

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE CHIEF STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MASSACHUSETTS.—In the Address which the Governor (Briggs) of Massachusetts, on the 29th of last June, made to Dr. JARED SPARKS, in presenting to him, according to law, the seal and keys of HARVARD UNIVERSITY, as President of that Institution, we have the following remarks on the subject of religious instruction in the University:

"An opinion exists to some extent in the community, that, in the various departments of education in this country, the moral training of the pupil is too much neglected. If such an error prevails, it ought to be corrected. The importance of moral instruction cannot be over-stated. The heart is the fountain of motive, and the wise man enjoins that it should be 'kept with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.' Christianity is the only rock upon which the character of man can be built with safety. I am sure, Sir, that its hopes and its principles, that its beautiful and sublime precepts, as illustrated in the wise teachings and in the spotless life of its Divine Author, will be leading topics of the instructions which the youth committed to your charge will daily receive from your lips.

For more than two hundred years the people of Massachusetts have respected and cherished this first-born literary institution of the New World. In the constitution of the Commonwealth, they say it was founded by 'wise and pious men,' and ratify its legal existence.

The truth of your character is to them a pledge, that all the powers of your mind and heart will be devoted to a faithful and impartial administration of its affairs, and to the advancement of good learning and science; that you, as the executive officer of the College, will maintain a discipline that will win the affections of these young gentlemen and their successors, and that will secure obedience to its laws; that all party politics will be avoided, and the only governmental doctrines inculcated will be the great principles of constitutional liberty; and that, discarding all sectarianism in religion, the theology taught will be the simple truths of revelation, as written in letters of living light on the pages of the Bible."

PRESIDENT SPARKS, in reply to this part of GOVERNOR BRIGGS' inaugurating address, observes as follows:

"When your Excellency speaks of the importance of a moral and religious education, your words must meet with a cordial response from every friend of youth, nay, from every friend of mankind. The principles, the vital truths, the practical rules of life, taught in the Divine Word, the doctrines and precepts of the Saviour revealed from heaven to illumine, cheer, and save a dark and erring world, should be made in every institution of learning the cardinal elements from which all other instruction should spring. The religion set forth in the Gospel of Christ inculcates love to God and man; it exhorts us to reverence our Maker and obey his laws, to search for the truth with honest hearts, and to build our faith upon honest conviction; it enjoins charity, forbearance, goodwill; it teaches men to live together as brethren, to think for themselves, but to act for the good of others, to avoid names, divisions, discords, and to strive for peace, amity, union; and it opens to us the certainty of an immortal world, where the acts and motives of men will be weighed in an equal balance, and where the awards will be meted out by a just and merciful Judge. May this religion be taught here in its purifying efficacy, felt alike by those who teach and those who learn; may it be taught and felt everywhere, in the temples of God, in the busy throngs of men, and in the quiet repose of the fireside, till the whole human family, children of one common Father, shall learn the lesson of universal love, and join as with one voice in hymns of praise and adoration!"

ESTIMATE OF COMMON SCHOOLS AS WELL AS COLLEGES, BY THE GOVERNORS AND SCHOLARS OF NEW ENGLAND.—The GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS, in inducting Dr. JARED SPARKS into the office of President of Harvard University, a few months since, made the following reference to Common Schools:

"Not doubting that the colleges of the Commonwealth always feel an interest in the success of her common schools, I may be

allowed to suggest that more practical demonstrations of that interest, and the manifestation of a desire for their advancement, in all suitable ways, would greatly tend to promote the prosperity of both these essential departments of education.

The mass of our children and youth must begin and finish their education in the district school house. There the children of the poor, mingling with the children of the rich, must gather the treasures of knowledge. Our system of free schools is one of the richest fruits of the Gospel, which upon its introduction into the world, was preached to the poor. They are the natural nurseries of the colleges.

Let the free schools in all our towns be competent to fit their pupils for college, and our colleges will be always full. The interests of the two institutions are identical. Both should be ardently loved and cherished by all who love their country, liberty, and their race."

PRESIDENT SPARKS replies to the Governor in the following golden words:

"Your Excellency has mentioned the common schools, and the intimate relation between them and the colleges. Here, permit me to say, you have touched a chord, whose vibrations I would neither resist nor disguise. Many of my earliest and dearest associations are centred within the narrow walls of the school-room. Nurtured during my childhood and youth in the common schools of New England, and for six winters a teacher of a common school, I have reason to be grateful for the benefits derived from them, in forming both my mind and character. Nor is it too much to say, that, for such of the qualifications as I may possess for understanding and discharging some of the most important duties of the station in which I am now placed, I have been more indebted to the seeds planted in the common schools, and to the experience which strengthened their growth, than to the latter instruction and discipline of a college. But they are both necessary to a well-ordered, prosperous community,—columns of the same temple, administering mutual and needful support. They both claim the fostering care and substantial aid of an enlightened public, and the earnest good wishes of every citizen, every patriot, who would see the glory and happiness of his country resting on the durable foundation of virtue upheld by knowledge, high intellectual culture, and a wide-spread intelligence."

Miscellaneous.

SPHERE OF HUMAN INFLUENCE.

BY THE REV. THOMAS HILL.

Charles Babbage, in his "Ninth Bridgewater Treatise," has a chapter concerning the permanent impression of our words upon the air,—a chapter which none have ever read without a thrill of mingled admiration and fear: and which closes with an eloquence that is worthy the lips of an orator, though coming from a mathematician's pen.

Would that Babbage had touched, in his fragmentary treatise, upon some of the inferences which may be drawn from the Newtonian law of gravity,—inferences which would probably have been as new to most of his readers, as those which he, with so much acuteness, draws from the law of the equality of action and reaction.

The motion of which Babbage speaks, in the chapter to which we refer, is undulatory, communicated by impulse, and requiring time for its transmission; and the startling result of his reasoning comes from the never-dying character of the motion, keeping forever a record of our words in the atmosphere itself; always audible to a finer sense than ours; reserved against the day of account, when perchance our own ears may be quickened to hear our own words wringing in the air.

But motion is not only enduring through all time, it is simultaneous throughout all space. The apple that falls from the tree is met by the earth; not half way, but at a distance fully proportioned to their respective masses. The moon follows the movement of the earth with instant obedience, and the sun with prompt humility bends his course to theirs. The sister planets with their moons are moved by sympathy with the earth, and the stars and most distant clusters of the universe obey the leading of the sun.