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through Jesus Christ.—PETER.

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## PRIZE ESSAY.

MR. EDITOR.—The following Essay was delivered in the Hall of the Baptist Seminary, Fredericton, on the evening of Friday, the 4th June. To its author was awarded a Silver Medal which had been kindly put at the disposal of the Teachers in the Seminary by S. R. Miller, Esq., of Fredericton.

GEORGE E. DAY.

## The True Hero.

BY CHARLES H. GIBBERSON.

In the breast of man there are longings after greatness. Many desire to have their names cherished and revered by the present and succeeding generations. Some by one means and some by another seek to attain to an elevated position in society, to a rank superior to the one in which they are placed. Men with such desires, and such ambitious feelings have lived in all ages and among all nations. They have moved about on the earth and have gone down to their graves amid the tears of friends, or the bewailings of relatives. They have been consigned to the narrow home amid the thunder of artillery, the sweet melody of music, or the lamentations of the bereaved. The green sod has been piled high over their last sleeping place; the loveliest flowers have been thickly planted about their tombs; and artists have exhausted their skill in the erection of monuments to mark their lonely sepulchres. But all these useless performances avail them nothing. True heroism does not consist in mere external accomplishments. Neither does a name to be great constitute greatness. A desire to be thought something when we are nothing, does not promote our excellence. One may be considered by many as the man whose virtues cannot be surpassed, but their thoughts do not make it so; hundreds may respond to his call with acclamations of praise and esteem, but this does not alter the case. He may have the wealth of Mexico or Peru, and yet be destitute of the shining qualities, which characterize the true man. He may have descended from the most powerful monarch that ever swayed a sceptre; royal blood may flow in every vein; a princely diadem may encircle his brow; a mighty and enlightened nation may be under his control; and countless armies may await his command; yet, in possession of all these he may be destitute of what is necessary to raise him to the high position already named. Such were Alexander, Napoleon, Caesar, Hannibal, and hundreds of others, who contended, not for right or justice, but for the gratification of their own evil inclinations and lustful desires. They did not fight for the promotion of virtue, and discipline among men, but to acquire for themselves a name upon the records of history, and an encomium upon the pages of the book of fame. They deserve not the title, because they gave not the glory of their conquests to another, but claimed it for themselves. To satisfy their ambition, they destroyed the lives of thousands of their faithful subjects and spread destruction and death wherever they went. Thus they forfeited all right to a rank among those who are inspired with a spirit of true heroism. Many in the height of their imagination exclaim that the mind makes the man. It is true, the intellect has a decided superiority over wealth or an illustrious birth, but it alone does not render the possessor a true hero. The mind is the receptacle of all the great and heroic principles, which are developed in the external movements. A man cannot be a hero destitute of intellect, but he may have a powerful mind, and yet fail to be truly great. It is the manner in which he employs the faculties which nature has bestowed upon him, that moulds his character. As an instance of this, take Byron the celebrated English poet. He searched the far and near—heaven and earth—something new, some thought unthought before. He labored day and night, and by the resplendent rays of the sun, or by the glimmering light of his midnight lamp wrote down what seemed, in truth, imperishable song. But did he stretch his imagination, and "ransack every nook and corner of his soul" for the promotion of virtue and its attendant blessings? Nay, he wrote unstable fiction rather than solid truth. He penned theories which demoralize rather than elevate the human mind. So we perceive that the intellect unless exercised aright fails to place the possessor among the noble and the good. But if neither wealth nor birth nor intellect constitutes true heroism, in what does it consist? It is the possession of certain virtuous principles which cause the performance of illustrious deeds. But while we consider this subject, the idea that heroes must have sprung from great and noble families, or that they have been in the field of battle or in the midst of some great naval action must be banished from our minds. True heroism is not confined to apparently favoured families, but among the low as well as the high, among the poor as well as the rich, it has discovered itself to the gaze and admiration of suffering humanity. Heroes have sprung up far distant from the accursed battle field, heroes who never listened to the beating of a drum, who never heard the deafening roar of the most active cannon; who never witnessed an engagement like that of Trafalgar, or wielded a sword to conquer an invader foe. It is true that many a hero has bled upon the field of battle, or found a grave beneath the waves of the deep blue sea; but true heroism is not confined to these scenes of warlike

confusion. They flourish in times of peace as well as in times of war. In all ages, and among all classes they have had an existence. They act their part amid the noise and din of arms, or by the pleasant fireside of the humble cottage. Now we may endeavor to discover some of the most prominent features in the character of a true hero. It is evident that no person can be true unless he is guided by the spirit of truth. Therefore a strict adherence to this may be regarded as one of the most important properties which constitute such a character. One may have a degree of courage and bravery, but without this principle implanted within his breast he merits not the appellation to which we have referred. The possession of it raises man in the estimation of his fellow-men and begets for him an influence which may be exercised for the promotion of good, and the extension of justice and equity.

When this virtue is held sacred there is an opportunity for the reception of many others which serve to adorn the human character. Self-sacrifice is another quality which occupies a high rank among the rest. That which will cause a man to forget his own best interest, to secure those of others; that which will prompt him to lay down his life for the welfare of his fellows, or to increase the public good; that which will make him to undergo dangers and privations for the extension of virtue and happiness, merely from a sense of duty, without the reputation of any earthly recompense, is a principle which actuates every true hero. He who will leave his home, his country, and his friends, to listen to the calls of suffering humanity, he who will support the side of virtue in spite of the fiercest opposition; who can be made to renounce his upright principles either by the allurements of gain, the most urgent entreaties of friends, or the bitter persecutions of enemies, occupies the exalted station allotted to the true hero.

Heroes belong not to that class of persons who are selfish, self-seekers, self-lovers, and self-idolaters. Take for instance the illustrious John Howard, whose loved name is embalmed in the memory of Europe's unfortunate captives. He was not selfish. He might have enjoyed the pleasures of retirement and ease, whilst misery and death were raging fearfully within the prison walls of his beloved country. But such was not the case. He had a heart full of sympathy and love to enjoy the blessings of life, and not make an effort to improve the condition of the sufferer. He felt that no sacrifice on his part was too great, in order to relieve those who were bound down amid scenes of wretchedness and despair. He might have thought his own inability and lack of means a sufficient excuse not to attempt so praiseworthy an undertaking. But it was not so. He was determined to do what he could, and leave the event with an overruling Providence. This heroic resolution, accompanied by perseverance and prayer, enabled him to effect much good. He exposed himself in the midst of sickness and death, and administered relief to the subjects of the most dangerous and pestilential diseases. He travelled from city to city, and from parish to parish, and endured many hardships and privations, unknown amidst the comforts of an English home. He not only spoke comfort to the sufferers of his native land but visited many places on the continent, and there bound up the broken hearted, and administered words of peace and joy to many sorrow-stricken spirits. But in connection with this noble spirit of self-sacrifice fully developed in his character, were blended many other excellent qualities which enter into the composition of every heroic nature. He was stimulated by such an amount of holy zeal as enabled him to surmount the many obstacles which frequently obstructed his path. He was a man of unflinching temperance and perfect fearlessness. He was self-distracting, lowly minded and compassionate. He aspired not to such a pitch of eminence or renown as clogged the minds of those ambitious and life-destroying generals already mentioned. He wished no monument pointing to his name above to perpetuate his memory. He was not a lover of human praise, nor did he desire to listen to a recital of his good deeds. He claimed no honour for himself, but ascribed them all to God alone. Again, a true hero is not a disssembler but a sincere person. His deeds are not performed for the sake of show or vain glory. They are nothing less than the accomplishment of right efforts, which have their origin in the heart. He forms not an opinion merely from the words of others, but searches deeply and pursues no pains to discover what is right. He looks not at shadows but at realities. He is a man of moderation, patience, and equilibrium. He lays the foundation of his opinions on select truth and clings to them with so much tenacity as not to be drawn aside into falsehood. He is a person of equity, immortality, and forbearance. He chooses rather to act worldily than act unjustly towards his neighbor. He also possesses boldness, openness, and determination. Consistency is characteristic of every movement. He undertakes no solemn undertaking, and relinquishes it when half finished. He knows what he does, he understands why he does it, and engages in it with all his might.

Until within a few years the English inhabitant of the British West India Islands indulged in the accursed slave-trade. Many African homes were made desolate, and bitter sorrows filled the bosoms of those who were so cruelly used. So it was for many

years, and no effort was made for their liberation. At length their sighs and tears touched the hearts of some noble-minded men, who devoted themselves to the arduous task of setting them free. Wilberforce, Clarke, and some others resolved to engage in the good work. Though often repulsed they returned to the charge with redoubled energy. In spite of reproach and opposition, they determined to support the side of justice and liberty. They struggled on for years, amidst persecution and insult; they persevered until they accomplished their high purpose. They endeavored themselves to the sable sons and daughters of Africa, and left a memorial which the hand of time can never obliterate. Now we may ask if these men were not true heroes, or was it a wicked ambition which prompted them forward. To the latter we say, nay. They felt that the sorrows of down-trodden humanity were their sorrows. Each motive was a sincere desire to relieve their suffering fellow-creatures. They were actuated aright by candour and uprightness. They supported their cause with patience and humility. Thus they laboured in life, and when called to their rest felt happy to think that they were about to leave the world better than they found it. So it is with every true hero.

Again, there is a class of individuals formed in every condition in life, who possess noble qualities. The widow's faithful son who denies himself of many enjoyments in order to comfort his aged or infirm parent is a hero, as well as he who occupies a more prominent position in life. The young man who chooses rather to suffer loss, than break the Sabbath or tell a lie is animated by a spirit of true heroism. The honest trader who renounces those unallowable methods of traffic which are held allowable and generally practiced by others of the same profession, likewise approaches the heroic. He who rather than sacrifice virtuous principles, consents against bankruptcy, ruin, or the actual wants of a family, is animated and supported by the self-same spirit which reigns in the heart of the true hero. Whilst their distresses tempt him on the one hand, the successes of less scrupulous neighbors allure him on the other, and he is thus compelled to struggle against a two-fold opposition. A man to be truly great must also fill the place for which he was designed, and not attempt to assume that of another. For instance Howard could not have filled the place of Wilberforce, neither could the latter have occupied with advantage that of the former. But as each felt willing to discharge his duty in the capacity in which he was placed, they were able to do much both for their country, and for the world at large. Again he that exacts skill, energy and diligence to bring in bright returns of gold, which he sends back to relieve, rejoice, instruct, and elevate others, may also be ranked among the heroic.

A species of daring is sometimes necessary for the development of real merit. How many times have persons exposed themselves to imminent danger to preserve the lives of their unfortunate fellows. Persons have been rescued from the fire, from the water, from the sword, and from other impending dangers, by their recognized friends, and often by those with whom they were not at all familiar. In many cases men have even lost their own lives, in trying to save others from immediate death. History abounds with instances where persons have stepped in and received the fatal blow from some deadly weapon, which was upraised to smite the general or comrade to the earth. It is that daring by which one exposes himself, so that though he may escape, he is more likely to suffer. It is endurance in which one submits to repeated strokes which he might evade. It is sacrifice in which one by his own acts deprives himself of enjoyment or honour. Now if persons undergo such trials to accomplish some benevolent designs, they most assuredly rank among the heroic.

We also read in Holy Writ that the man who is "slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Therefore the person who is able to control his passions, and keep his evil propensities in check is a hero in the highest sense of the word. He who allows not his natural desires to gain the mastery over him, justly deserves our marked attention. He who endeavours to do to others as he would that others should do to him, and in whose breast malice or envy rankles not, is influenced by the principles of true heroism. Such a person in the solitude of his chamber gains many a victory over himself, which should give a brighter lustre to his name than all the conquests which can be made upon the field of battle, or all the splendours of poetic achievement. But heroes are presented to the world chiefly through patriotism, science, and religion. To discover the heroic patriot we may go to the battle field stained with the blood of those who are indeed truly great. War is a great evil it is true, but a country is sometimes obliged to maintain her rights by force of arms. Under such circumstances the man who is ready at any moment to obey the calls of his injured state, and dies, if needs be, in defence of what is right, is indeed with a spirit of true heroism. He who is willing to abandon home, family and friends, to avenge some horrible outrage, committed against his beloved country, against humanity, or against the laws of virtue, is certainly entitled to a rank among the great men of the earth. He who fights to uphold his country's best interests, apart from any private motives or self-

ish feelings deserves to be classed with the noble and the heroic. Men who have thus averted the blow which threatened to prostrate virtue at the feet of vice, have done honor to themselves, to their country and their God. They who sacrifice all private resentment to the public good are indeed patriots and heroes. Such were Alfred the Great, Blake, Havelock, and many others who have wielded the sword in defence of their abused country and insulted countrymen.

For heroes in science, we may go to the field of invention and discovery. There we find Sir Isaac Newton, whose name stands high in the annals of the man who rolls in wealth, or the mighty warrior who fills the world with distress. He made many very important discoveries such as the mechanism of the solar system, the composition of light, and the cause of tides. His first care was to obtain substantial proof that his theory was correct, when this was done he displayed a willingness to combat error of every form. He declared that for which he could produce substantial evidence, but rejected all which was destitute of the same. He was great inasmuch as he allowed no glare of imagination or prejudice to seduce him from his onward path. In Newton's genius were most attractively blended force and humility. He attempted nothing but what he wished to perform, and prosecuted his inventions with out noise or excitement. He respected truth and maintained a strict adherence to virtue and piety. He laid the foundation of his opinions on Bible principles, and each argument paralleled therein.

On the field of discovery we also find Columbus who struggled long and hard to accomplish his purpose. He was scorned and called deluded by those who listened to a relation of his convictions. For many years he was obliged to contend against extreme poverty, and the apathy of his fellow-countrymen. Though subjected to mockery and insult, his mind remained unchanged. His intentions were fixed, and means only were requisite to carry his projects into effect. At length with feelings of gratitude he was able to set sail on his long desired expedition. He was to cross the broad and tempestuous Atlantic, whose billowy surface had never been crossed before. Such an attempt seemed like madness, or the height of presumption to all except himself. But his eye was steadily fixed on the star which twinkled in the distance. His sailors became furious and threatened to throw him into the sea, and return to their native land. He however controlled them in the best possible manner, and cheered their hearts with a hope of success. He stood calmly surrounded by the lamentations, and tears of his despondent crew. At times hope would almost vanish, but his heroic spirit alone supported him. Thus he endured from week to week and from month to month until the green islands and mountain forests of our Western Continent brought joy and gladness to the truly heroic Columbus and his weather-beaten companions. In him, and in others of a kindred spirit, therefore we recognize the character of those in whom nature was pleased to plant the principles of true heroism. But there are many others who have laboured hard to extend a knowledge of the arts and sciences. They have so obviated the many difficulties which once impeded their progress, that what would formerly have taken a life time of hard labor to acquire may now be obtained in a comparatively short time with much greater ease. Such men must approach the heroic, as they studied with great patience to dispense ignorance, and scatter light broad cast over the land. Among these we may reckon Euclid, Robert Boyle and many others who are now dead but whose valuable works remain.

There is however another class of persons superior to those brought before us either through patriotism or science. They are developed by means of religion and the happy effects which it produces upon the race of mankind. The devoted Christian must be a true hero, inasmuch as his highest aim is to pattern after One, who nearly two thousand years ago offered himself a willing sacrifice to atone for the sins of fallen man. In this glorious personage dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He was without spot and blemish. When he was reviled he reviled not again, and when he suffered he threatened not. He lived a life of sorrow and died the ignominious death of the cross to provide a way of escape for rebellious man. His doctrines were pure, and all his precepts bear the impress of his own lovely image. We dare not, however, attempt to place Deity on a level with human nature, but we would say that they who live nearest his righteous examples must be the greatest upon earth. All the kind and generous qualities previously mentioned are most happily blended in their characters. They are liberal-minded large-hearted men, animated by a spirit of self-sacrifice, which is the special virtue of Christianity. This can be proved by many instances of past ages recorded in the word of Divine Inspiration. We hear one saying that he counted all things as loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord; that neither tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword should be able to separate him from the love of Christ; that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to sever the true disciples from the love of God. This has also been confirmed by many in whose

hearts the light of gospel truth has been shed abroad. If we turn over the pages of the Holy Writ, we shall there find an account of many who were indeed true heroes; where deeds have survived rolling ages, and which the withering hand of time can never efface. In order to perform these, strong faith and a firm reliance upon the never-failing arm of Omnipotence, were not only desirable but absolutely necessary. In that volume we read of one who was reared beneath the shadow of an earthly court, and who was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptian schools. He was most tenderly loved and would probably have inherited the crown of a vast and mighty empire. But these vanities allure him not, for he had faith in the promises of God and respect unto the recompense of reward. So when he came to years he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.

We might speak of David the shepherd boy, afterwards King of Israel who slew the valiant champion, who for forty days defied the armies of the living God; of Daniel, who would rather be cast into the lion's den than disobey the commands of the most High; of the three worthies who found a bed in the fiery furnace, rather than bow down to the graven image, which an idolatrous King had set up; of the prophets and holy men of old, who shunned not to declare the denunciations of the Almighty against his rebellious people, and whose blood was made to flow in torrents down the streets of the once holy city. Then we hear of Paul and Peter and the other apostles who were willing to endure insult from the self-righteous Jew, and even death from the hands of the Gentile executioners. Their loins were girt about with truth; they had on the breast-plate of righteousness, and were armed with the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. Thus equipped, they went forward and gained many victories, not however with noise or confusion; not in their own strength, but through Him who commanded them to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Thus we might mention hundreds of such who have proved themselves true heroes in the highest sense of the word. And if we examine profane history, we may find many instances of a similar nature. Look at the pioneers of the Reformation, and think of what they did to advance the intrusis of Christ's Kingdom, and for the welfare of their fellows. Think of what they did for the emancipation of those, who were bound down in the midst of ignorance and superstition. See how they laboured to elevate those whose condition was much more deplorable than that of the West Indian slaves to which we have already referred. Yet we find Wickliffe, and afterwards Luther, Melancthon and others coming forward to effect their deliverance. They lifted up their voice against the abominations, committed in the land, and though after repulsed, they persevered until Satan's Kingdom shook from the very centre. Luther publicly declares that he fears not them who are only able to kill the body; that he will retract nothing of what he has said, unless disproved by Scripture, and that it is not safe for a Christian man to speak against his conscience. Was he not then a true hero? Though but a youth his intrepidity surpassed that of either Caesar or Wellington, nor were the threats of a blood-thirsty priesthood sufficient to put him to silence. He went when he was called, and gave not over the struggle until death removed him beyond the limits of time. Again if we look at the martyrs for Christianity, whose blood is truly said to be the seed of the Church, we will find the principles of the true hero clearly developed in them.

When we consider how they were brutally tortured and slain, and observe their faith, patience, and resignation, we cannot fail to ascribe to them what they justly merited. They suffered deaths most cruel and ignominious, yet in the midst of their greatest agony, lifted up their hearts in sincere prayer to Almighty God in behalf of their tormentors. In this we perceive the love and generosity which they bore towards their most vindictive enemies, feelings which are cherished by all of God's house. The faithful missionary who goes abroad among the heathen, or otherwise, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation, possesses the amiable qualities which characterize the truly great. His heart burns with love to God, in obedience to whom he goes forward and combats the powers of darkness, to save souls from eternal ruin. We have said that Wilberforce, who set the bodies of men free was a hero, how much more then was Carey who strove to emancipate the souls of those who were slaves to ignorance and superstition; into whose minds the light of Gospel truth had never shined. He was surrounded by poverty, and had a family to maintain by the sweat of his brow. But the pious condition of those who were bowing down to stocks and stones, excited within him a desire to teach them the road to happiness and eternal life. After a mighty struggle he left his humble residence in the West of England, and went far away into a strange land to undertake the work to which he had been called. He forsook the pleasures of home, and labored to promote the interests of strangers and barbarians. To perform his task, strong faith was

needed; courage to meet reproach in any form; perseverance that never shrunk from toil and compassion such as is learned in the school of Christ alone. He spent much of his life in the work, and rejoiced to know that he had not labored in vain. He was a hero indeed. So are all they who choose to obey God rather than man.

Again he who breaks off from sin, and liberates himself from the snare of the evil one, in the midst of taunts, and jeers and insults; he who rebukes profanity regardless of the scorn or frowns of his companions; or he who forgives an injury rather than revenge it, is a much greater hero than the wicked conqueror whose name is far transported on the blast of the trumpet of fame. He who steadily maintains a christian character, amid the countless vicissitudes incident to life, fails not to merit the appellation of "true hero." Under this head we may also class the translators of the Bible, the founders of many religious institutions, and others who have devoted themselves to the cause of charity and benevolence. Therefore if we sum up the blessed parts of the spirit, love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith and temperance, we shall therein comprise the fundamental principles which actuate those who are true heroes in the most refined sense of the word. These good qualities implanted within the breast, shine forth with peculiar lustre, and not only render the possessor a happy man, but diffuse a gentle radiance over others of the human race.

Now as we have briefly described the character of the true hero, let us see if we would wish to imitate his example. If so, then let us not seek the applause of men, which is as fleeting as the wind or as the summer's dew. Let us not spend our time and strength as these who seek to perpetuate their names by monuments of marble which must crumble into dust, beneath the hand of time. Let us not covet the wealth of the rich, which fades away like the vapour before the morning sun. Let us not desire the shade of a royal palace, or frequent the halls of merriment and vain pleasure. But let us go to the distressed and relieve their woes, or to the broken-hearted and heal their sorrows. Let us try to save the lost, or reclaim the wanderer from the paths of vice. Let us devote our lives to the promotion of virtue and happiness and we shall most assuredly secure our end. If we pursue such a course no sting of conscience can mar our peace, we shall be boundlessly sustained through life, and shall leave memorials more lasting than pillared piles or the eternal pyramids.

## Sabbath School Address.

VICTORIA CORNER, WAKEFIELD, 1858.

[CONCLUDED.]

In another school 14 teachers laboured during 10 successive years, only one of whom was a professor of religion at the commencement; of these, all but one had embraced religion before the expiration of that period. Of 200 pupils connected with the school during the 10 years, 133 professed to have become savingly acquainted with the gospel of Christ. Of 136 admitted in one year to a church in the State of Connecticut, 111 were connected with the Sabbath School. Another teacher says that on looking over his class books kept for a period of 17 years, he ascertained that three-fourths of his scholars have become professed Christians, and several of them gospel ministers. A person of experience in the United States writing about 18 years since; says it is safe to estimate the numbers of members added to the church of Christ from Sabbath Schools in the United States within the preceding 15 years at 75,000, and so far as he could learn an instance of a revival of religion had rarely occurred for some years, which had not originated with a Sabbath School or embraced it in its progress. It has been affirmed by competent authority that 19-20 of the evangelical missionaries sent from Britain within the present century became pious or received their first permanent religious impressions while connected with a Sabbath School. During a period of 6 years beginning with 1826 a Sabbath School was amidst much difficulty kept up; 25 teachers were engaged in it in that time, only one of these at a time of commencing his duty, was a professor, and only one left the school a non-professor. Of another school it is related that every scholar, who had been a regular attendant and had come to the age of 20 years, had been converted, some of them before they were 13 years of age. There were some few years since two large flourishing churches in St. Louis, United States, owning their existence, under God, mainly to a Sabbath School established there some 40 years before, and in which the pastors of both were taught their alphabet. It was ascertained not long since of 507 students preparing for the ministry in 6 seminaries of 3 different denominations, that 313 were instructed in Sabbath Schools, and of 50 of these young men in one of these seminaries nearly 40 were converted in the Sabbath School. The late Rev. Mr. James Bector of Christ Church, Philadelphia, made the following statement at a public meeting, which he addressed shortly before his death: A young man who had been piously instructed in his early years, while at college mixed in gay worldly society, so that in a short time the serious impressions distilled into his youthful mind left him, and he ceased to pray; after a time he removed to a distant city and com-