

poet, "with eye in fine frenzy rolling," was ever more in earnest than the experimental philosopher probing nature for another of her precious secrets.

But the truth of this general view acquires its most luminous illustrations when we turn to those men who have been the chief benefactors of the world in its social and religious reformations. The fiery zeal of Luther and Knox has often been censured. Assuredly it was not, in either, at all times so perfectly under the guidance of heavenly wisdom as could be wished; yet who can estimate the importance of the indomitable energy and burning zeal of these men to the success of the reformation in Germany and Scotland? It is grand to see how their zeal made them strong to burst asunder the fetters which had for ages enslaved the mind of Europe. And I cannot but think that but for the Christian sincerity and noble earnestness of Cromwell, British liberty might have perished in its cradle; and had not Burke been as earnest as he was wise and eloquent, it might at the close of the last century have gone down in the darkness and anarchy of a licentious democracy. Verily, gentlemen, I am most anxious to impress you deeply with the fact, that nothing great or beneficial for the world has ever been achieved except by earnest and energetic men. It is the earnest missionary, such as Brainerd or Williams, who under God converts a heathen tribe; it is the earnest minister in a Christian land that edifies and blesses his congregation; it is the earnest statesman who secures true liberty for his country and resolutely defends it; and it is the earnest counsel at the bar to whom the innocent man on his trial looks with confidence, to whom the jury give a believing ear, and to whom the judge turns with respect. Why should it be otherwise, if earnestness be, as we have defined it, clear views of great truths and a keen perception of motives to the performance of duty. Without this no professional man is entitled either to confidence, love, or esteem.

There never was a time when the world stood more in need of men of true earnestness than at present. For, are not these the men *who alone can guide and restrain* the popular mind, in the new channels into which it is now at all points forcing itself? "Give me a place to plant my fulcrum on," said the ancient philosopher, "and I will move the world." Give us earnest men, say I, and then we will move the moral world rightly. Assuredly, we see on all hands much ardor in the prosecution of certain objects. There never was an age in which men sought wealth or political power more keenly or cultivated more sedulously the physical sciences and the mechanical arts. In all this there is much to commend, and much that furnishes ground for hope. Yet these things are not the highest that ought to enlist the heart of man. For the highest of these should but be means of far higher ends.