

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE

CHURCH IN BRATTLE SQUARE,

BOSTON,

ON THE

LORD'S DAY

AFTER THE DECEASE OF

JOHN WARREN, M. D.

MERSEY PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY AND SURGERY IN THE
UNIVERSITY AT CAMBRIDGE,
PRESIDENT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY,
CORR. MEMBER OF THE LOND. MEDICAL SOCIETY,
&c. &c. &c.

WHO DIED IV. APRIL, MDCCCXV. AGED LXII.

BOSTON :

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1815.

SERMON.
SERMON.
PREACHED AT THE

TO THE

RELIC AND THE CHILDREN

OF THE LATE

DOCTOR WARREN,

THIS SINCERE, THOUGH FEEBLE, TRIBUTE

IS INSCRIBED

WITH RESPECTFUL AND AFFECTIONATE

SYMPATHY.

Joseph McKean.

Harvard College, 10 April, 1815.

SERMON.

ROMANS XII. 11.

“NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS, FERVENT IN SPIRIT;
“SERVING THE LORD.”

MAN is evidently framed and endowed, with a view to activity, usefulness, and enjoyment. How curiously and wonderfully made! How nobly capacitated! How richly gifted! Shame, to the ungrateful recipients of an intelligence, next to divine, who would employ this glorious prerogative in endeavours to prove that it is earthborn and perishing! Pity, for the deluded followers of this miscalled philosophy, which would make life a casual, or spontaneous, or necessary modification of matter; and death, the extinction of being! Oh, no! the hand of God surely is here. Speech, reason, memory; these, to say nothing of the animal economy, cannot be the result of chance. Still less can the sentiments and affections, which rise up even to God, and extend around to all His creatures; embracing most firmly those, whom consanguinity or friendship brings closest to the individual, but including within their regards the whole human family; it cannot be, that these are

but of temporary duration; limited to the short span of "three score and ten years;" seldom allowed even that brief compass; and liable at any moment to *destruction*. It may not be, that a luminary so bright, and beaming such genial rays, is but a spark lighted up by accident, struck out by fate, and exposed to be finally extinguished by every fleeting atom, by every passing gale.

The powers conferred on man, and his adaptation to enjoy and to do good, indicate the intention of his wise and benevolent Creator. This is, if possible, more clearly and fully declared, in His inspired word. Here, even more plainly and authoritatively, than by the bodily and mental constitution of man, are his personal, and social, and religious duties enjoined. On this ennobling scheme, man is not the mere "compound of matter and motion." He is a child of God, an heir of immortality. He is not an outcast upon creation's waste, cut off from the regards, or beneath the care, of superiour intelligences. He is "compassed about with a cloud of witnesses;" is the charge of angels; is noticed by God. He is not insulated from the joys or the responsibilities of association. Connected by strong ties, with fellow subjects of the Universal Sovereign, he finds many additional motives and helps to duty and enjoyment, in the relations of himself to others; the highest excitement and obligation, from the state of dependence and accountability, in which all stand to Jehovah.

Such are the uniform representations of human duty, in the Holy Scriptures. Such, most plainly and explicitly, is the doctrine of the apostle, in the context. In urging an argument, common to all his associates in the honour, of recording the will of God to man, he begins with “the mercies of God;”* and justly infers the “reasonable service,” of dedicating all that He hath given to His use and honour, “a sacrifice holy and acceptable” to Him. It is then correctly deduced, that in order to please Him, we must love and serve those, with whom He has connected us. By the expressive analogy, of the mutual dependence and influence of the several limbs and organs of one body, all not having the same office, but none superfluous or useless, is happily illustrated the necessity and benefits of harmony and cooperation among the constituent members of a community.” “We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” “Let love, therefore, be without dissimulation.” “Be kindly affectioned, one to another, with brotherly love.” Be “of the same mind, one towards another.” “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.”† Be not *slothful*, in your respective *business*; but, with active diligence, with *fervent* zeal, use all your time, exert all your talents, to advance the best interests of society, in conformity to the law, in compliance with the *authority*, and with reference to the favour of God.

* vs. 1. † 5. 9. 10. 16. 15.

Here is briefly represented the measure, the spirit, and the motive of social duty. Here is comprized what is to be done; in what manner, and why, it is to be done; *Diligence*, in some useful employment, *Ardour*, in the pursuit of good ends, and *Respect to the will of Him*, to whom we are accountable.

These requisites may first, be briefly treated separately; then, the excellence and value of their combination; and this will naturally lead to a particular application.

I. Be "not slothful," in the discharge of the appropriate "business" assigned you in life.—The powers of man, though great, are not unlimited. Few have talents, adapted equally for all exercises; scarce any, those which can compass *all* the objects of pursuit; most may rest contented with excelling in some one department. There can be no doubt that the cause of science, of the arts, and of human happiness, is best promoted by the concentration, in a great degree, of the efforts of each individual, to some one point. The division of callings and professions is one of the first steps in the progress, from a rude and savage to a cultivated state of society. Instead of attempting to do all that is wanted or wished, for the supply of his necessities, or the gratification of his convenience; each aims principally to furnish a definite contribution to the common stock, from which, while he renders accommodation to others, he finds in ex-

change a supply for his own. In societies thus organized, the selection of the particular sphere of action, becomes to every rational and responsible agent a concern of incalculable moment. We suppose a youth, favoured by indulgent providence, with parents who, in a good degree, realize and fulfil the high trust committed to them. He is blessed with "a sound mind, in a healthful body." He has been guarded from the physical dangers and moral snares, which beset infancy and childhood. He has arrived at years of some discretion and consideration. What question can be stated, of comparative magnitude, respecting the present world, with that which involves the choice of the path to be taken, in order to most comfort and usefulness. In proportion to the talents possessed, the previous means and opportunities of cultivating them, and the measure of knowledge acquired; does this election become, in an increased degree, important. Take the case of one, who has had the advantages of a liberal education; who has used, with a reasonable share of diligence, the benefits of some well endowed and conducted seminary. On such an one, the eyes of the community, as well as of family and friends, are turned. The streams, of which he has partaken, are, in part, derived from the publick; and society has peculiar claims on all, who drink at the fountain which the wealth of the whole helps to supply; that they repay the boon, by giving of the strength and health, which have

been thence imbibed, to the promotion of the common benefit.—The field of usefulness is most extensive; no one section is exclusively fertile, or inviting; several promise, with nearly equal certainty, a rich harvest of renown and advantage. Natural taste, cherished inclination, the wishes of connexions;—some or all these may be allowed weight, in the deliberations; but the decisive, the ultimate criterion is not to be overlooked. How may most *good* be effected? How is it reasonable to presume may the *general welfare* be, in the greatest degree and the best manner, subserved? This once satisfactorily ascertained or believed, due regard, of consequence, being had in the estimate, to personal adaptation and inclination; there is, to each, the assigned department of labour, of duty, of enjoyment.

In this sphere, whatever it be, of manual ingenuity, of intellectual research, of civil or sacred employment; diligence, industry, perseverance are indispensable. Usefulness, eminence, remuneration, are alone to be expected, by as close application, as continued exertion, as consists with necessary attentions to health of body and energy of mind. These, may not be disregarded, in solicitude for distinction, or even for usefulness. The most benevolent, the most pious enterprizes, must not so engross the care and efforts; as to lead man to forget, that human strength is of a measured capability; and that the animal and spiritual or-

ganization is liable to derangement by excessive tension. Even in the excitement of the race, the candidate for the prize is not to overlook the consideration that life has other scenes of exertion; that the acclamations of admiring spectators, for the triumphant bearing off of a single crown, will poorly compensate for a frame exhausted, perhaps irrecoverably doomed to imbecility or languishment, by one overplied hour. Amid the inspiring clangour of martial instruments and of clashing weapons, true valour is as prospective as it is fearless; and alike avoids needless danger, as it heeds not and knows not of risk, at the post of prescribed duty. But remissness or slothfulness will prove the bane of every thing great and good. Within the limitations just hinted, toil and fatigue are not to be too carefully shunned, nor their evils too greatly magnified. The dust and heat of the course, the turmoil and peril of the combat, are to be encountered without murmuring, endured without faltering. They will be abundantly compensated by self approbation, if not, with the highest meed of victory.

Industry is the dictate of enlightened self love, as well as the positive law of benevolence. The mind and the body demand exercise, as a mean of happiness. Pleasure would seek employment, if duty did not enjoin occupation; taste must be active, if reason did not demand exertion. The happy man is the industrious man. How far from en-

joyment, commonly how far from contentment, is the slothful. If recurrence be not had to vicious indulgence, to fill up the vacuity; how listless, if not restless, how dispirited, if not fretful, are those who have nothing to do; or rather, for there are none such, who engage in nothing! The world is large enough, and there is enough to be done in it, to occupy every one of its inhabitants. None, then, who are able to lend their aid to the common cause, may innocently refuse, or decline their share of solicitude and labour:—which leads to remark, that this is man's incumbent obligation. Industry is not only the mean of usefulness to our fellow creatures, and comfort in ourselves; it is well pleasing to Heaven. It is not only recommended, as fit and salutary; it is binding, as duty. It alike has the sanction of expediency, utility, honour, and happiness; and the express, plain law of God.—What had been Adam's mode of service, to his Maker, and Friend, had he continued in the favour which he originally enjoyed, it is not easy to ascertain, nor necessary to consider. But even in Eden, its happy tenant was not idle. He was located there, “to dress and to keep the garden, which the Lord God had planted.” While he participated freely in its delights, he was to advance and to direct its luxuriance. It may be, we cannot now form an adequate idea of the whole method of serving our heavenly Father and our brethren, had we continued in obedience. When our progenitor and re-

presentative forfeited his first estate, we know, from infallible authority, that one condition of his spared life and protracted years was, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground."* The earth was doomed to "bring forth briers and thorns," choaking its flowers and stinting its fruits; except where the industry of its cultivators should subdue its stubbornness, and cause herbage to spring, and food to grow. It is industry, which, by the blessing of the Almighty, converts the desert into a garden; which causes cities to rise on the barren shore; which furnishes man with commodious mansions, instead of the dark cavern or the earthy hovel; which, exerting its potent influence in commerce, manufactures, and the various arts, improves a commonwealth; raises and adorns the edifices, which may tell posterity of its wealth and greatness; rears and embellishes the consecrated domes and turrets, which bespeak its pious and literary munificence. It is industry, which enables genius to guide the chisel and the pencil, with that combination of power and skill, which produces imitations of nature that vie with the originals, in all, but breath and sense: which, copying from the mind, the results of meditation, reflection, and study, devises and matures those works, which astonish and improve the passing age, and secure an immortality of fame. This, in a word, it is, which gives to one man among his associates his chief distinction; which places one

* Gen. iii. 19.

people, high above another, in all that ornaments, and strengthens, and enriches a community; which separates a refined and polished, from an unlettered and barbarous age; which raises, according as it is efficient, a nation to true renown, and when declining, involves its degradation and misery.

So much space has been occupied on the *measure*, that less can be spared than might be useful, for treating of the *manner*, and *motive*, of a good man's deeds.

II. Be "fervent in spirit;" in the diligent prosecution of your chosen or appointed service. That which wisdom recommends to be undertaken, and virtue permits and approves, is worthy of real engagedness of soul. That which does not authorize the arousing and exerting of all the energies to accomplish, is of equivocal character; that which would justify, but does not command them, is not a favourite pursuit. Every motive of interest, every impulse of honourable ambition, every requirement of duty, which calls for industry, concurs to insist on zeal, in the vast and arduous duties of life. Unless this be, in some good degree, felt and cherished, those become a heavy load; it may be, an intolerable burden. Irksome, almost to loathing, must be that course of difficult and laborious exercise, in which the heart takes little or no interest. Easy, cheerful, delightful, are those engagements, in which the soul is wrapt up; howev-

er much the time they occupy, or the attention, they demand, or the labour they occasion. The curiosity is then ever awake, to add to the knowledge; inquiry is ever busy, in discovering new relations and combinations. The ability to execute continually advancing towards perfection, the wish is earnest, the purpose resolute, by the divine blessing, never to relax, nor to abandon the intensest efforts, while providence permits them to be prosecuted; until all is accomplished, which, with the powers entrusted, and the advantages afforded, mortal capacity, and industry, and energy can possibly attain.

III. Diligence and zeal must be consecrated, to "serving the Lord." All which He has given, is to be used in ways conformable to His will; and because of His authority. The evident requirement of reason, the imperative command of revelation still more decisively, is "Do all, to the glory of God." "Whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." In nothing, perhaps, have mistakes been more frequent, or are they more pernicious, than in separating religious motives, from the actions of ordinary life; and representing, or rather, apparently acting as if admitting, that the service of God is confined to publick acts of religious homage, or the more private and personal, though still positive, exercises of piety. But religion is an ever influential, and ever operative principle; as really exhibited, in

the prevailing affections, which shine forth in domestick life, in the habits of social intercourse, in the engagements of professional or publick business, as in the worship of the temple, or of the family. These are reasonable and incumbent expressions, of a deep rooted principle, a cherished sentiment; but still, they are chiefly means to an end. Of themselves, they have little value; and unless productive of an influence, extending over the whole life, disciplining the whole temper, affecting the whole disposition, they may be worse than useless. They may lead to spiritual pride, they may nurture false confidence, and be substituted in the place, or offered as a compensation for the neglect, of habitual personal holiness and social virtue. They then become not merely vain, but offensive in His sight, “who will have mercy, rather than sacrifice.”

A few hints are to be offered on the excellence and value of the combination, which the text exhibits. It will secure peace of mind to the possessor. It will attract the admiration, command the respect of others. All must approve, if they do not imitate such a character; and they will most admire it, who endeavour, with greatest earnestness and success, to become what they approve. The commendation of the discerning and the faithful, of the wise and the virtuous, is no small gratification to an ingenuous and good mind. Splendid talents, even if perverted, will extort the wonder,

and may obtain the applause, of the unthinking or the unprincipled; brilliant exploits, though attended by crime and followed by suffering, may raise a hero's name to celebrity, and emblazon it with fame. But what a false lustre is that, which blazes from vulgar greatness! How pure the light that beams from beneficence! The one is the portentous glare of the comet; this may be compared with the sun's benignant rays; that is the baleful decoy of the meteor; this, the steady and mild radiance of the queen of evening. How estimable, how serviceable, how honoured, how beloved, is he justly entitled to be, who, qualified by nature, and prepared by education, for extensive usefulness, is fully impressed with his responsibility, and aims to answer it! He gives himself to God and his brethren, in some calling, adapted to his powers, congenial to his taste, and securing his preference. In prosecution of its demands, he is resolute and indefatigable. With glowing heart and braced nerves, he puts his whole strength to his work. No difficulties are insurmountable, no obstacles formidable, to diligence and zeal, leagued with benevolence and piety. He is preeminently an ornament and a blessing to his associates; he may indulge the animating hope of the favour and benediction of his God.

It will doubtless have been anticipated, from the theme, and the preceding remarks, that the application was intended for noticing a most estimable

member of this religious society. Personal respect for his worth, with the official connexion, which has for a few years subsisted between us, in the neighbouring university, unite with the wishes of your respectable committee, and, it is probable, the expectation of you all; that not only the customary improvement of such solemn dispensations of providence be made, but some particular reference be had to the character of one, in private life so deservedly dear, in his publick relations so justly eminent, as was Dr. WARREN.

The merited eulogy has already been pronounced* by one, worthy of the office; and in a manner, worthy of the subject.—It is not necessary, therefore, if otherwise expedient, that the history of his life should be described; or any analysis of his powers of mind, or a minute account of his professional attainments and qualifications, be attempted. All that is needed, or designed is, to delineate with fidelity some of the most obvious and strongly marked features of the physician, the scholar, the man, the citizen, and the friend.

In these several relations, is not the text most strikingly characteristick of him, whom we mourn: “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.” Allow him to have been endowed with talents, as largely, as the most eager advocate for the allsufficiency of genius would ask; still, it is contended, that such extensive and pro-

* James Jackson, M.D. on the preceding day.

found knowledge, as he possessed, could not be gained without great attention, much study, and more reflection. Those best qualified to decide, assigned to him a very high grade, in the small class, of the most learned and skilful among his brethren. Perhaps now, alas ! that he is no longer among us, few would object that the very first rank should be allowed him. The estimation, in which he was held at home, was abundantly evinced, by the offices he sustained, in the medical society, and the collegiate institution. Nor was his fame limited to a narrow circle of admirers ; it was extended through our state, and country ; it was known, and honourably noticed, in that from which we sprang. Much may not be said, but it is impossible to be wholly silent, on his wonderful assiduity in the practice, as well as diligence in the study, of his profession. No call was unanswered ; no hours or seasons were reserved. Wherever there was pain to be assuaged, or infirmity to be supported, or anguish to be relieved ; there, at the first summons, was this ready minister of the healing art. The poor, who could give nothing but gratitude ; the wretched, who scarce dared ask his attention, found in him a good Samaritan ; not only binding up their wounds, but imparting, too, wine and oil, for their comfort. To all his patients, the manner of his attendance enhanced the value of his skilfulness ; and rendered him not only a *celebrated*, but a “*BELOVED PHYSICIAN.*”

Not diligence alone, in the pursuit and communication of knowledge, and the discharge of those duties, to which he had peculiarly pledged himself; but ardour of soul, in all that he thought or did, emphatically characterized him. Who so *active in business*, as he? Who more *fervent in spirit*? What could have carried him through such a course of duty, especially with his slender habit of health, but an eagerness, which nothing could repress, a zeal which nothing could abate, a resolution which nothing could impede?

This assiduity and fervour were directed and controlled, by elevated motives. He did good to men, as *serviug the Lord*. Sentiments of purest virtue, of unfeigned piety, appeared to govern him. Reverence for the seasons and services of religion was ever manifested; and nothing, but the paramount claims of necessity and mercy, kept him from attending its stated publick offices.

His attentions and attainments were, by no means, exclusively professional. None, who heard him converse; who noticed his cooperation, in so many important literary designs; the ability, with which he discussed the questions which arose, and the dignified facility, with which he presided, in any social, benevolent, and learned association; hesitated to give him a respectable rank among general scholars. His pupils will allow that but few, so preeminent in one department, are so well versed in the circle of the sciences. All who re-

member, or will read, the few discourses, which he pronounced on publick occasions, may judge of the vigour of his conceptions, the justness of his reflections, and the classick taste of his style. His eulogy on his friend, and the friend of many of you,* is deliberately regarded as meritorious, in this class of composition, as, we were told, his anniversary address, to his medical associates, was ingenious and elaborate.

But far higher praise, than even particular or general knowledge, is his rightful portion. The man was as superiour, as the student, the practitioner, the professor, or the scholar. His principles, temper, and manners; his frankness, candour, sincerity, liberality, and hospitality, combined with his powers and acquisitions, to render him a most valuable member of society. It would have been a severe reproach to any place, if a man, thus endowed by nature, and qualified by diligent attention, and persevering efforts, to excel in a most important and honourable profession, and so disposed to advance the best interests of the community, had not been held in esteem. Such a reproach attaches not to our capital. Here, and in the vicinity, he had attracted and secured general good will, and much affectionate regard. In promoting all good objects, he was free and bountiful to impart of his time, his wisdom, his experience, and his wealth. He was the open and sincere

* Honourable Thomas Russell.

friend of religion and its ministers, of literature and its promoters ; and by those who loved these, was he highly respected. Evidences of this abound. In his life he was honoured. Expressions of trust and confidence followed him. “The ear, that heard him, blessed him ; the eye, that saw him, bare witness to him.” His sickness cast a shade over many faces ; his departure called forth many tears, and afflicted many hearts. Multitudes thronged to pay the last token of respect, to his lifeless remains ; and the fixed attention, which listened eagerly to his praises, conspired to testify that he was extensively regarded as “a good man.”

Mention was made of his claims, in civil life. In a government like ours, every man of warm feelings is occasionally impelled to take more than that part, in publick affairs, which none may justifiably evade, the uniform, sober, conscientious exercise of the right of suffrage. On this topick, of acknowledgment to the merits of the departed, much might be advanced in aid of generous, decided, enlightened patriotism. But I cannot suppress, the uniform delight and admiration excited in my mind, by noticing that on several most momentous occasions, when some measure, of pith and weight, was to be commenced and arranged ; when many, in walks more immediately political, appeared reluctant to act ; and when his multiplied engagements might have been urged as excuses, by a mind

less ardently devoted to what he deemed the cause of truth, and order, and freedom ; he never shrunk from responsibility. He often yielded to the wishes of those, whom he considered to be entitled to his confidence, and consented to moderate in the deliberations of their assemblies.

As a friend, he was peculiarly formed for all which is substantial and ardent in that happy relation. If no other testimonial of this were possessed, but the cordial attachment cherished for him, by one,* who was intimately connected with him, for many pleasant years, and who not long preceded him, as we trust, to the abodes of purer and more permanent friendships ; one, whose estimate of character, though always candid, was most discriminative, and whose judgment, in these as in most respects, was with me, commonly decisive ; *his* warm commendation and affection, would be satisfactory. But numbers of the most worthy, unitedly give evidence that the praise is justly his, “ a friend greatly beloved.”

There are other and still more precious ties, in which every good man is bound, to a greater or less extent. His included the most sacred and tender, which this life can know ; and in no view, could he be placed more favourably, than in the intercourse of family and kindred, for one, whose wish was to exhibit a fair, I was almost about to say, a faultless image. But the sorrows of the most im-

* Rev. John Eliot, D. D.

mediate mourners may not be invaded. Nor may we dwell on scenes, which so forcibly renew the whole extent of their loss. God alone, who, among many other condescending titles, has revealed himself “a Judge of the widow, a Father of the fatherless,”* can give them the solace, which such a bereavement needs. They will not fail to strengthen their efforts to resignation, by realizing their motives for submission, and recollecting their obligations of gratitude, to Him who gave them such a blessing, and continued it to them so long. While, with devoted affection, they cherish his “blessed memory,” they will strive to follow his example, and observe his precepts, and answer his wishes and prayers. Though no more to behold his face, nor hear his voice, which ever delighted the eye and charmed the ear, with their benignity; though no more to share his presence and converse, in the social circle, or at the cheerful repast, or in the walks of recreation and of business; though no more to come *in company* with him to the courts of the Lord’s earthly temple, nor *take sweet counsel together* with him, on its worship and instructions; let hope rise exulting to the world of glory; and faith devoutly lay hold on the promises of its final inheritance; and patience wait, in the ways of well doing, for reunion in duties, without imperfection, for happiness, without alloy and without end.

* Psalm lxvii. 5.

Christian friends ! Let us strive to be followers of all them, who have gone, through duty and usefulness to their reward. Loud as mournful, is the voice of warning from the grave, “be ye also ready.” “The day is far spent,” with many ; with all, “the night” may be close “at hand.” Let us be faithful and diligent in our Master’s work, “as those who must give an account ;” and who know not when or how, they may be summoned. “Whatever our hand findeth to do, let us do it, “with all our might.” “Now is the accepted “time ; now is the day of salvation.” “There is “neither knowledge, nor device, nor labour,” in the land of darkness. “While we are in the light, “let us walk as children of the light.”—Draw closer than ever, then, the bonds of social and christian fellowship ; for a brother and helper is taken from the midst of you. Give, more than before, your hearts and your lives to God and society ; for one, who eminently served them, no longer performs here his part. “Giving all diligence,” let us “make our calling and election sure.” Let us earnestly strive, and fervently pray, that by the grace of JESUS the SAVIOUR, we may be, in reference to the interests of soul and body, of time and eternity, “Not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit ; it ; serving the Lord.”

