

## WAITING FOR THE SONS OF GOD

"For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God."—*Romans viii, 19.*

"For all creation, gazing eagerly as if with outstretched neck, is waiting and longing to see the manifestation of the sons of God."—*New Testament in Modern Speech.*

**T**HIS morning we will make no attempt to reach the height of Paul's great argument. We will content ourselves with immediate, practical applications of his profound thought. His view, in a sentence, is that all animate and inanimate creation protests against the suffering which has been imposed upon it; that the universal longing for a better state and a better time is a prophecy of distant glory; that these sufferings are but as the birth-pangs of new and gladder worlds; that the universe was made subject to change, in hope that no evil thing may endure, that even Winter may change to Spring, and that love may conquer at the last. And the essential condition of the realization of this hope is the appearance of the sons of God—the appearance, that is to say, of good men and women. For this the creation, gazing eagerly as if with outstretched neck, waits and longs. The good time coming—which is always coming but never come—will be here: the prophecies will be accomplished fact; the radiant dreams of poets will be the plain prose of life; the creation itself will be delivered from the bondage of corruption—in proportion as the race produces men and women who are manifestly the children of God. What hinders the coming of God's kingdom amongst men? How hold we the heaven from earth away? What wait we for? We are waiting for more men and women heroic and

holy, generous and good. We are waiting for the sons of God.

This is the energy of all moral effort—a steady supply of good men and good women. This is the steam which makes the engine move. This is the stored up potency of electricity which lights up a city or drives the vast machinery of modern life. Do great men produce great ages? Or do great ages produce great men? These are questions which our Literary and Debating Societies have been arguing for a hundred years. Emerson would tell you that an institution is only the lengthened shadow of a man: Protestantism, of Martin Luther; Quakerism, of George Fox; Abolitionism, of Thomas Clarkson; Methodism, of John Wesley. All history resolves itself quite easily into the life stories of a few stout and earnest persons.

To-day we give God thanks for the Rice Institute of Liberal and Technical Learning. We praise the Giver of all good for the bright hopes which have gathered about these Dedication hours. We rejoice in the public spirit of the man whose name it bears, in his broad and generous views, his insight into our common needs, his prevision of the dawning greatness of this State, his love of the fair Southland. We bless God for the inspiration of a great and splendid purpose in the soul of the founder of this University; not less do we praise Him for the men who have given themselves with patient, self-denying, patriotic toil to the achievement of that purpose. Some have passed into the Unseen: some are with us to-day. One sows: another reaps: God be praised, Sower and Reaper rejoice together!

In the Rice Institute of Liberal and Technical Learning the seeing eye perceives an incarnation of constructive energy. From its halls and laboratories shall go forth men and women who are men and women indeed, trained,

equipped, fearless, aspiring, self-reliant, faithful to conscience and to God—the men and women for whom creation waits! Producing such streams of redemptive, life-giving power, the Rice Institute shall make for the worth and wealth, the health and happiness, of this old world. And happiness is a moral asset, never doubt it. Diffused amongst the masses of the people, it is an asset of incalculable value in the life of a nation. It is hungry men who make revolutions. It is what a British journalist has called “a mighty mob of famished, diseased, and miserable Helots” who menace the security of life and property in the midst of a wealthy civilization. Happy men and women are under no temptation to become anarchists. A honeymooning couple are in no mood to throw dynamite bombs at the palaces of the rich. Education, all the world over, in all the worlds there are and in all ages, is emancipation. It manumits and it edifies. First it frees the slave; then it builds the man. Capacity and culture—skill for the hand and sight for the soul—to open to the individual, man or woman, a means of living and the meaning of life—why, this is patriotism not less noble and ennobling than that of the heroic men whose praises our Laureate hymned yesterday, who

*saw the many-million-acred land,  
Won from the desert by their hand,  
Swiftly among the nations rise,—  
Texas a sovereign State,  
And on her brow a star!*

It is poverty, stupidity, ignorance, which do the devil's work. The world is cursed by ignorance and darkness. It will be blessed by knowledge and light. “Let there be light!”—it is the creative fiat. It thunders down the ages from the

dawning of the first morning of the world. And Jesus said, "Give them to eat!"

When with prayer and praise and in communion with the Highest we dedicate this institution to the advancement of Letters, Science, and Art, we dedicate it to the making of men and the making of nations. We dedicate it to America! It is our contribution to the stability of the social order, to the permanence of American institutions, to the propagation of the principles for which America stands in our modern world, to the perpetuation of the forces which called her into being and by which she lives. This is our gift to the greatness of our land.

For the forms of democracy are precisely those through which corruption most easily works if the spirit of democracy be lacking. What forces inhere in law and constitution and in the administration of law which may not be blown to the four winds of heaven upon the breath of some demagogue, drunk with the lust of place and power, most ignorant of what he's most assured of, and like an angry ape playing such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make angels weep? This country was brought to birth under compulsion of the ideal. Heroes who poured their blood out for the truth, women whose hearts bled, martyrs all unknown, gave birth to our country and to its liberties. Its greatness goes back to the visionary and the seer; to the Jesuit missionary marching from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, to the Pilgrim and the Puritan of New England, the Lutherans of Pennsylvania, the Moravian missionaries of Ohio, and all the countless hosts of the obscure, the silent, and the dead who, living, believed in God and His goodness, and followed the gleam. What is to preserve in our modern life this ancient vigor of the spirit? What is to keep the soul of the nation alive?

On what grounds do you believe that this Republic will endure? No republic has yet endured as monarchies have done. Fifty years ago some of the most thoughtful minds in Europe were satisfied that this democracy could not last. During the Civil War the Prince Consort, Queen Victoria's husband, said, with a sort of sardonic satisfaction, "Republican institutions are on their trial." From that trial republican institutions emerged triumphant. You believe that the noonday splendor of this land will outshine the golden glory of its dawn. Whittier declared that the sons and daughters of the Pioneer should

*Make the people's council hall  
As lasting as the pyramids.*

On what ground does this conviction rest? But on what grounds does your belief rest? Why should this Republic endure?

On the side of a current controversy it is glibly asserted that in the last analysis a State rests on force. The opponents of a popular movement go on repeating this dictum as though it were an oracle from heaven. A State rests on nothing of the kind. And force—by which is meant physical force—cannot keep a nation strong. Force could not save the Roman Republic. Rome possessed the finest army that has ever existed on the face of the earth. As a fighting machine it had attained unto perfection. And the Roman Republic failed. To-day Sir Edward Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in King George's cabinet, has warned the British Parliament and the British people that if the insane rivalry of the nations in the matter of military and naval strength be continued, sooner or later it will submerge civilization itself.

The State does not rest on force. It rests upon confidence—a vastly different thing. The basis of our modern society is confidence in one another. You who know a thousand times more about it than a preacher possibly can, let your imagination play for a moment about the vast, far-reaching, apparently illimitable ramifications of commerce made possible between man and man. How much business did you do last year, and how much are you hoping to do next, upon guarantees not very much stronger than the word of a man of whom you know little, and the honor of corporations the individual members of which you do not know at all? The State rests upon confidence in the social order; upon our common trust in justice and in the administration of justice, in law and the sanctity of law. And if the objector says, "Yes; upon the knowledge that force can be used to secure the due observance of law," the answer is easy: "You have not carried your analysis far enough." Our confidence is not grounded in the conviction that the State can control and direct physical force, but in the conviction that the force of the State will in the long run be controlled and directed by wise and good ends. That is to say, the strength of states is in the fundamental rightness of our human nature and our undefined belief that the mass of mankind would rather do right than wrong. The material wealth of cities, the integrity of states, the happiness of kingdoms, the greatness of a republic, alike go back to this, to the number of good men and women they can produce. All creation—all creation we know, Houston, Texas, the South, America, our modern civilization—gazing eagerly as if with outstretched neck, is waiting and longing to see the manifestation of the sons of God.

We have felt the lack of this driving power in the machinery of our social and political life. We have missed the note

of moral enthusiasm. The touch of a high spirit upon human affairs has been wanting. We seek the compulsion of commanding genius and character. Such a voice as that which once from Gettysburg, all fragrant with the memories of a nation's dead, shook the civilized world, is heard no more. Our big men are not big enough. Our leaders are too far in the rear of those they lead! We are ready to cry out again with the poet—prophet of two democracies:

*O for an hour of that undaunted stock  
That went with Vane and Sydney to the block!  
O for a whiff of Naseby, that would sweep,  
With its stern Puritan besom, all this chaff  
From the Lord's threshing-floor!*

For our conviction is that deep down in the hearts of the people there is a capacity for being led; that the people who are being led wrong could be led right; that however corrupt interests deceive, fool, and use the people, there is still that in a nation which might be called the soul of a people; and a soul which would wake at the call of a son of God. *Men* are there, but *Man* is missing. And like our wild-eyed Hosea Biglow, with his tongue of truth and heart of flame, we feel—

*More men? More man? It's there we fail;  
Weak plans grow weaker yit by length'nin':  
Wut use in addin' to the tail,  
When it's the head's in need o' strength'nin'?*

*We wanted one that felt all Chief  
From roots of hair to sole of stockin',  
Square sot with thousan'-ton belief  
In him and us, ef earth went rockin'!*

We are waiting for this Man, with the thousand-ton belief in himself and in us, in Righteousness and God, who will give expression in consecrated and consecrating action to the social aspirations of a million hearts. We are waiting, in the high places of the land, for the sons of God.

That is not all. Let us come to something even nearer to hand. Upon the work of this institution and of institutions like this depends entirely the question whether our amazing material resources, our ingenuity, our inventiveness, our science and skill, shall prove a blessing or a curse. A person or a community may find the disadvantage of possessing so many advantages. We may be ruined by our prosperity. We glory in the best equipment which skill and science can devise; but there is not one thoughtful person here who has not known individuals who would have been better equipped for their work if they had not been equipped so well! One is haunted by the fear that in our day and country we are not producing results commensurate with our efforts. In proportion to the extraordinary increase of our resources, are we doing the good in the world we ought to do? In the world of art and science are we, with our wealth of training and equipment, doing relatively greater work and better work than, let us say, George Stephenson, the inventor of the locomotive, when he taught himself arithmetic on the sides of colliery wagons, or Wilkie when he learned painting with a piece of chalk and a barn door, or West when he made his first brushes out of the cat's tail; than Watt, the inventor of the steam-engine, when he made his first model out of an old syringe; Humphry Davy, of safety-lamp fame, when he extemporized his scientific appliances from kitchen pots and pans; and Faraday, described by Sir William Ramsay last Friday as one of the most brilliant physicists and most daring experimenters of the nineteenth cen-

ture, when he made his from glass bottles; or better work and greater than when Elihu Burritt mastered eighteen ancient and modern languages while shoeing horses at the village forge?

We are doing better and greater work, you are confident. And you name Mr. Edison and Signor Marconi. But, relatively to the wealth of our resources, is the result all it should be?

In the world of moral effort are you quite so confident? Stephen, the first Christian martyr, John Ruskin reminds us, did not get bishop's pay for that long sermon of his to the Pharisees. He only got stones. And Paul had no cathedral called by his name from which to preach his Gospel to the Roman world. When Augustine and his monks landed at Ebbsfleet and met the English king between that place and Canterbury, and declared the good news of Jesus to him, there was no missionary society and missionary press behind him. When the famous few met in a house at Kettering to win heathenism for Christ, the first collection was sixty-six dollars. Do you not think that we ought to do vastly more with our wealth and numbers than men did who were few and poor? Yet are we in the way of accomplishing more for the age we live in and for ages to come than Stephen did for the Jewish world, Paul for the Roman world, Augustine and his monks for the English world, and Fuller Pearce and Ryland for the world of the distant East?

We are not gaining all we ought to gain from the resources that are ours. Why? We leave the work to the machinery, when we ought to do it ourselves. This nation has developed a capacity for organization which is as unmistakably an inspiration of genius as the sculpture of Pheidias or the philosophy of Plato. The art of the Greek, the law of the Roman, the Hebrew passion for righteousness,

the genius of the English for colonization, is not more characteristic nor more significant in the evolution of the race than the genius of the American people for organization. But such high and notable qualities have their natural defects. In this country we first make the machine, and then we bow down and worship it. We kneel and say our prayer to it: "Almighty and everlasting Machine, we beseech thee to roll over us, crush down our insurgent will, and grind down our souls to a pale unanimity!" But neither an individual nor a nation can be better than the gods it worships. If we first make our gods and then worship them, we end by becoming like them. We worship the machine—and we become machines! We have lived to see the apotheosis of the filing cabinet. When Gambetta was praised by a friend for what was perhaps the greatest speech of his life he said, "For seven years I have wanted to make that speech. I have had it here (the heart), but I have not had it here (the head)!" With us, he would only have had to look under A B C, or perhaps under X Y Z, and he would have found it all in the card index!

Our religious work is hag-ridden by this superstition of the machine. The worst speech I have heard in more than five years of residence in this country—always excepting my own, but those I forget—was on "The Standardized Church." Every Church was to be raised up and leveled down and sawn off lengthwise and chopped across and planed superficially to a standard which existed in the machine-made mind of the standardizer. Somewhere in the broad heavens, he seemed to think, there is an everlasting stencil, and with every sweep of the cosmic brush a million souls are produced, all made to measure! The gifted organizer wears himself to a shadow in his determination to standardize the world; and one prays for him the cure which

William III, king of England, desired for the victim of a contemporary superstition. He was the last king of England who practised what was known as "touching for the king's evil." When kings ruled by divine right—what Byron called "the right divine of kings to govern wrong"—it was believed that the touch of one of them would cure a certain disease. They brought a sick man to bluff William; he laid his hand on the sick man's head and said, "May the Lord give you better health and more sense!" But we go on discussing methods—methods—methods!—methods of Sunday-school work, of Church work, of Missionary work—the underlying assumption being that there is one correct, complete, absolute, and universal method, and if only we could find it the work would get done of itself! I sat in a Missionary Conference where godly old women of both sexes discussed "methods." And a missionary just home from the Congo whispered to me, "I have been flat on my back while a naked savage about six feet six inches high, and as tall across, had his foot on my chest and his spear at my throat. What sort of a missionary method ought I to have used then?" To be sure! There are just as many methods as there are men and women. There are just as many good methods as there are wise and good men and women. There are just as many bad methods as there are foolish and lazy men and women!

Henry Ward Beecher once went through a factory equipped with the most perfect machines produced in his day. He gazed on them with admiration, and after a long and lingering gaze he said, "They look intelligent; I think they ought to vote." One has heard something somewhere about the machine voting, but that is neither here nor there! A machine may look intelligent, but "intelligent" is precisely the thing which it is not. All your machinery needs intelli-

gent men and women to work it. Organization is a necessity; but there is danger even in a necessity. The danger is that we leave the organization to do what can be done only by a living spirit. It is the tendency of all human organizations to stifle individuality. Let the organization follow its own tendency and it droops and dies. It is for the individual to assert himself within the organization and, if need be, against it. By so doing he serves its interest and saves its life. Force and Fire brought the organization to birth—Force of Will and Fire of Devotion. By Force and Fire alone can it be fed and nourished into vigorous life—Force of Character and Fire of Love. The organization is a magnificent piece of machinery. But no mechanical means at present known to mortals will generate energy to set it working and keep it going. Human heart-beats must supply the driving power. The Apostle Paul is right: we are waiting for the sons of God.

“The Rice Institute of Liberal and Technical Learning”—is it so the name of our institution runs? “Liberal and Technical Learning”: what I have lately called “Skill of hand and sight of soul”—it is a superb challenge to brain and heart. It was expounded yesterday by the President in a speech entirely noble, the chaste language worthy of his lofty theme. I will not go over the ground again, and do badly what Dr. Lovett did so well. But let me set his conception, which is my own, in the light of religion, and test it by its proved capacity to satisfy our human needs.

In the world of moral effort we meet the Idealist whose sublime head strikes the stars—and who tramples human hearts beneath his feet. He lifts up his eyes above the mountains, and he does not know of any healing ministry for the devil-haunted child in the crowded street. The Corn-law rhymer in England more than sixty years ago described

a type of philanthropist with whom our generation is scarcely less familiar:

*Their noble souls have telescopic eyes  
Which see the faintest speck of distant pain;  
While at their feet a world of agonies,  
Unseen, unheard, unheeded, writhes in pain.*

With better intentions and purer life, the Idealist may yet fritter away his strength in endeavor as futile.

But in the world of moral effort we still meet more often the person who thinks himself practical and takes pride from his belief. He will not look to the far-off interest of tears; no, not he! He is not going to sow the seed and wait for after ages to reap the harvest. He tells you that he wants results. He wants crops. He wants to get there, and to get there quickly. He is the get-rich-quick man of the world of altruism, philanthropy, and reform. If he is called to preside over the councils of a great nation, the best you can say of him is that he is an extempore statesman, a statesman trying to set the world right by rule of thumb, profoundly ignorant of the nature of the forces with which he is playing, and proudly indifferent to the age-long, world-wide consequences of his acts. This is the best you can say of him—if you are a patient and sweet-natured person; but if you are not—why, you say something worse. A man may mean well. But men and institutions and nations need to avoid the devil's short-cuts to a desired end.

What then? The Idealist may be a failure and the practical man a fool. What we want is the practical man who lives by the power of the ideal. Often he has to work almost in the dark; slowly he gropes through the broadening dawn. But he sees the light and whence it flows. And he

knows that each steady step is toward the rising sun. He has certain principles. They may be few. But they are sufficient. They are clear-cut, firm-rooted, four-square to all the winds that blow; and they are safe. He knows, as the world knows, that this same world is not ready to apply those principles immediately and universally to the whole round of human conduct. But he knows, what the world does not, that these are the principles by which alone men live, and that the nations which will not adopt them God sends down to destruction. He, too, is an Idealist of the purest type; but he will labor night and day to apply his principles where and when he can, winning from the unprincipled, anarchic world here a little, there a little, and every little looking to the one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves. Do you tell me that he is living in each little act, each little step, each little gain of justice upon injustice, each day's work well done? I tell you, No! He is living in the true, the good, and the beautiful. He sees life, and sees it whole. He is living in the march of deathless generations. He is living in the sweep of the ages. He is living in the triumph of immortal principle. He may tell you, with his rough practical senses alert and his ear to the ground, that he has only to live one day at a time; but he knows, though he keeps the knowledge to himself, that really and truly he is living in eternity—living, that is to say, in principles older than protoplasm, causes that complete and crown the centuries, and movements that roll back the tide of guilt and sin.

Yesterday, with joy and deep thanksgiving, the Rice Institute was dedicated to the purpose set forth in its Founder's will, in the presence of those whom Dr. van Dyke called the

*Honoured and welcome guests from the elder nations,  
Princes of science and arts and letters.*

Now we, the people of Houston and of Texas, rise and solemnly link ourselves to that consecrating act. We dedicate this institution to the advancement of Letters, Science, and Art, to the service of the imperial commonwealth of Texas; to the material and moral progress of the Southland; to the cause of human improvement over all the earth; and to the greater glory of God. Upon President and Trustees and Faculty, upon other great-hearted men and women who shall bring to the aid of this institution, now and in the coming days, gifts of heart and brain and hand, we invoke the benediction of the Most High. And earnestly we pray that in the years to come the sons and daughters of the Rice Institute may bring honor to its name; that their children and their children's children may rise up to call it blessed; that they may show themselves to be the Sons of God for whose coming Creation waits and longs, co-operating with the world's eternal purposes and preparing for a redeemed humanity a renovated earth.

CHARLES FREDERIC AKED.