

And let me here observe, that the fact of our receiving impressions like these (however interrupted, and by whatever means excited,) is an evidence that the spirit of religion is not dead within us. By the blessing of God, the spark now burning but dimly may be excited to a flame, which shall refine the corruptions of our hearts, and become the animating principle of our lives. On this account, every visitation tending to alienate our affections from the world ought to be considered as the warning voice of God addressed to ourselves, and not to be despised; and every solemnity of religion (whether public or private), having the power of touching the heart and acting on our better feelings, is to be regarded as a merciful invitation of God, and never to be rejected.

Sentiments such as these are surely fitted for the occasion on which we meet; to return thanks to God for the mercies he has vouchsafed to us—to recount the names of those pious benefactors to whom we owe the peaceful abode of learning and science wherein we dwell—to place before the mind's eye those illustrious men who have inhabited this our Zion, and obtained for themselves a name imperishable as the records of our race. These men are to us in the place of a glorious ancestry, urging us by their example to an emulation of their deeds; and we are unworthy sons if we turn a deaf ear to that voice by which they still seem to speak to us.

Among them were found many to join the foremost rank of those who in ancient times emancipated this country from spiritual bondage; to partake in the great work of translating the records of our faith into our native tongue, and to put