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Ahab and Naboth; or, The United States and Mexico.

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DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED IN

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST

IN GUILFORD,

ON THE

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING OF 1846.

By E. EDWIN HALL.

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P R E F A C E .

Good truth may find its way to some understandings, and by some singular working of the mind, be re-produced with such a sad mixture of error, as to cast a doubt upon its genuineness, or even destroy its identity. Such has been the misfortune of some portions of the following discourse. Some who heard it, have so re-produced parts of it,—whether good or bad, others must judge,—as to give a false meaning and design to the whole. It is for this reason chiefly that it is given to the public. While I have taken the liberty to add a few thoughts, I have been careful to preserve unchanged those parts of it which seem to have been displeasing to some; hoping that a perusal of the discourse will satisfy such persons that “what came out of my lips was right;” (Jer. xvii, 16,) and that if in some sort I “spake unadvisedly,” I at least uttered no “perverse things.”

It is an unpleasant truth, that there are many Christians who seem so firmly fixed in the ranks of “party,” that they feel obliged to split their throats and fritter away their religion, in shouting approbation of all the demagogical tricks played off by the vaulting ambition of party leaders. But if Christianity be such an odd compound that it is not often shamed and insulted by the conduct of political partizans; and if approbation of such conduct be consistent with it, then, for my own part, I should prefer to

“take my chance with Socrates for bliss,
Than be the Christian of a faith like this.”

When godless politicians ask the approval and support of schemes which are repugnant to the simplest principles of religion, have Christians nothing to do but yield to the demands of party? Must they renounce the fear of God to do good service in the day of political strife? Need wise men be misled by the political cant of those who come to them “with blood on their hands and Scripture on their lips?” Are any but the very blind excusable for being deceived by the voice of Jacob and the hands of Esau?

But it is not out of character with true Christianity to be good citizens in all the conditions and changes of Society. The best Christian will be found to be the best patriot both in the time of peace and of war. If the government turn aside from the way of righteousness, it is no want of patriotism to refuse to follow. "Our country, right or wrong," is the language of ignorance or of quack patriotism, or what is worse, of atheism; and it will not be an easy matter for a Christian to adopt it without first parting company with his religion.

DISCOURSE.

“And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house.”—1 KINGS, XXI : 2.

PERHAPS I shall be obliged to task my ingenuity in vain, to show you what particular relation this passage of Scripture has to the duty of gratitude. But we sometimes find it convenient to enforce the duties of virtue by exposing contrary vices. There is in this affair of Ahab with Naboth, an exhibition of great selfishness. It manifested itself in a spirit of discontent with his own large and abundant possessions, and also in coveting his neighbor's vineyard. Ahab well knew that his neighbor could not alienate the possessions which had fallen to him by lot, without a violation of the law which regulated the holding of all lands. Naboth therefore replied to him,—“the Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.” Noble, patriotic Naboth! he feared more to do a sinful and mean thing, than he did to refuse the king in his covetous desires and demands. Yet like many others, who, for an honest firmness in the way of duty, have hazarded the displeasure of those in power, he lost not only his vineyard but his life. Naboth's refusal to allow Ahab to make a kitchen garden of his vineyard had a strange effect on the king. Like an ill-tempered child, who cannot be gratified in his extravagant and unlawful demands, ‘he laid him down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.’ But Naboth might have lived to bequeath his paternal estates to his children, if Ahab's wife had not “given aid and comfort to his enemy.” You all know how Jezabel, that “cursed woman,” as she is somewhat bluntly called, contrived to fasten upon him the charge of blasphemy, both against God and the king, and thus, under color of justice, secured his death and the confiscation of his property.

We see here that Ahab cherished a spirit of discontent in the midst of his great possessions, and the abundant benefits which God had bestowed upon him, while he ought to have been well satisfied with what he had: and his heart ought to have been filled with gratitude to God for his manifold mercies. With his discontentment, he also wickedly coveted his neighbor's estates, which he knew could not be rightly or honorably alienated. Covetousness is always unmer-

ciful, and he who is cursed with this spirit, scruples not to secure his ends by foul means, when they cannot be compassed with honest fairness. Ahab suffered wicked counsellors to use his name, and the seal of his authority, and took by force and fraud what could not be honorably secured. Yet justice was so made to shelter the brutal transaction, that the 'law seemed to allow it, and the court awarded it.' His discontent and covetousness, which could find no place in a truly thankful heart, led him to fill full his cup of wickedness, and brought on himself and his household the just judgments of God.

If now you will keep in mind the brief account I have given of Ahab's conduct, I will repeat the text, with some verbal alterations, and you will have before you the subject of our present meditations. 'And the Government of the United States spake unto the Government of Mexico, saying, give me Texas, that I may have it for cotton and sugar plantations, because it is near unto my own territory.'

Before tracing the similarity of conduct in the case of Ahab and our own Government, I shall state some historical facts in relation to the Texan revolution, and the annexation of Texas to the United States.

It may be proper to say here, that I have not chosen this subject for discourse from any consideration of party politics. Nor does it seem to me—as I hope in the sequel it will not seem to you—that I have selected a theme from beyond the proper boundaries of pulpit discourses. I am aware that the admission, or the non-admission of Texas into the Union, was a prominent topic of discussion between the two great political parties at the late Presidential election. But those who favored this project enforced their arguments for it with strong and repeated asseverations, that it would be a peaceable acquisition of territory. And it would doubtless be doing great injustice to the humanity, as well as the morality of my fellow-citizens here, to suppose that they could have desired it, with a certain knowledge of its sad and disgraceful consequences.

It is totally impossible for us, as reasonable beings, to regard this subject *now*, as we once regarded it. The scene has entirely changed. The consummation of that iniquity, so iniquitously consummated, has involved our country in the horrors of war;—a war too, which will be found to be among the most unjust and disgraceful that have been recorded on the bloody page of the world's history. This then ceases to be a *party* question; it comes home to the business and bosoms of all men. From the river St. John to the Rio Grande, there is no one who is capable of considering the subject, who is not, and should not be, deeply concerned in this mat-

ter. The church and the ministry are, and ought to be, interested in it; not so much because of its political bearings, but because of its immorality; because of its opposition and injury to the best interests of humanity; because of its entire and irreconcilable hostility to every principle and precept of the Christian religion. And the time has not yet come, when the pulpit of New England must be silent, or fear to speak in all boldness, of the impolicy and wickedness of needless and aggressive wars. Freedom of speech on a subject like this is not to be questioned, and when it is questioned, when

“The tongue must forfeit what the hands have won,”—

when we may not speak plainly of conduct in the Government which is in conflict with the laws of God and the commonest principles of righteousness, then, we shall have lost all claim to freedom, and be fit only for slaves, though we have not the *color*, which in some quarters is held to be nature's badge of slavery.

I shall then, in the first place, repeat some notorious facts connected with the history of Texas, and its annexation to the territory of the United States. And if it is not proper for me to make many comments upon these facts, it will be proper for you to draw from them, and carefully consider those natural inferences which may be suggested to your understandings.

When Mexico became independent of the Spanish Crown, a monarchical form of government was established there, and maintained for a number of years. Under this royal government, grants of land were first made in Texas to citizens of the United States, and whoever accepted them, did so under an express obligation to conform to the policy of the government, both in civil and religious affairs. Subsequently, Mexico became a Federal Republic. The original grants of land were, however, confirmed to those who had become citizens of Texas, and new inducements were offered to our people to emigrate there, always, however, with the understanding, that they should be subject to the laws of Mexico.

In 1831, the following statement was made in behalf of the Texans, to secure a larger emigration from the United States:—“The inhabitants [of Texas] are perfectly contented with their condition under its present government. They desire no better. It is a free republic, like the United States. The people choose their own rulers, and make their own laws; and those laws exempt them from duties on all goods imported for their own use, and from taxes for the support of government, for ten years from their settlement.” Col. Austin wrote from the city of Mexico in 1834, as fol-

lows:—"The Government have remedied all the evils complained of in Texas." He recommended also, "that a public act of gratitude should be passed by the people, for those remedies that had been applied by the Government." During the same year, a committee of Texan settlers used the following language in an address to the people:—"We ask you in the spirit of candor, has the government ever asked anything unreasonable of Texas? If it has, we must, before God and our country, say we know it not. Has it ever burdened you with taxes, or the performance of arduous, perilous, or expensive duties? Nay, has Texas ever borne any part of the expenses of that government which protects our lives, our liberty, and our prosperity? When have the people called on the government for any law to their advantage, or for the repeal of any law by which they were aggrieved, but that their requests have been granted?"

From these statements it is very manifest, that no justifiable cause of resistance to the Mexican government existed. And here you have, in part, the secret of the steadfast opposition Mexico has made to the independence of Texas, or its separation from the Federal Republic. The greatest sacrifices had been made for the welfare of the Texans, and they returned the kindness of the government with ingratitude and treason.

Of the causes for the revolution which soon occurred in Texas, but one or two need be mentioned. And here it should be stated, that it was generally understood in the Southern and South-Western States, and publicly proclaimed in the newspapers of the day, "that the people of Texas would throw off their allegiance to the government of Mexico, so soon as they should have a reasonable pretext." This very language was used in a Southern paper five years before the rebellion. Resistance, at all hazards, seems to have been the design of many of the colonists almost from their first settlement. That their designs might be accomplished, the grants of land which had been made to persons on condition of their permanent settlement in Texas, were transferred to joint-stock companies in the United States; and by them, titles of land, to a vast amount, were sold to our own people. The legislature of Texas also, on one occasion, granted to a company of land speculators, in consideration of twenty thousand dollars, the extent of four hundred square leagues of the public land, which they had no more right to do than the legislature of Connecticut has to sell the lands of which the general government has the exclusive control. The government of Mexico disavowed the act of the Texan legislature, and annulled those grants which had been made in open violation of the laws of the Republic. These land titles,

thus iniquitously given, could therefore be made good only by making Texas independent of Mexico. Many of our citizens, by gambling in Texas scrip, were greatly interested in the relations of that State to the government of Mexico; they greatly desired its separation from the Republic, in order to secure the lands to which they had only nominal, and not legal titles; and they doubtless did much, by their influence, with the discontented spirits of Texas, to hasten the civil war which resulted in its independence. The stupendous frauds which the Texans sought to perpetrate, by robbing Mexico of her lands, which led to the interference of the general government, was undoubtedly the principle and proximate cause of the revolution.

Another reason for this revolt, was a determination to admit slaveholders and their slaves into Texas. When Mexico escaped from the tyranny of Spanish rule, she decreed, that "thereafter no person should be born a slave, or introduced as such into the Mexican States;" a testimony in favor of liberty from those half-civilized Mexicans, which makes us blush for our own government, which, for a series of years, has done its utmost to perpetuate the accursed system of human slavery. Such were the laws of Mexico, that emigration from the slave-holding states, was confined, for the most part, to those who "left their country for their country's good," of whom there were not a few. It was necessary that Texas should be separated from Mexico, to permit slavery to pollute the soil which had been consecrated to freedom. And under the influence of this motive, men and money from the Southern States, were not wanting to foment the rebellion and carry on the civil war. It is said, that in the army of eight hundred men who won the victory at the battle of San Jacinto, not more than fifty were citizens of Texas, having grievances of their own to seek relief from on that field.

The grand reasons for this revolt may be briefly stated in the language of one who was an inhabitant of that country at the time. He says,—“the primary objects of the persons engaged in the present contest are to plunder the Mexicans of a fine rich soil, and to establish and perpetuate the system of slavery in a country where it is now prohibited by the laws.”

I have but to say, by way of comment on this part of my subject, that the whole transaction, by which Texas was thus separated from Mexico, is characterized by the most disgusting cupidity and unmitigated rascality. These are the softest words I can find it in my heart to use concerning this whole affair, after a painful investigation of the subject.

The second point of which I wish to speak, is the annexation of Texas to the territory of the United States. Of this

I shall say but little, merely quoting from public documents enough to show the *real reasons* for this transaction.

It will be remembered, that soon after the battle of San Jacinto, application was made for the admission of Texas into the Union. Our government replied, that the United States were bound to Mexico by a treaty of amity and commerce, and might justly be suspected of a disregard of the friendly purposes of the compact, if the overture of the Texan Minister was received, or even reserved for future consideration. All negotiations on the subject, either then or in future, were utterly declined. And at that time it was very generally regarded throughout the States, as totally inconsistent with our relations to Mexico, and a gross violation of public faith, to entertain the idea of annexing Texas to the Union without the consent of the Mexican government. Even during the year preceding the disgraceful violation of public faith by the admission of Texas, it was regarded by the most eminent statesmen of all parties as an "act of unparalleled outrage on Mexico."

But the time at length approached in which a new line of policy was to be pursued by our government. By private letters from England, our then Secretary of State, Mr. Upshur, was informed that efforts had been made by citizens of Texas to secure the aid of Great Britain, to accomplish the abolition of slavery in the new Republic. He expressed, on the part of our government, great anxiety and alarm; he was fearful that Texas, by abolishing slavery, might do what would have been as much to her glory, as what she has since done, is to her shame and disgrace. Mr. Upshur wrote at once to Mr. Murphy, the Texan Minister in London, setting forth the strong disapprobation of our government, in view of such an event as the abolition of slavery in the Republic of Texas. He says,—“a movement of this sort cannot be contemplated by us in silence. Such an attempt upon any neighboring country would necessarily be viewed by this government with very deep concern. It cannot be permitted to succeed without the most strenuous efforts on our part to arrest a calamity so serious to every part of our country.”

Alas! for us, that in this enlightened age, when the conscience of the whole world is at war with slavery, the diplomacy of this government, which boasts so loudly of its freedom, should be used for the perpetuity of a system so offensively repugnant to the purest principles of human liberty, and the best interests of humanity.

Mr. Upshur further says,—“The establishment, in the very midst of our slaveholding States, of an independent government, forbidding the existence of slavery, could not fail to

produce the most unhappy effects. If Texas were in that condition, her territory would afford a ready refuge for fugitive slaves, and would hold out to them an encouragement to run away which no municipal regulations could possibly counteract."

Our government, it seems, feared that if slavery should be abolished in Texas, the *happy* and *contented* slaves in the Southern States would all run away from their present scenes of unrequited toil. If the slave could thus readily escape from his pitiful degradation,—could we thus readily shake off the criminal disgrace of slavery,—could that lingering curse to our country be so easily remedied, it ought, for once at least, to be the burthen of every good man's gratitude and thanksgiving to Almighty God.

Mr. Calhoun succeeded Mr. Upshur in the office of Secretary of State. To our Minister at the Court of St. James, he wrote as follows:—"It is with still deeper concern the President regards the avowal of Lord Aberdeen of the desire of Great Britain to see slavery abolished in Texas; and as he infers, is endeavoring, through her diplomacy to accomplish it, by making the abolition of slavery one of the conditions on which Mexico should acknowledge her independence. It has confirmed his previous impressions as to the policy of Great Britain in reference to Texas, and made it his duty to examine with much care and solicitude what would be its effects on the prosperity of the United States, should she succeed in her endeavors." He afterwards added,—“the President directs me to inform you that a treaty has been concluded between the United States and Texas, for the annexation of the latter to the former as a part of its territory.”

I have quoted enough for my purpose,—enough too, I doubt not, to show you the true reasons for the annexation of Texas to the United States. In speaking of the Texan rebellion, I have trespassed on no man's political opinions, for no question of politics touching our own government was involved in the Texan war with Mexico. And concerning the annexation of that territory to the United States, I have said little,—merely quoting very briefly from public documents; and that, not to show the opinions of a *political* party, but to show the sentiments of the *slaveholding party* of the South. They desired the annexation of Texas, for reasons totally different from any which were urged by politicians in the Free States,—for reasons which Northern men would have been afraid, if not ashamed to urge. The question with the South was one of domestic policy, peculiar to their own selfish interests, not to the interests of the States generally; it was a policy as barbarous as it was peculiar.

The great reason then for this act of our government was

briefly this :—to give security to the slavery of the Southern States, by making that “peculiar institution” permanent in Texas. This is a sad and dreadful truth. It is written in black on white, in the official correspondence of the government,—it will be the evidence of our disgrace so long as the writing shall be legible. Our government was driven into this measure by the dictation and diplomacy of the South. It has inflicted a grievous wrong upon the free States; nay, the whole North have been sufferers by the existence of slavery ever since the adoption of the federal Constitution. The South have ever monopolized the chief sources of power. Only twelve years out of sixty has a man from the free States been permitted to fill the office of Chief Magistrate, and no Northern President has ever been reappointed. More than three-fourths of the most important offices in every department of the government have been filled from the slave States. By the influence of the South, the energy of the government has from time to time been employed at the expense of the North to sustain and extend a “peculiar institution” which the North generally abhor from their inmost souls. It is a sad thought, that this work of wrong and mischief has not been done by the South alone. How often are we reminded of Randolph’s bitterly true words,—“we do not govern the North by our black slaves, *but by their own white slaves.*” Many a Northern man would blush at the remembrance of these words, if with his freedom, he had not also lost the very color of virtue. The sly and silent courtship of bribery, in the shape of patronage, has secured the aid of many sons of freedom in building freedom’s tomb. It is not the worst sort of charity to say,—

“indignant heaven
Must think that wretch too foul to be forgiven,
Who basely hangs the bright, protecting shade
Of freedom’s ensign o’er corruption’s trade,
And makes the sacred flag he dares to show,
His passport to the market of her foe.”

The North have too often been the slaves of the South; too often have they yielded to them from a love of peace, when they ought to have stood firm from a love of principle. Even in the halls of legislation they have sometimes obeyed the dictates of the South with almost the same ready obsequiousness as the human chattle obeys his imperious master.

But these things cannot always last. No true man, who has any love of his country worth naming—whose heart owns a principle of liberty worth possessing, can contemplate the policy and conduct of the South without feelings of deep sorrow and indignation. They have made us, as a nation, a spectacle of disgrace to the civilized world. By their diplo-

matic chicanery, whereby the government is enlisted in the defense and perpetuity of slavery, we stand convicted in our own judgments, and in the judgment of every Christian nation, of conduct the most dishonorable to ourselves and unjust to others. We are a free people, and boast of it in "the quackish pomp of noisy words," while at the Capitol of our country, a sort of

"bastard freedom waves
Her fustian flag in mockery over slaves."

'And the government of the United States spake unto the government of Mexico, saying, give me Texas, that I may have it for *cotton* and *sugar plantations*, because it is near unto my own territory.' Does not the text thus written express to us the solemn truth? Have we not been discontented with our abundant possessions, which for excellency and variety of climate and soil, and for the greatness of their resources, are not surpassed in the whole habitable world? While our hearts ought to have burned with grateful emotions for God's bounty and blessing, have we not been criminally dissatisfied, and thus practiced towards Him the basest ingratitude? Have we not wickedly coveted the estates of our neighbor, and improperly desired the surrender of some of the fairest portions of her ancestral domain, which she could not grant consistently with honor and duty? And have we not coveted that fair land for the very meanest and most inhuman of all mean and inhuman purposes? When Mexico aimed one good blow at one of the giant curses of the world, have we not coveted her possessions that we might there re-establish and perpetuate the curse? Have not some of the older slave States coveted that goodly land, that they might enrich themselves in the nefarious business of slave breeding, to supply it with benighted laborers? How heaven-wide are the principles of Washington and Jefferson, and other Virginian fathers of our country, on the subject of slavery, from the principles of their degenerate sons! Methinks the very bones of those revered men will shrink away to a deeper distance in their consecrated graves, at the noisy tramp of the shackled slave-gang on their weary way from the Old Dominion to a Texas market. Do we not show the deepest and blackest ingratitude to God for the freedom secured to us by our fathers, when we plot and toil to desecrate and destroy the first and fairest principles of human liberty. Such clearly is our conduct in our covetous designs upon the possessions of a neighboring nation.

But our course in this matter has another point of similarity to the course of Ahab towards Naboth. He took advantage of his weakness; and because he was the stronger,

he robbed him of that which had been refused to his covetous demand. So have we used the power of this great nation against our weaker neighbor, and in taking possession of Texas without the consent of its rightful owners, we have become a criminal party in the fraud and robbery which were designed in its original revolt. It is idle to deny, that our government would never have made Texas a part of our territory if it had belonged to a nation equal in power with ourselves. We first coveted those fair fields, and then in the spirit of robbery seized them because our arms were longer and stronger than the arms of Mexico.

The result of our unwarrantable conduct towards Mexico is a war with that people, which, in view of our own policy, will redound to our shame till the very name of our nation is blotted from the records of human history. It is in every respect an unequal war. It is waged against a nation which we have always pitied for its inefficiency, and which has for years been rent in pieces by civil dissensions. There is more of meanness than magnanimity in the aggressions of the strong upon the weak, and more of the love of plunder than of peace manifested in attempting to conquer those who can never do us a great mischief. It is in view of the events which preceded this war, the selfish Southern policy, which would provoke it at all hazards, and in view of the *apparent*, and doubtless the *real* reasons for carrying it into the heart of Mexico, that its injustice and disgracefulness are especially manifest. War of any kind is wholly at variance with the character of our institutions and the principles of our government; it is inconsistent with the disposition and habits of our people. A war in self-defense, which should be brought upon us by the direst necessity, would be a sad calamity, and it would be justifiable only on the ground of its being absolutely unavoidable. As Christians we cannot justify an offensive war. A war of aggression,—a war for needless and hurtful aggrandizement, like that we are now prosecuting in Mexico, can have none but evil consequences to all concerned; and I hesitate not to say, that it is a stench in the nostrils of every true-hearted American, for I call them no true-hearted Americans who will rob a weak neighbor of territory and go to war to justify the robbery, and all for the barbarous purpose of giving a cheek to the principles of personal and civil freedom.

I care not to speak of the impolicy of this war—of the needless waste of life and treasure—of the taxes which in one form or another must be imposed on the people to meet the millions of expense which it will incur;—I care not to speak of the countless acts of individual injustice on the one hand, and favoritism on the other, to which it will give occasion,—of the many who will be impoverished by it, and the

few who will be dishonestly enriched by it;—I care not to speak of the great increase of governmental patronage which it necessarily produces, and which very much endangers the integrity of those who are in power, as well as those who wish to be. Such matters I leave to politicians. Nor do I care to speak in detail of the miseries which inevitably attend the bloody trail of conquering armies; of the sad accents of the dying, and the more sorrowful wailing of the worse than dead,—of the many homes made desolate—of the blighted hopes of loving hearts, the faithful recital of which would almost move the heart of death himself to pity. These things, however, are comparatively of small moment. But there is a deep demoralizing influence attending all war which cannot be avoided. The brutal spirit which it excites—the bad passions which it cherishes, tend to unhumanize all who are engaged in it. It tends to deaden the moral sense of those who rejoice in its bloody victories, or even become familiar with its dreadful carnage. It is the embodiment of all evil,—it is the image of Badness, fiercely opposing with its own carnal weapons the influence and the ends of Goodness. More directly and more rapidly than any other evil, it leads those who engage and delight in it, to the deep disgusts and sottish corruptions of moral death.

I should do an insult to your understandings to attempt to show that the war with Mexico is not on our part a defensive war. It is a war of conquest, of aggression, or of *honor*, if you please to dignify it with an improper courtesy of speech. The essential principles of such a war are as clearly opposed to Christianity as sin is to holiness. There is no principle or precept of the gospel of Christ which authorizes or excuses it; and it can find no *consistent* advocate among the true disciples of that Prince of Peace. The religion of Jesus Christ is eminently peaceable in every feature of it. This truth had a peculiar and striking illustration in the Advent of our Savior. The nations of the earth were then at peace, almost for the first time since nations had a distinct existence. The Roman Empire, the profession of whose people was that of arms, whose invincible legions had penetrated far into all the surrounding nations; the scream of whose eagle was heard from the snowy hills of Scythia to the sands of the burning zone,—from the Ganges on the East to the Ocean on the West, was then resting in quietness, and holding out the olive-branch of peace to all the world.

"No war nor battle's sound
 Was heard the world around ;
 The idle spear and shield were high uphung,
 The hooked chariot stood,
 Unstained with hostile blood ;
 The trumpet spake not to the armed throng,
 And kings sat still with awful eye,
 As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord was by."

In this repose of the nations at the Advent of Christ, there seems to have been an unconscious sympathy with the sentiment then uttered by angels to the shepherds of Judea,—"peace on earth, good will to men." God seemed thus by his providence to illustrate in a peculiar way the peace-loving, peace-seeking religion of the gospel. It seems indeed but an idle task to set forth the hostility of the gospel to all wars of conquest and aggrandizement. They not only find no apology in religion, but they are utterly and in every respect alien from it in spirit and in practice. And the more thoroughly our hearts are imbued with the spirit of the gospel, and the more firmly we are established in its principles, the more earnestly shall we labor and pray for the peace of the world ; for the dawn of that glad day, when the noise of war shall be no more heard, and when the brotherhood of the nations shall be acknowledged in the predominant influence of the principles of JUSTICE and LOVE.

But even in respect of this disgraceful and wicked war, we have occasion for gratitude to-day. We should be grateful that the scene of this war is not in our own midst ; that our eyes are not compelled to witness the bloodshed and brutality, of which it gives us pain enough to hear. And God grant that our own New England may never, to the remotest age, be a theatre where the thundering of hostile armies shall be heard in the shock of battle. God grant that the hardly cultivated soil of New England may never again be moistened with the blood of her hard-handed, but noble-hearted sons. Let us be thankful then, that no enemy, with murderous design, is at our own doors, and that our own fair fields and pleasant homes are not laid waste by the torch of war. The consequences of this war we cannot wholly escape, for they will ultimately be felt against our prosperity, against the harmony of our people, and the purity of their morals. Still let us thank God that we are so far removed from the seat of war ; and while we deprecate the judgment which the baseness of Southern cupidity has brought upon us, let us be thankful that we do not yet experience that judgment in its severest forms.