office. These sermons were models of pure English; full of evangelical truth, and particularly suited to an audience made up almost exclusively of hearers in the formative period of their lives. While these sermons were not as abstruse as those of Bishop Butler, and the language was more elegant, they closely resembled those of that great moralist in their trend of thought. To read them in their published form, dedicated to those pupils who heard them spoken, brings their loved author very near to our hearts. In his public prayers there was a most marked originality, despite the fact that this was a daily duty. He led the morning devotions invariably; for such was his punctuality that he did

not miss once on an average in a year. The writer heard him at every morning service during the college course, and occasionally since, and never in these exercises were there two prayers in which there was the slightest similarity of set phrase.

In teaching, also, he employed no redundant words. Here he was especially quiet and calm. His presence carried so much respect that it was never necessary for him to speak to a student about behavior in the recitation-room. There was something in the atmosphere where he taught that forbade the thought of disorder. Students prone to mischief in other places were somehow subdued when they entered his recitation. Hence he had no occasion to make any remark about good order. This was taken for granted as well by the pupil as the teacher. He came in noiselessly and rapidly; took his seat with quiet dignity; made no allusion to any extraneous subject, but began the work of the hour exactly on time. The student who desired to learn had no occasion for trepidation when he arose to recite. There was no ensnaring question, no effort to take him off his guard, which could disconcert even a weak or timid scholar. If a pupil had not studied his lesson, or could not master it, this fact was made manifest in a perfectly businesslike way; and honest ignorance was treated with kindness and relieved as far as this could be done without taking time that belonged to others. But pretentious wisdom and forward ignorance received no mercy. The needle was inserted so deftly into the gas-bag, and this collapsed so quickly, that the process was over almost before the pitiful wight knew what had happened. There was no malice in this pricking process; and while there might be mortification in the subject himself, the justice of the act was apparent to all others. It was strictly a matter of business, a part of instruction to insert the probe and relieve the swelling. For it is quite as

necessary to show a man what he does not know, as to allow him to gain culture by explaining what he partially understands.

The whole process of teaching by President Woolsey was *maieutic*. It was the business of the pupil to recite, and the teacher's duty to enable him to do this by the most effectual method. If there was any mental conception that could be delivered, this teacher could be a veritable son of Phænarete. He did not talk. The formulating of his questions was a marvel to his pupils then, and continues so still. For he embodied the most meaning in the fewest words, and they of the simplest kind, that is conceivable. Nothing that ever met the writer's notice, except Gladstone's headings to the sections into which he has divided Bishop Butler's works, could vie with President Woolsey's terseness in the questions he formulated in the oral recitation. He rises before the mind's eye, after this long interval, as he sat, still as a statue, with his hand slightly supporting his head; the forefinger resting on the nose, with the thumb and the rest of the hand under the chin. In the quietest and clearest of terms propounding a question of one or two words, he seemed to embody the substance of a whole page. If the reciter knew anything of the subject this question would call forth his knowledge. If he could not answer, then a sharp and clear suggestion was offered; and if this knock showed that there was no one at home in this student's mind, he must give place quickly to another.

The two prime requisites for a successful teacher are seldom found together. The one is to be able to formulate a clear-cut, clean, and comprehensive question. In the search after Nature's secrets the *prudens quæstio* of Bacon is the chief thing at which to aim. For the secret is always ready to be revealed to him who has the key to unlock the treasure-house where the knowledge is laid up.

But this requires not only the skill of experience, but the insight of the diviner. The knowledge is somewhere, and to be elicited when asked for in the right way. There is no reluctance in the response provided the secret spring is touched to awaken the power which is latent. So it is with the human mind,—the most cunning handiwork of Nature. When this is young, and stimulated, as it usually is, by curiosity, it has a wonderfully responsive power whenever any chord is touched, and thus made to vibrate. There are dull pupils whose modes of thought are hard to divine, either by the dull or sharp instructor. That this should be the case with the former, goes without saying. But why so with the latter? Because the operations of the quick-witted are so rapid, and his insight is so clear, that the modes of thought of the dull are unfamiliar. It is hard to the quick-witted to let himself down to the level of the sluggish and hazy. Hence many bright intellects who are possessed of thorough scholarship often fail as instructors, unless they have pupils nearly their equals in mental vigor. When two intellects of nearly equal acuteness meet, there is the sympathy of kinship.

But we must remember that the teacher is not merely or chiefly for the highly gifted—for a double reason. Such minds are rare, and when they do exist they need but little help. The able teacher is one that can take fair talent and make it brilliant; can take mediocre talent and make it useful and respectable. But how to do this most effectually is the great problem. The instructor is justified in the assumption that there is ability of at least fair order in every pupil who reaches the highest grade of schools. His task, therefore, is to reach and develop this ability. Unless, however, there is something to respond, there can be no teaching. For this process, as we have seen, does not drive education in, but, as the word denotes, draws it out. We may continue the *maieutic* idea, which is the only true

method of teaching. The intellectual germ or embryo is in the pupil's mind. It is already struggling to come forth into real life; or, if only in a dormant state, it must be awakened. In this process the pupil must endure the labor. Assistance may be given to aid nature; but if the native powers are not strong or active enough to endure parturition, nothing can be produced. The formulating of ideas in the mind to be taught, the clothing them in the dress of speech which will best set off their beauty, must be done by the learner himself, or nothing worth the pains can be effected.

Most teachers forget, or at least do not act on this, *the second* requisite in order, but the first in importance, in education. They seem to think that to educate means to tell a pupil what *they* know; not reflecting that what passes through the mind of the learner and is worked into shape by him is the measure of his acquisitions and culture. It is easy for the instructor to give the information; it is hard to elicit this from the dull or inattentive pupil. Besides, it is delightful to many instructors to display their own knowledge and superiority, and thereby excite admiration. But it is extremely difficult to formulate a clear-cut and searching question; free from verbiage yet comprehensive in reach; such as will arouse and hold the attention. Doubtless this is the most rare talent in the world, to be able to ask such questions as will force the interpretation of Nature—more rare than to be a great poet or general. Any teacher who will honestly endeavor to formulate sixty or one hundred questions in an hour, covering the amount of knowledge to be taught in that time, will find himself more exhausted than if he had split rails with Lincoln or felled trees with Gladstone. If he is honest with himself, we repeat it, he will find this a most difficult task; and hence so many instructors shrink from the labor. And added to this labor there is the weariness of listening to

ignorance, stimulating the sluggish, and restraining the forward who persist in talking when they have nothing to say. Besides it is so easy for the average teacher to talk, talk, talk; especially for him whose belly is full of the east wind, but who has not himself well mastered the subject in hand. And it is much more comfortable for the lazy or dull pupil to sit with ears, eyes, and mouth wide open, apparently taking in the torrent of words—if haply he be not engaged surreptitiously behind the bench in making caricatures of his professor or the persons of his fellows. Still the net outcome of such teaching is nothing but a dull mind made more so in the case of the learner, and the formation of a habit which will utterly unfit the instructor for his vocation.

President Woolsey talked less, and made the pupil explain more, during a recitation, than any other teacher we have ever known. For this reason, in large part, we consider him the best; though this same characteristic was conspicuous in Trendelenburg, Roediger, and Sir William Hamilton. He made the pupil do nearly all the talking; yet when the latter began to make a display of his smartness he was brought up roundly. He compelled him to think for himself, and so gain that independence of mental action which every person must acquire if he would arouse and direct the energies of others—which is the paramount duty of every educated person. There is too much talk everywhere, and this *cacoëthes loquendi* has invaded the chair of the college president perhaps more than any other calling, not even forgetting the politician. It may be taken for granted that the average student knows how to behave himself properly, and grows restive in seeing the time which is allotted to teaching consumed by advice on that or any other extraneous topic. And undoubtedly one great duty of the higher education is to accustom the learner to hold his speech in check until he has something



to say. For he should, as a man of culture, be a leader among men. There is too much talk everywhere.<sup>1</sup> The habit of talking to hear one's self talk, the feeling that silence is so much time lost, can be entertained by those only who have so little ability to think, that a small and infrequent exercise of this power is a great weariness. There is no class of persons to whom the biting sarcasm of Butler in his sermon on the "Government of the Tongue" is more applicable than to the loquacious college professor or president, who from the positions they occupy are supposed, at least by themselves, to possess wisdom which must be aired, else it would give up the ghost!

The disposition to avoid unnecessary words was certainly one of President Woolsey's leading traits. Believing that more effectual teaching is done by example than by precept, and that a most important factor in education is to be able to restrain one's self from talking until he has something to say, he maintained this characteristic not merely in the recitation-room, but wherever he might be engaged. Hence often in public religious gatherings, when, from his official position he might be expected to take a leading part, he took the lowest seat and remained silent. And when his duty was to officiate, he confined himself strictly to what belonged exclusively to the service. While he always conducted chapel service in the morning, yet he never took that as an occasion to do or say anything else than what the specified duty required. He came exactly on time, with a rapid but noiseless step, ascended the pulpit, read the Scripture, announced the hymn, and made the prayer—and such a prayer! Can any one who ever heard him pray forget the manner, the substance, or the language of the prayer? It was devotion in every part, and nothing else. And when this service was over he descended from the pulpit in the same quiet yet

<sup>1</sup> Gladstone's Butler, Vol. ii. pp. 84-85, § 10.

rapid pace, with unaffected dignity; leaving the impression that he had been with God and was clothed with his Spirit.

RIGOROUS IN HIS REQUIREMENTS.

As a teacher he was exacting with his pupils, but more so with himself. To require good work of others is only a natural consequence of a deep sense of personal duty. This was no doubt unconscious; having become a second nature, growing out of his own experience as a pupil, and his confirmed habits of study. He graduated young, at the head of his class, and ever remained a close student. This hard dealing with himself was not a necessity growing out of a struggle with narrow means, since he was born heir to such resources as would have enabled him to live in comfort without strenuous exertion. But his sense of duty compelled him to make the most of life; and in this way severity with himself became the fixed standard of his thought and action. He was indeed strict in his requirements in scholarship, and unyielding in the demand for perfect order and propriety of demeanor—though the latter was somehow secured through the awe inspired by his presence. Yet he did not demand respect as a personal right, but as due from an inferior to a superior, from a learner to a teacher. The requirements for scholarship in the college were greatly increased by his influence while still professor, and during his presidency the advance was yet more marked. To say that he had no patience with dullness would be perhaps to put the case too strongly. That he could not tolerate idleness needs scarcely to be said; and, therefore, that he dismissed such from college with short shrift can be readily understood.

There may be honest difference of opinion as to the extent dull pupils are to be tolerated. Mediocrity has its place in the world; and, if so, should have the opportunity for such culture as will enable it to make the most of

itself. And this unquestionably can be best effected by public teaching. Moreover, this order of talent needs help more than acuteness and vigor. The latter can gain culture without much assistance and secure it in many ways. But the mediocre must be aided, else it will retrograde; and the world be deprived of the fair work which this could have done under the proper conditions. Hence there will always be a doubt how far a dull pupil who is anxious to learn should be tolerated in a bright class. For the instruction which is level to the majority will be above his grasp; and if the teacher adapts it to his caliber and exercises enough patience to meet his case, the others will suffer both in the character of the teaching and the loss of time belonging to them. Mildness and compassion will do all that is possible, and, when carried to a fault, this certainly leans to virtue's side. The alternative is between the wish to aid honest dullness and spare the disgrace of removal, and the greater amount of good which can be done to the world through the effectual culture of the gifted in the same time and by the same appliances. Besides, the effect of either system is not merely on a few individuals, or temporary in its continuance. It determines the character of the institution, and conversely the character of those who seek it. Colleges segregate and classify themselves into those where it is easy to graduate and those where it is difficult. Men of diverse abilities and preparation will classify themselves accordingly; and the value of the work done will be largely determined by the degree of rigidity in the standard of requirement demanded for entrance, and maintained throughout the course.

There can be no question as to President Woolsey's position on this subject. He was rigidity itself in the demands made upon the pupil. It is possible that his own quickness of intellect, his excellent preparation for college, in their combined effect upon his own character made him

too rigid and exacting, too little considerate of those slow to learn. He certainly raised the standard of teaching and requirements in all departments. With unequaled insight into character he selected his corps of professors as the chairs became vacant, and always had a faculty of his own way of thinking. Those who loved him best must admit that he had a strong will. But there cannot be a strong character joined to a weak and vacillating will. Some one must lead in every body of men joined for common action. The leader is more necessary, if possible, than the subordinate. He must not only know what to do, but not shrink from responsibility involved in any line of action he undertakes. Every one knows that President Woolsey was the leader; no matter where he sat, that was the head of the table, whether as regards fellows, faculty, or students. He knew how to govern and had the courage of his convictions. During his long connection with Yale "he occupied," as has been well said by one of his successors, "the highest place in the life of the institution that it was possible for any one to hold." The college grew apace under his wise, aggressive, and expansive ideas. The foundations of a great university were laid securely. This work, like all that he did, was wrought noiselessly. It was not by some extraordinary effort, some grand display, some startling innovation, but by remaining at his post; working with unflagging energy each day from one year's end to another; looking into every detail of finance, of instruction, of government—for he was the prime mover of all—that Yale grew strong in the character and number of its graduates, and through them in the confidence of the country. It would be unjust and foolish to say that he did all this, or that he did not have a broad and firm foundation already laid when he began to remodel. For he found a faculty able in their separate individuality and harmonious in their action; each having unbounded love

for, and confidence in, their leader, and only too glad to work along lines which he should devise. But they all received inspiration from his spirit and example. When once asked how it was that he never was absent from an exercise, he replied: "I must show an example of punctuality. My position as president requires me to do more myself than I can ask of any one else. It would be unreasonable to ask of professors or students any more than of myself."

Yale has always been a religious institution. While entirely free from sectarianism, it has been distinctly and unmistakably Christian. No college or university in the world has for an equal number of years been more steady in its grasp on the teachings of evangelical religion. And this is right. For there can be no teaching, which is worth the name, that holds aloof from faith in a revelation, or from a culture, which, while fitting for this life, does this in entire subservience to a future state. It is not required for this result that the professors of mathematics, chemistry, or the Greek language shall give a part of each hour to dissertations on theology or the value of creeds. But all truth is so connected together that no one portion can be taught in complete isolation. There is an atmosphere of doubt as well as one of faith; and he who breathes either will be affected by the medium in which he lives. It is not necessary for a man to wear a brocard, or proclaim his creed at the corners of the streets, to prove that he is religious. The life speaks more eloquently than the oft-repeated formula; and the "epistle, that is alive, is known and read of all men." No one could come near President Woolsey without becoming conscious that here is a man who feels the solemn truth, "Thou God seest me." Yet, save in the pulpit, or in some distinctively religious service, he seldom spoke of religion; never, anywhere, of his own! But the whole attitude was that of one who

lived in constant communion with that Power which established law and embodies righteousness. He who seeks first the kingdom of heaven will have everything else; and his actions show of whom he has taken counsel, and whose temper he possesses. For the amount of religious character will be felt, like any other force, in the influence which it exerts upon the world. It cannot be hid any more than the light of the sun in the solar system, or gravitation in the universe. The less that is said about personal piety by the possessor, the more it will speak for itself; the less it is paraded, the more will it exert its hidden influence on all who come within its sphere of action.

The intellectual and moral life cannot be separated. The faith which overcomes the world has to work by love, that love which is ready to give the whole life for the good of our fellow-men. Such faith our venerated teacher showed all the time. He lived for his pupils. There was not an energy of his soul or body, not a resource of talent, learning, or worldly goods, that was not made a free-will offering for the good of those for whom he lived, loved, and prayed. He was the wise instructor in the culture of the schools; the faithful guide to the perplexed spirit; the unstinting giver to the needy and friendless student—who perchance has never more than suspected whence came the timely aid. These qualities of mind and heart combined to form a character strong in the highest elements capable of union in human nature. He did not possess that freedom of address and popularity of demeanor which invited familiarity. While he never held himself aloof, his manner spoke more plainly than words: "I have my work to do which cannot wait; have you not also your call to duty?" It is a strong aid to a teacher to hold that vantage-ground of dignified bearing, which, by never cheapening itself, prevents such familiarity as breeds contempt. For this destroys his power to convey instruction

in its greatest potency. A man is better pleased in every relation if he receives favor from a superior than from an inferior. There must, however, be a native not a factitious dignity. The latter is worse than familiarity. For while this places the benefactor on a level with the recipient, and is favorable to complete sympathy of thought and action, the other discloses an effort at falsehood. The hypocrisy awakens contempt, and thus renders nugatory whatever power of instruction a teacher may possess. The great majority of teachers can be successful only through that sympathy which is evoked by getting close to the heart, and through this reaching the head. Hatred closes every avenue of approach to the learner's inner nature. And when this prevails on one side it soon affects the other. In such a case there can be neither that trust which results from dependence, nor that freedom begotten of love; so that there remains no avenue by which knowledge can be imparted. But even if a way of approach were still left open, the chief element of culture would be neglected. For pure intellect without heart fits a man neither for intercourse with his fellows, nor communion with his own soul. It isolates him from the world without, and makes him a stranger to his higher spiritual nature, because it is left desolate.

Those who possess the native force and nobility of character which secure reverence while not inviting familiarity, acquire a dignity which is highly advantageous to them as teachers in many ways. For it awakens a feeling of loyalty like that possessed by a faithful subject towards a king who reigns by divine right. It ennobles the subject and calls forth his best services. He is ready either to live or die for the sovereign of his heart. But the kingly prerogative of a gifted and cultured intellect which is consecrated and crowned by the grace of God, calls for and receives a still more devoted loyalty. This is the

loyalty which springs from a recognition of powers cultured by precept and ennobled by example. There is a new inspiration infused by the sight of one who, while walking with God, gives every energy of his being for the service of those who seek his instruction; one who is always conferring benefits on others, yet desires no reward save their love. This, the only recompense which was possible for them, was given without measure by every pupil of Theodore Dwight Woolsey.

#### HIS TREMENDOUS EARNESTNESS.

Some one said of Dr. Chalmers, when asked wherein the great power of his preaching lay, that "it was his blood earnestness"! This temper was conspicuous in President Woolsey. With a frail, bent body, and a bloodless face; but with an eye through which all the fire of a great soul gleamed, he went about his diversified cares. He seemed never to take any rest. From one kind of work to another he was under the necessity of turning many times each day, but found no cessation. In all these labors there was the same steady yet nervous, quiet yet intense, movement. The impression was always made by those who got near his inner life that the amount of reserve force was greater in every case than that expended. In other words, that, despite the incredible amount of his service, he was never worked up to his full mental capacity, even when most busy; and that he was husbanding his strength from the rational view that he could in this way make a given amount of vital force perform the greatest amount of service. His power of concentration seemed to be perfect. The writer once asked him how it was possible to have charge of so many exacting and perplexing duties, all in the same day, without distraction or neglect of any. Since he knew that the question was not intended as an imperti-



nence, but to learn a secret as a valuable means of culture, he replied with the utmost frankness: "Early in life I endeavored to get such a control over my own powers as to give my whole attention to one thing at one time; to pursue this till it was completed, or, if interrupted, to turn at once with the same singleness of purpose, and attend to the new matter till it was finished, and then to return to my former work and resume exactly where I had left off." That he could do this was evident.

That this was requisite to enable him to do the amount of work, and do this with such excellence as was manifest in all he undertook, is equally clear. For twenty-five years he was president of all the departments of Yale, which was a university in fact, if not in name, as it had all the faculties. His correspondence was necessarily enormous; amounting, on an average, to twenty-five hundred letters per year. These he wrote in full with his own hand—many of them long, covering extensive topics,—without an amanuensis, and before the era of the labor-saving type-writer. He taught and lectured as many hours as any professor. He preached very often in the college chapel, and in other pulpits. He wrote constantly for the magazines; edited text-books; wrote extensive treatises on moral, political, legal, and economic subjects. Besides these labors there were the never-ending interruptions that a president of a large college, who does not delegate any of the details of his office to any one else, has to endure from the trivial or important wants of the students. From all these sources we have a combination of toils which will rival Scaliger's famous enumeration of the labors of a lexicographer. Yet he met all these, and left nothing undone that in any way could fall to his lot. Did he grow weary? If so, he did not weary others with the account of his own weariness.

## THE PURITY OF HIS LIFE.

Nothing impressed the thoughtful student more than the transparent purity of his life. This was manifest, whatever view you might take of him. His intellectual character exhibited what Bacon calls the "dry light." The workings of his mind were along the lines of pure truth. His language was direct and to the point, and was so accurate that it needed no illustration. There was nothing slovenly in his expression, no ideas half developed, and no incomplete sentences. There was a hesitancy sometimes in his speech to find the word or construction that would exactly enunciate what was in his mind. This arose from his unwillingness that any one should be led astray by his failure to express precisely the fact in a given case. The style of expression was generally devoid of ornament; very much like that of Aristotle, so clear that nobody was excusable for not knowing exactly what he meant to say. Some persons of good ability seem occasionally "to aim at nothing and hit it." The reason is that they are so anxious to speak that they begin before they have any elaborated knowledge. But he was preserved from this error by his strict conscientiousness. His reverence for the truth was so great that nothing could tempt him to utter a sentence that was not thoroughly canvassed, and its bearing seen from every point of view. All the power in the world could not make him swerve from strict veracity, not merely where material interests might be affected, but even when abstract truth only was in jeopardy. This characteristic was still more conspicuous when ethical interests were involved. One of his life-long friends reported a conversation held with him,—which, for substance, was the same as the writer heard from his lips,—which deserves mention: "No power in the universe, no fear, no loss, no physical suffering, could induce me to state what was even

suspected to be false." Truth in the inward parts was a ruling passion of his life. Language with him was not, as with Talleyrand, made to conceal a man's thoughts; but was given by divine inspiration, and rests upon a solemn compact which God makes with the soul. This is to convey exactly the thoughts, which in turn should be in agreement with that reality which underlies all nature. The man who always speaks the truth, who lives the truth, is allied with God; and though he may suffer for it temporarily, is the gainer in the end; for it is sure, sooner or later, of justification and recompense.

It is easy, therefore, to see that in dealing with pupils they were expected to be honest and never prevaricate. It might be thought that a man so absolutely truthful could be easily imposed upon by crafty students, because he could scarcely conceive of a rational man deliberately lying. But such was his sagacity in reading character that the prevaricator could be seen through by the Roentgen rays of his testing search-light. But few attempted to deceive him face to face. Few were audacious enough to stand before that embodiment of uprightness, and twist the truth: much less utter a downright lie. For there was something so noble and unselfish in that life which was given without recompense for the behoof of the pupil that a young man would have to become depraved indeed if he could find it in his heart to try to deceive our common benefactor. He evidently expected the truth, and almost invariably got it: either through a frank avowal, which went far to secure forgiveness, or a reluctant confession, which was easier to make, even with disgrace staring the offender in the face, than to brave out a falsehood before the incarnation of truth.

#### MODESTY AND FREEDOM FROM SELF-SEEKING.

Most people gain their ends by hard struggles and are

prone to feel that their positions are unsteady, and must be guarded with as much care as was employed in securing them. But he who is more anxious to be able to do good work than to be paid for it, to merit recognition than to receive a due reward, has no need to be perpetually looking out for himself lest he fail to get what he wishes. For there is an Omniscient Master who desires to put the servant where he can do the most good, and who has the sole power of appointment. So when a true man gets place or recognition, this is secure until the appointing power has some place better suited to the servant's abilities. But when a man through intriguing gets a position for which he does not possess the qualifications, he feels that he has sold himself for a higher price than his actual worth, and hence when his true value is discovered, he will be compelled to go down from his elevation. Hence he is always uneasy in his position, because he has just reason to fear he will lose it. But he who is truly humble, yet possesses the worth fitting him for lofty place, has nothing to fear. For he cannot be placed lower than where he thinks he belongs, and so feels in no dread of falling. The difference between the ambitious and the humble is strongly marked. The one is always dissatisfied with his present status, and is wire-pulling for advancement. This occupies him so completely that he has no time for the performance of those duties which are demanded by his present work. The other thinks only of doing good work in the place to which God has assigned him; and, being free to follow this duty with singleness of purpose, renders the best service of which his nature is capable.

In the recitation-room our teacher seemed utterly oblivious of himself, and was the impersonation of his work. How to do this best for the pupil was evidently all his thought. While there was no familiarity encouraged, at the same time there was no disposition to abridge the pu-

pil's rights. As to assumption of authority from his position, or a dignity which had to be tenderly guarded, no such thought touching him ever entered the mind of either teacher or pupil. There was only one thing to be done: that was the education of the learner by arousing his powers to independent thought; and the imparting of so much information as was necessary to that result. Hence a question was received as respectfully by him from the pupils as his questions were by us. Of course no one thought of such an absurdity as making an inquiry to get him to talk—the like of which does sometimes occur in the recitation-room—and so consume the hour. None dared to divert him from the main issue by pretended zeal for a special aspect of the subject: much less to ask him for a story to be the occasion for the forced laugh.<sup>1</sup> It would have been a curious phenomenon had any student been foolhardy enough to attempt such a liberty, and of absorbing interest to observe the outcome. But while his manner forbade all such liberties there was no awful distance—albeit each one of us held him in a particularly wholesome dread—which prevented a frank request for information germane to the lesson. There was a fairness in his treatment of each scholar which was the great secret of President Woolsey's success as an administrative officer, and representative of the policy of the college. Every student felt that there was absolutely no favoritism. The rich and the poor met together on a common footing before the law; and, as a consequence, with each other. While Yale has a proud record for many excellencies, there is nothing more distinctive of her policy than the absolutely impartial treatment of each man; no matter whether rich and backed by powerful family connections, or poor and utterly unknown. After a

<sup>1</sup> Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* :—

“ Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee,  
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he.”

student had been admitted, and as long as he remained there, he was welcome to all that Yale had to offer, whether he paid for his tuition himself, or allowed it to be paid by the president out of his salary—for he gave this, and his undivided services to the welfare of the institution—all were treated absolutely alike. It is our opinion that Yale is the most thoroughly democratic, in the proper sense of that word, of any literary institution in the world, and that President Woolsey was its most complete exponent during his long period of service.

Hence, when there was any discipline inflicted, it was upheld by pupil and public alike. And this very often occurred, for the president was an uncompromising disciplinarian. He believed in this part of government for the two reasons generally assigned, viz., Punitive and Preventive; that is, both a help to him who was punished and a warning to others. But there was no doubt, either in the minds of those who were innocent or of those who suffered for their wrong-doing, that the punishment was right, and that the effect would be salutary. And this was largely due to the confidence reposed in his decisions. For this there were two reasons, viz., that his judgment was well-nigh infallible; and that a man who lived exclusively for what he considered the best interests of all who came to him to be taught and disciplined, could be swayed by no motive but the constant desire to do right.

#### HIS WISDOM IN ANTICIPATION OF AGE.

Many able men who hold important places and do good work for a long series of years neutralize much of their desert by holding on to their positions longer than their strength warrants. To grow old gracefully and give place to successors; to stand by passively and see others inaugurate lines of policy different from our own; to be laid on the shelf while as yet we think we have the requisite sa-

gacity, supported by long experience, is an ordeal too severe for any but the grandest natures to welcome. There is no greater test of the soundness of a man's judgment and elevation of character than his readiness to surrender power when his strength begins to fail. The aged are usually the last to discern this, and restive when others suggest, in the most remote way, that their powers are waning.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore very rare for a man to anticipate this inevitable result of age, and retire before the public discerns any ground for this action. In nothing was the calm, clear sense of President Woolsey more conspicuous than the judgments he formed about himself. He knew instinctively what he could not do, and avoided failure by not making the attempt. He knew the measure of his own powers in what he did, which no one of his friends ever desired to be greater than it was. And, as the mark of consummate wisdom, he took a course betimes which effectually prevented him from undoing the good work which he had already wrought during his many years of unremitting toil, by trying to hold on to his responsible office after the period when his powers might be unequal to the demands. He anticipated this, having determined, several years before, that he would lay down the office of president when he reached the age of seventy. In a conversation with a friend the question was asked, "Why did you resign the presidency when so many of your friends desired you to retain it longer, because they were sure that you were still able in all respects for its duties?" He answered, "I have observed in my long life many persons who held on to their positions to the hurt of both their positions and themselves. I well knew the time would come when my strength would no longer be sufficient for the duties, and when that time arrived I might not be conscious of my inability. So the decision was made to lay down my office

<sup>1</sup> Gil Blas, the Archbishop of Toledo.

while, in the estimation of all others as well as myself, my strength was fully equal to the demands made upon it." Nothing could be a clearer illustration of the guiding principles of his life. That life was thoroughly unselfish, consecrated to the noblest uses, and guided by a measure of common-sense rarely, if ever, equaled.

#### HIS LAST YEARS.

The activity exercised after his retirement from the presidency showed most clearly that no powers either of mind or body had become impaired. The freedom from the incessant and harassing cares of this office allowed him to compose, or materially revise, many of his most important writings. He was the president of the American Committee for the Revision of the English Translation of the Bible, in the New Testament section, where his thorough knowledge of the Greek language was again called in requisition. He continued to be a power not only in the college where he taught, and as a member of the Board of Fellows, but also as a political factor in the nation of the most far-reaching importance. His advice was sought by the United States Government, and the policy suggested by him was followed in several of the most important crises of our country.

There was a change in his manner observable to all who had known him in the busy days of the presidency. He relaxed much of that severity of demeanor which his countenance had habitually worn, so that he evidently enjoyed life more than heretofore. The hard lines of his face gave way to a most kindly and genial expression. He seemed more joyous and younger at eighty than he had at fifty; and even took a little time for relaxation and social intercourse. Each part of his life was equally well employed and supplemented the other. The untiring labor of his youth and early manhood in laying broad founda-



tions, the superhuman energy and push of his long-continued activity while professor and president, the serene yet busy old age, when native wisdom, strengthened by experience, was mellowed by that perfect peace which follows a whole-hearted service for God and humanity, showing the beauty of holiness written in every feature of his face—these give us the picture of a rounded manhood lacking nothing. Few men have done more or better work ; none have been more loved than Theodore Dwight Woolsey.