

some of us that we shall see each other's faces no more upon earth—believing that at such a time the words I speak to you may receive a place in your minds, which better words had failed to win under different circumstances—I am led to offer you some brief counsels for your future guidance. Without speaking words that will be deemed unsuitable by those who have favoured us with their presence on this occasion, I may venture to remark that the examination which you have undergone during these two days has been in a high degree satisfactory, showing that during the session now closing you have been worthily employed. Let me now urge it upon you to have always a worthy object of pursuit: and, having such an object, to pursue it with befitting earnestness. This is very much what is contained in that precept of the wise man, which he enforces so solemnly, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

Have always a worthy object of pursuit. Your hand must find something to do; for work is the law of creation. The stars rest not in their courses, nor the insect in the sunbeam. You were not made for rest, but for work. This you might have learned from all nature; but God hath come and taught it to you, saying, "Go, work in my vineyard." You must have some object of pursuit; see that it be a worthy one. Here the Bible—the Book of books—the Book of God—must be your guide. It must be so, because its directions are alone infallible, embracing the whole extent of our existence, and the full range of our relations. You will learn from it that your first and highest object should be to please Him who is your Creator, Preserver, and Judge—to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and that, unless this be sought after by you, your application to anything else will be the veriest vanity. The Bible will teach you, however, that this first and highest object may be pursued in the discharge of a vast variety of employments corresponding to the variety of our circumstances and relations, and to that variety at successive stages of our existence. We may please God—we may seek His kingdom and righteousness—everywhere, and in all things; and in taking our principles of action from the Bible, and following the lights and leadings of Providence in a lowly and reverential spirit, we cannot fail of discovering the very calling in which God would have us to engage—our hand will find the very thing in His vineyard He has for us to do; for "the meek He will guide in judgement, and the meek He will teach His way." Your lines of things will be different, your departments of exertion various; but, walking humbly with your God—in the light of His word, and under the direction of His Providence, it will be His work, and the portion of His work for which you are best fitted, that you will find to do; you "will be about your Heavenly Father's business"; and this will ensure your object, whatever it may be, being a worthy one. You have not, I trust, lived so far from God hitherto as to be destitute of the blessed feeling that He has thus far directed your steps. By the young, alas! as well as by the old, the rule, "In all thy ways acknowledge God," is but too much neglected; and it may not be that all of you were consciously directed from above to apply yourselves to the cultivation of your talents and the enlargement of your knowledge in such a course of education as you are now passing through; but some of you, I may venture to hope, were so. Some of you can say, I am applying to my present work because it was made plain to me, after much examination and prayer, that it was God's will that I should become a Student; and, if it be so, your work here among the worthiest in itself, is worthy in you. One worthy object of pursuit at least you already have. But mere students you are not always to be; mere students, indeed, you can at no time innocently be, because to study is but one of your obligations. Already there are presented to you other objects, the worthiness of which, as well as

your call to them, must be painfully scrutinized by you; and these objects will enlarge as life opens up, and your relations extend. In all cases you will be guided to a proper determination, if you acknowledge God: setting Him before you, your paths will be directed; your hands will find what they should do, because they will find what God gives them to do; and you will proceed on as securely as if you were hearing a voice from Heaven, saying to you, 'This is the work to which I appoint you.' Of this direction you may be assured because it is promised by Him who cannot lie.

Having a worthy object of pursuit, pursue it with befitting earnestness. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." I have indicated the circumstances in which the pursuits of a student would be worthy in you; I have expressed my hope that these circumstances are yours—that, if you are intermeddling with all wisdom and cultivating your intellectual powers, as but few of our race are privileged to do, you have the feeling that this, in your case, is according to the will of God. Truly if your work here, through your call to it in Providence being plain, is worthy in you, it is in itself pre-eminently worthy. If regard be had to the high objects with which you are here brought acquainted, and to the fitness which the studies and discipline of this place will give you for the discharge of distinguished employment in the service of God, and for the good of your fellow-men, your present pursuits are indeed noble; and well then might we expect to see you giving yourselves to them with your might. Undoubtedly it is befitting that your work, as the Students of a College, should be done with the heart, with good will, with the deepest earnestness you can feel; let us hope that this work will be so done by you, and that, as you advance, your course will be marked by a more settled determination, by a growing enthusiasm, in study. I feel the importance, my young friends, of your now studying with your might; I feel that your present opportunities are unspeakably precious, and that they demand that you should strive to make the most of them. But you are not to be always Students; you will soon have to use what you have acquired; thinking must be succeeded by acting. Other objects than those which are pursued by the light of the midnight lamp, will soon be presented to you; far sooner, perhaps, than you think. Already even are you in the midst of such objects; and from one and another portion of the vineyard of the Lord is there a call coming to you, "Why stand ye idle, since here is work for you to do?" It is not therefore in reference to your pursuits as Students merely, however worthy these may be, but in reference to all those pursuits in which God is now calling or may hereafter call you to engage, that I seek to press upon you the giving of yourselves to them with earnestness. Not in regard to one thing only, but in regard to whatsoever thing you do, would I urge you, in the words of Solomon, "to do it with your might".

Earnestness in your work is indispensable to your success. It was said to Reuben, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel;" and a commentator, writing upon this, quaintly says, "Men do not thrive because they do not fix." Nothing is more true. No one can thrive in anything without vigorous and sustained exertion; all things may be done with strength and fixedness of purpose; without them, nothing. Pre-eminently is this true of study; especially in this age, so remarkable for activity and competition. Let the young Student not forget this. Let him take it along with him, that more needful in these days than in any before them are fervour and fixedness of purpose; that attainments and training, which might have succeeded heretofore, will not succeed now; that, consequently, Students must feel more intensely, and work more industriously than their fathers, if they would not encounter the shame and disappointment of sinking beneath their fathers' level.

Earnestness in your objects of pursuit is as indispensable to your happiness as to your success. What has just been said, shows this; for how can a man be happy, who must always be trembling under anticipated failure? But the blessedness of industry is seen from every point at which it can be viewed. While sloth withers the strength both of our mental and corporeal frame, industry preserves a healthy mind in a healthy body. Labour, though it bears upon it the stamp of the curse, has, in the wisdom and goodness of God, been converted into one of our chief blessings. The life of the industrious, if only God be acknowledged in it, is a continual feast. The life of the idle, on the other hand, is a continual vexation; insomuch that persons, who have looked forward to a retirement from active life as the summit of their ideas of enjoyment, have then only, for the first time, learned what it was to be truly unhappy.

Without earnestness in your work you cannot please God. It is not the sluggish and cold that He seeks to serve Him; His servants must be fervent in spirit; only such can be acceptable in His sight. If our eyes were open, we should receive confirmation of this from every quarter. The laws impressed upon creation—the claims of God upon our service—the nature of that service—and the difficulties amidst which we have to render it—all would proclaim in our ear that in the listless and supine God can have no pleasure, that in the zealous and laborious only can He take delight.

In fine, without earnestness in your work you cannot be prepared for the rewards of eternity. Time flies; we shall soon have done with all here; soon have to lay ourselves down and die. But should this grieve us, when this voice has been heard from Heaven, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them?" Yet let us observe these words. The blessed, of whom they speak, are persons who rest from their labours, and whose works follow them. This looks ominously for the hopes of those who are not labouring, who are not working; who, when their Master in Heaven has a work for them to do, either pass by on the other side, or, if they approach it, come to it with a cold heart and nerveless hand. Will a servant of this kind be pronounced a servant at all? Or, if he is, will it not be an unprofitable servant, and will he not receive the unprofitable servant's doom? Let this be reflected on. Let it convey a timely alarm to those who have ever thought that they might spend life on the lap of ease, yet lay hold of the prizes of immortality. Ease,—what have we at least to do with ease? Work—blessed work—is our calling. Who would not wear out rather than rust out, even if there were no hereafter? But there is. Meantime our vocation is work, and arduous work too; for it is to strive against sin—to be at enmity and war with the diversified forms of moral evil in ourselves and in others. "It were in vain," says Foster, "to seek to escape from the condition of our place in the dominions of God. A mind of wandering and melancholy thought, impatient of the grievous realities of our state, may at some moments almost breathe the wish that we had been a different order of beings, in another dwelling than this, and appointed on a different service to the Almighty. In vain! Here still we are to pass the first part of our existence in a world where it is impossible to be at peace, because there has come into it a mortal enemy to all that live in it. Amidst the darkness that veils from us the state of the universe, we would willingly be persuaded that this our world may be the only region [except that of penal justice] where the cause of evil is permitted to maintain a contest. Here perhaps may be almost its last encampment, where its prolonged power of hostility may be suffered in order to give a protracted display of the manner of its appointed destruction. Here our lot is cast on a ground so awfully pre-occupied; a calamitous distinction! but yet a sublime one, if thus we may render to the Eternal King a service of a