

their undertaking, accompanied by the expression of our very hearty desire, that by the continuance of that good understanding and mutual co-operation which has hitherto always existed between the Bench and the Bar, the interests of suitors may be duly and properly attended, to, and an unsullied character for purity of administration of justice be transmitted from generation to generation.

## II. REV. DR. RYERSON,

*Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada.*

### ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL PROGRESS.

After stating how necessary it was to have mental repose, in order that the mind should be in a fit state to thoroughly digest those subjects which a person would desire to bring before an assembly, Dr. Ryerson proceeded to say that he would content himself on that occasion with laying a few practical suggestions before them. He remarked that the subject he had to deal with was alike important to all ages, all conditions, and all classes of the community. The question is, what does social progress assume and imply? It assumes the existence of society, the formation of that society by individual members, it means, in the large and more extensive sense, that which confers upon society advancement, both in an intellectual and moral point of view. In the larger sense society is made up of all grades and classes of the community.

The rev. lecturer here noticed the constitution of the United States and that of Great Britain; and in referring to the British constitution, he remarked that it had now grown into a magnificent structure, which those who belonged to that empire and lived under its sway rejoiced in, a constitution which is a glory and an honour to the British nation, and in connexion with which the largest freedom is enjoyed. Now, a constitution of this description required, of course, the punishment of the lawless and disobedient, those who refused to comply with its just and equitable laws and requirements; it is necessary that punishment must be awarded to those who violate the laws of the land. It is, therefore, necessary that there be properly constituted officers of justice, in order to carry out the executive, and it is also necessary that there be a class of persons for interpreting the laws. There are jurors, judges and magistrates for the proper administration and carrying out of these laws, in order that peace, order, and harmony may be maintained. It is also necessary for the social compact that laws should be framed, and in order to the accomplishment of this, legislators are invested with this power, although they are selected in different ways in different countries.

Political economy is that by which the wealth of a country or nation is developed. The person in whom is invested the supreme power goes by different names or titles. In one country he is called a governor, in another, a president, in another, a king, and in another, an emperor, names which indicate that supreme power is vested in these individuals, who stand at the head of the social fabric. This may be termed social progress in the largest and more extended sense. It assumes the possibility of improvement and advancement in that which conserves to the benefit and advantage of these various individuals who compose the social fabric.

What, it may be asked, does social progress imply? It implies the progress in the arts and sciences, the attainment of that knowledge which will tend to the elevation of an entire people. The reverend doctor then noticed the negative of the question for a short time. He said social progress did not imply exemption from labor. Many persons think of ease and enjoyment, freedom from labor, in connexion with social progress, but this is a great mistake—no one should assume the exemption from labor in connexion with it. Were the whole heavens dripping with dew, and the earth bringing forth more abundantly, so far from elevating man, apart from his own industrial exertion and activity, both bodily and mentally, so far from elevating him in the scale of human kindness and moral well-being, it would degrade him, it would enervate him, and morally enfeeble him. Labor is stamped upon the vast universe of God; labor is necessary in order to gain the prize; it is required and absolutely necessary throughout life, and in accordance as it would be bestowed we would advance and reap the rewards of our labor. Instead of seeing young men of our own day, who should be the hope of the country, devising all means by which to escape their share of toil and labour, instead of seeing the most promising characters blasted, we would see them manfully bearing their part of honest toil and industry. It is a bad sign, in a country like this, to see our young men crowding certain professions; in the very course and order of things this will lead to very bad results. It is a bad sign when they shrink from labour, from honest toil and industry, and leave the country, to go elsewhere in search of that which they fondly hope to attain, and which they look forward to as the goal of all their ambition, to enjoy themselves in ease and contentment, to have freedom from labor. It does not imply the necessary accumulation of wealth. It is possible that this may come upon us, and lead to the indulgence of appetites and passions, which will curse rather

than elevate our social as well as moral well-being in connexion with the social fabric. Large wealth does not beget large views. We often see in the possession of the greatest wealth the smallest and most contemptible mind. It is incumbent upon each individual to cultivate his own mind, and to bestow culture upon these noble faculties of the mind with which God has endowed each one of us.

Parents who toil from Monday morning to Saturday night, it being their one, their chief aim, by the dint of frugality and economy, to lay up a competency for their children, so that they may throughout subsequent life enjoy themselves in ease and comfort, have acted a very unwise, a very injudicious part. Careful and attentive observation will show that such has been the case. It is only by the mental and moral cultivation of the young, by energetic and vigorous exercise, that we lay a sure foundation for the country's welfare and prosperity. They are the men whose characters are formed, while those who have to rely upon what their parents or others may leave them, without depending in any measure upon their own individual exertions, prove to be in too many instances a curse rather than a blessing to the country. There may be cases of persons following different professions and trades, that may reasonably have good cause to go from one place to another in search of employment, being driven by the force of circumstances, but that is a very different thing from that spirit of restless, worthless ambition, which is too often manifested in our own day.

As society consists of individuals, social progress implies the influence of individuals. We must aim at having each individual impressed, if possible, with the necessity of individual effort being put forth. Social progress implies, in the first place, the culture of the moral faculties, in order that we may do that which is right in the sight of God and man. It is indispensably necessary that the faculty of conscience should be maintained in good health in order that it may fulfil its important office, for the direction of the whole. It is necessary, if a man would answer the great end of his being, that he pay particular attention to that great faculty which Almighty God has placed within him, and that silent monitor that warns every man of his danger, and checks him when he goes astray, and to see to it well that he does not stifle the voice of conscience; then he can go with all the confidence it secures and inspires him, and manfully look up and face his fellow man.

The first elements in individual progress is the culture of the moral faculties; the second the culture of the religious affections. This is a very important element in social progress. Our existence cannot be separated from that divine being "in whom we live, and move, and have our being." Other powers can be advanced when these faculties are cultivated. The rev. doctor here very eloquently referred to the heathen gods of antiquity, and showed the debasing influence they exerted upon the human mind. Can it be otherwise, then, that he who walks with the divine being must be elevated? Then it will be that the character of man will be laid upon the true, the permanent basis. When there is a being who rules over all, who watches over all, can it be otherwise, then, that a salutary influence will be exercised over the entire man. There cannot be any prosperity, there cannot be any social progress, without the culture of the religious affections, and this he, the lecturer, would urge without any reserve.

Social progress implies a culture of the mental faculties. When the affections of the mind and heart are placed upon the proper object, it is then that the whole faculties of the mind will be improved. One description of mental power, which should be specially impressed upon his audience, is the power of thought, in bringing forth its latent powers, its latent energies, and which will have the beneficial effect of enabling the mind to grapple successfully with the great question it may be called upon to deal with. It is often the case, that without this faculty of the mind being improved, that the mind is passive in reading, and the consequence is, that we read with little or no advantage and profit. The whole system of mental culture should rather have for its grand object the cultivating of that which is within, than adding from without.

By what means may social progress be improved? First, by aspiring and having a due appreciation of individual importance. It is a common fault to think too much, rather than too little, of ourselves; but there is one sense in which we cannot attach too much importance to ourselves, and that is to attach a high value to the great powers with which we have been so highly favoured and blessed, and by which we can rise high in the scale of intellectual grandeur and excellence, being possessed with an immortal soul, that is capable of an inconceivable state of happiness throughout eternity. Another element is to make the most of the powers with which we are favoured. It is often the case that those who have the most opportunity to accumulate a large library, and other means at their disposal by which they have it in their power to gain a vast amount of information, make the least improvement. If we would excel, and become ornaments to society, we must make the most of the privileges we enjoy. If we would look at those celebrated individuals