

"Seest thou a man diligent in business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before common men." The man we speak of to night was truly a man diligent in business, in the domain of mathematics; he labored assiduously; he struggled nobly and attained a preeminence that placed him among the most gifted men of this earth. He, indeed, literally stood not only before kings but also queens, and that was more than the wise man thought of, for he was knighted by his sovereign Queen Anne. But his real patent of nobility came from no earthly hand; it came from a higher source, which said — "Behold I have sent thee forth mortal man to teach the world the secrets of my physical control of the universe; to investigate the laws by which the government of all these orbs is on my shoulders; to proclaim these universal laws of matter that govern a myriad blazing thrones, compelling them to reverence the principles of gravitation and mechanics, and to keep, as rigidly their behests throughout all the ages from long before that time when the earliest astronomer gazed at them from the rude observatory of a hilltop. I endow thee with the perception first to see the truth, and then to prove the truth, and last of all to proclaim the truth that all these battalions of remote and shining hosts are bound by the chains of the same adamantine regularity that rules our globe." Yes, Isaac Newton not only stood before those who were kings of this earth in the common sense, but he stood among the kings of intellect, who had been touched by the divine afflatus of scientific discovery, and who loyally acknowledged his supremacy. And in speaking of Newton's preeminence I cannot forbear placing before you Dryden's epigram on Milton.

"Three poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The next in majesty, in both the last.
The force of nature could no further go
To make the third, she joined the other two."

But why should Dryden in exalting Milton disparage Homer