

the docile animal tribes, the broad, the various, the unexhausted domain of nature, are a mere outward pageant poorly understood in their character and harmony, and prized only so far as they minister to the supply of sensual wants. How different the scene to the man whose mind is stored with knowledge ! For him, the mystery is unfolded, the veil lifted up, as one after another he turns the leaves of that great volume of creation, which is filled in every page with the characters of wisdom, power, and love ; with lessons of truth the most exalted ; with images of unspeakable loveliness and wonder ; arguments of Providence ; food for meditation ; themes of praise.\*

It is true that the passions of the corrupt and sinful heart of man may often trample down not only the influences of knowledge, but of Inspiration itself ; but I speak of natural and general tendencies and of knowledge based upon Christian principles, clothed in the philosophy and animated by the spirit of genuine Christianity. Can an educated man then be morally guiltless for withholding, in a spirit of negligence and selfishness, from his fellow-man—nay, from his country—the inestimable blessing of knowledge, and inflicting upon them the unspeakable curse of ignorance ? Is not such a character as guilty before God, as he is odious in the sight of men ? This linking of man with man in the obligations of reciprocal duty, as well as in the condition of mutual dependence,—this enjoined care of the parent for the offspring, the rich for the poor, the strong for the weak, the old for the young, the rulers for the ruled, the educated for the ignorant, is the predominating spirit of that Book which is alike the authoritative standard and teacher of “ whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.” That “ it is not good for the heart to be without knowledge,” is alike the voice of Revelation and the testimony of experience ; and “ My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” unfolds the source of the most terrible national calamities which are recorded in history. The educated men who does nothing to remove the pall of ignorance from his country thus contributes to destroy it. Can he truly love either his nation or his Maker ? Is he not a just object of public execration ? and can he stand acquitted before the Supreme tribunal ?

The motives of action on the part of educated men are greatly strengthened, and their responsibilities proportionately enhanced, by the facilities and certainty of success which are possessed by us over the famed and fallen nations of antiquity. We possess the almost superhuman art of printing, which was unknown to them ; we enjoy a free and representative government which in reality never existed among them ; and we have a true and spiritual religion, of which they were ignorant. In the absence of printing, knowledge was confined among the Greeks to the cities, to sophists and slave-holders, while the mass of the people throughout the country, and even in the towns and cities, were profoundly and brutally ignorant ; their governments were either ill-regulated and tumultuous democracies or military despotisms ; their Deities were the patrons of the worst passions and vices, and their worship was an instrument of debauchery and corruption. They wanted the essential elements of durability, and soon yielded to the invader, or dissolved in anarchy. With

\* Discourse on the benefits of the General Diffusion of Knowledge.