

Sermon preached, by the Rev. Dr. Jacob, (at the request of the
Worshipful the Treasurer), before the Governors of Churo's Hospital,
on St. Matthew's Day. Sept^r 21st, 1854.

"Through wisdom is a house builded; and by understanding it is established."

One obvious feature which characterises the language of the Bible, is the frequent use of figurative and illustrative expressions; and these figures and illustrations are commonly taken from such simple and familiar objects, that they are intelligible to all persons and in all languages. And thus a precept or description may in its literal statement convey some easy instruction to the most untutored mind, — and yet in its fuller application it may open out the knowledge of some deep spiritual truth, or inculcate principles of the most comprehensive utility.

Thus the words of the text, in their simple and literal expressions, call our attention to the obvious fact that the building of a house for the habitation of man, especially when civilization with its attendant arts is highly advanced, is a work which requires much skill and exercise of mind; and that, if such a building with its conveniences of arrangement, protection, and comfort, and the solid durability of its structure, be compared with the rude huts or tents of less skilful times, a well built house is a monument of man's wisdom; and without such wisdom it could not be created. And then, in order that such a structure may be preserved from year to year, — may be kept in due repair, — and be established as a lasting domicile for a human family, — a further and continued exercise of intelligence is needed; or else the skill and labour of the original architect will
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ever long be lost, and come to nothing, by the necessary progress of decay & ruin. "Through wisdom is a house ~~established~~ builded, and by understanding it is established."

But doubtless this is not all that the sacred Writer designed to teach us by such a precept. The words will apply with equal truth to the greatest works, on which the thoughts and operations of man can be employed. And all plans, which are intended to be productive of lasting benefits, — or institutions which are to promote the highest interests of man, as permanent sources of happiness or utility — must be originally framed with wisdom; and when once begun they need the continued exercise of intelligence, care, and prudence, to carry on the good designs: — to preserve and enlarge their power and usefulness; — to adapt their functions to the requirements of each successive age; — and to hand them down to coming generations, not merely as monuments of antiquity, but as abiding foundations which time has not impaired. — It is one of the peculiar advantages of this our land, that it abounds with instances of such originating wisdom, and conservative understanding. And most of the benefits which we now enjoy in our religious, civil, and social position, may be traced back to the acts & or institutions of ages long gone by, and since then prudently preserved, or wisely modified for present use. The whole British Constitution in Church and state, with all the vast interests involved in it, is a House which "through wisdom has been builded", and which has been, and must still be, "established by understanding".

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But leaving at present such wide views, we are invited by the circumstances of this day to confine the application of the text to a single instance of minor, - but by no means trivial - importance; and the sympathies of my hearers will, I am confident, go with me, when I now appropriately name "the ancient, royal, and religious foundation of Christ's Hospital", as a striking exemplification of the ascription in the text.

I The wisdom, with which this house was builded, is proved generally by the facts, that at it's first establishment it was admirably suited to meet some of the most pressing and peculiar wants of that period, and of the locality in which it was placed; and that at the same time it was equally fitted to last for future ages, and to adapt itself to their changing character and circumstances, without either losing it's original and distinctive features; or on the other hand appearing, in the midst of modernised and recent structures, as an obsolete and by-gone relic of antiquity.

And if it were necessary to follow out such general arguments, by any enumeration of detailed proofs, we might mention as indications of peculiar wisdom, the remarkable union of fixedness with free and expansive action in it's constitution, and in the powers and functions of it's government; - the liberal and comprehensive nature of the advantages held out in it's design to the recipients of it's beneficence; - and the sound theory of it's religious character, as seen in it's permanent connection with the Protestant Church of England.

II And then the understanding, with which it has been established and continued to the present day, is most obviously proved by the fact that it not only still exists as one of the permanent Institutions of our country; but that it has greatly increased in wealth, power, importance, and means of usefulness; — that it has extended the sphere of its operations and influence far and wide beyond the original range of its benevolence in the city of London; and now opens the arms of its care and kindness to every locality and corner of these realms.

It is not my intention however to review the history of this Hospital during the three centuries of its existence; or to mark the different steps and stages of improvement, or depression, through which it has passed, and thus notice the varying amount of intelligence or folly displayed in its management, regulations, or accomplished work. — I purpose to consider a far more important and deeply, — responsibly, interesting portion of the subject now before us: — namely, the actual position of this time-honored House with reference to the present day. And this will necessarily lead me to touch upon — the expectations which may justly be formed of its efficiency as one of the most noble educational institutions of the country, and one which in point of capabilities, resources, and means of doing good, probably stands before all similar establishments in the World: — the consequent responsibilities which press upon all who are connected with its government and operations; — and the wisdom and understanding specially requisite now, for establishing this House upon the firm basis of influential

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usefulness, which it ought to occupy; and to enable it duly to fulfil its mission in this marked and stirring generation.

In alluding to such topics, it will be perceived that I must address myself more especially to the Governors of the Hospital; and, on this my first, and perhaps my only opportunity, for addressing them as a body, — I desire as their Servant to address them with all due respect, but at the same time I must claim permission to speak with the plain truthfulness of impartiality; — remembering that this is no place for flattering words or empty compliments; but a place and an occasion, when the great and serious interests involved demand to be faithfully considered; and when difficulties and deficiencies should be looked in the face, as well as improvements and signs of progress be thankfully acknowledged.

III. And now, if first of all we take a general view of the position of Christ's Hospital, and its bearing upon the educational wants of our own day; — how great are its capabilities! — how much may be expected from it! — and consequently what need of wisdom and intelligent action on the part of those who regulate and control its destinies!

In this House, exclusive of the daughter establishment at Hertford, between 800 and 900 Boys are lodged, fed, clothed, instructed, and supplied with every requisite; and after having been kept under its roof for the space of 5, 6, or more years, about 200 are annually sent forth to carry with them to all quarters of the land whatever of good or evil

evil they have contracted here. The peculiar circumstances also of this Hospital give it some very striking advantages over other Schools in its power of doing good to the children under its care. For they are all collected beneath its own roof, and not dispersed in separate and independent Boarding-Houses, as in some Public Schools, — nor required to be brought together from their homes each day, as in others. They are consequently always on the spot, and come under the influences of the Institution, by night and by day, in study and in relaxation. And while they are thus always within reach, — accessible to every benefit which wise regulations may confer; — there is less danger that any pernicious external influence arising from the ignorance, caprice, or misunderstanding of others, should impede the free and healthy working of our plans. And lastly, the authority of the Governors to make such regulations as may be requisite, for giving full effect to our great educational resources, is unfettered by any vexatious hindrances, which might clog their intelligent and beneficent exertions. Surely then, from such an Institution, great results may be expected; — and it may be well supposed that from its walls come forth each year a goodly band of youths well trained and taught according to their several ^{ages} abilities, and fitted to take their places in the various paths, to which they are subsequently led, with marked benefit to themselves, and to the community at large.

And if in smaller and less peculiar Schools a large responsibility rests on

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those who manage them, and they have need of prudence, wisdom, and intelligence, to do justice to the calls of their position:— much more are such qualifications requisite here, both in the Governors at large, as far as they can exercise their powers, and particularly in the Committee of Almoners, on whom (on all ordinary occasions) the supreme authority practically devolves. — For a great work lies before them, — to enable, by their wise government, this noble Institution to accomplish its full amount of Good:— and a difficult work lies before them:— difficult not merely from the largeness of the Establishment, and the multiplicity of its details;— but more difficult, from the very nature and constitution of the Governing Body. It is difficult for a Committee, be its Members as noble and as honourable as they may, to govern such an Institution by the direct exercise of their own authority. — It is difficult for them to understand its wants:— to know what regulations are required, or how their regulations, when enacted, are carried out. It is especially difficult for such a Body to get at the truth even respecting matters of fact connected with the education and discipline of the place. They cannot see for themselves, — and many who could inform them lack opportunity, inclination or courage, to tell them the undisguised truth. — They are like the kings of countries where there is no unfettered Parliament, and no freedom of the press. None but individuals peculiarly circumstanced or unusually daring will venture to tell them unpleasing truths, or awaken them from agreeable dreams: and such as do venture, do so with the risk of being discredited, disliked, and charged with

unworthy motives and designs. - It is very possible that there may be times when such a Governing body will conscientiously believe their Institution to be well-regulated, flourishing, and successful; - free from all glaring defects, and as near perfection as human institutions can well be; - when all the while the very reverse is in reality the case; - when the gravest evils are rife within its walls; - when regulations are in force and practices encouraged, which exert a most pernicious influence upon its system and operations.

And this may the more readily happen here, from some peculiar ~~and~~ circumstances connected with this House. - One legitimate mode of estimating the efficiency of our larger Grammar Schools is to mark the different honours obtained by their Scholars at our national Universities; - and thus if our Grecians gain such distinctions it is sometimes inferred that our School is in a good condition; but this may be a false inference in our case. For only four Grecians go to College every year, while 200 other Boys are during the same period sent forth; and the success of a Grecian at Oxford or Cambridge is no proof that the large number of other youths have been satisfactorily instructed, and fitted for their various walks in literary, scientific, commercial, or industrial life. - Again, in most other Schools a flourishing condition in point of numbers is a fair evidence of good instruction or careful training: and if Boys are found by their Friends to be badly taught, complaints are freely made, and the numbers probably decline.

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But here Parents feel themselves to be under obligations to the benevolence of the Hospital; and the other benefits besides instruction are thought so great to orphan and ~~widows~~ children of large families, that the mouth of complaint is stopped; and there would always be widows and hard pressed families enough to afford numerous applicants for a presentation, however defective and inefficient the actual education might be. Great therefore is the need of understanding, — and not of uprightness and good intentions merely, — in the Governing body of our School: that they may deal aright with the grave questions which come before them; — that they may know when to exercise their full powers in person, and when (as true wisdom often-times requires,) to make their power a valuable support to others who, armed with authority from them, may better execute their will.

IV. But in order to do justice to this grave and interesting subject, it is necessarily, besides such general views, to enter a little more into detail. And although to do this fully would occupy too much time, yet even to glance with brevity at some particulars may not be altogether without its use. — If we look at Christ's Hospital as a magnificent asylum for children in this country, its work must necessarily be of a complex character; and must have reference to the physical, intellectual, and moral or religious welfare of the children who partake of its beneficence. And accordingly as through wisdom the house was builded in the case of the Royal Founder for all those requisites; — so now the understanding which is needed to establish and confirm it, must extend its influence to all these branches; — and

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while it ministers to the bodily wants and comforts of the children, must supply sound instruction to their minds, and exercise a wholesome moral influence upon their character, - if it is not to be found wanting, when weighed in the balances of truth.

1. Now with regard to the physical welfare of the children, it may be observed, that any one who was acquainted with this Institution 30, even 20 years ago, and who witnesses what is its condition now, - must not only see marked and most gratifying improvements; but he must be convinced that the present admirable regulations in the Hall, in the Wards, in the Infirmary, and in everything relating to the personal comfort and health of the Boys, could not have been brought about ^{within} the space of a single generation, without a large exercise of intelligence and energy, guided by a liberal spirit, and by a determination to place the Hospital, in this respect, on a footing becoming such an Institution, and suited to the present condition of Society.

2. Would to God! - and I say this in all solemnity - that the intellectual and moral wants of Christ's Hospital were as fully and satisfactorily provided for. But it is a more difficult task, and demands a higher wisdom, to understand the exigencies and provide for the welfare of the mind & soul, than is required for bodily health and comfort. Insufficiency in food, - personal discomfort, - disease and pain, - unsightliness in outward appearance, or any relic of barbarism - that an earlier age might have handed down, -

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things patent to observation and remark. - It is natural therefore that the refinements of the age should bear first upon the things which mark the physical condition; and that, (in our case), the ruling powers should first notice what was wanting in this Department, and zealously introduce desirable reforms. But the mental and moral condition of our Boys does not thus meet the eye, and challenge observation. Nothing is known of it, except by those who are conversant with them, and mark the amount of their acquirements, or their moral principles and actions. Not only the Governors at large, but even the Committee of Stewards may remain in ignorance on these momentous questions, and fail to remedy what is wrong, - unless with earnestness, candour, and a simple desire to know the truth, they will seek information from those who can give it, and thoroughly probe disorders with a view to their effectual cure; - and unless they be either themselves men of experience and competent judgment in matters of education, or else possess that valuable species of wisdom, which makes us willing, where we ourselves are ignorant, to seek, and be guided by, the judgment of those who happen to be more experienced and better informed.

Without attempting here to detail the proofs which but too plainly show the general defective character of the tuition which has been prevalent in Christ's Hospital; - I would remark that whereas the old Grammar Schools of this country, until lately taught nothing but Latin and Greek; but did in general teach these with

accuracy and effect:— and on the other hand the Schools, in which different branches of more practically useful modern knowledge are taught, have often omitted accurate classical training:— the system here pursued in the School at large has combined the defects of both these methods; and our Boys in general are very ignorant in important branches of English instruction, without having attained any accurate knowledge in their classical studies.— This would be a defect to be much lamented at all times, and under all circumstances;— but when we consider the question of mental education in its modern aspects, and see what such an Institution as this ought to do to meet the demands of the present time;— when we mark the vast improvements which have taken place in the education of the lower classes, and are forced to acknowledge that a large mass of our Boys would be unable to compete with the Scholars of a well-conducted national School;— when we notice the Subjects which are specially needed for a good modern education, and to fit youths to play their part well in the stir and struggle of commercial and industrial life, and we find that these are the very things which a Boy at Christ's Hospital as yet has little or no opportunity of learning;— when we are informed that modern Languages, — various branches of practical or applied Science, — physical and historical Geography, — English Composition, — the history of the British Empire with its colonies and dependencies, — elementary art of drawing on correct principles, — are subjects which practical and experienced men are demanding to have taught, in their

rudiments at least, to the rising generation; and that the greater part of these Subjects are all but absolutely interdicted here: - it must be owned that there is ample room for something to be done. Moreover besides improvement in the actual subjects of tuition, there are other important questions affecting the welfare of the School as a place of instruction: - questions relating to the size, arrangement, ventilation, and furniture of the School-rooms, upon which success in managing and teaching large classes - and oftentimes grave moral results, - very much depend: - and questions relating to the appointment, relative position, duties and efficiency of Masters, - to which I shall now only thus cursorily allude, and hasten to the last of those three considerations which I above enumerated, - the religious and moral training of the School.

3. By the moral and religious training of Boys, I mean the using of such means as are within our power to repress vicious actions and encourage virtuous ones: - to form aright the manners, habits, and as far as possible the tone of thought and feelings: - and to inculcate sound principles which may abide with them in after life; and thus fit them as citizens in a free country, and Christians in a Protestant Church, duly to serve God in the station to which his providence may call them. And in order to this it is necessary that facilities should be provided: - for the due performance of those domestic and public acts of Worship which should be habitual in the members of a Christian community; -

community;— for imparting suitable instruction in the truths, doctrines, and duties of the Christian religion;— for enforcing a wholesome discipline, — and lastly for bringing sound moral and religious influences to bear with practical effect upon the daily conduct of the Boys.

Now I have had too much experience in the actual life of boyhood in Schools to entertain exaggerated ideas as to the degree of religious and moral perfection which we must expect to realise. Here between 800 and 900 Boys of different ages, ranks, characters, and previous training are brought together "it must needs be that offences come";— it must needs be that, with every effort, we shall see some failures, — some deficiencies, — and even some grave and distressing evils. But it is equally certain that we ought to aim at the best attainable condition; and means for promoting this which are evidently desirable and easily to be procured, cannot be wisely and innocently neglected.

(a) ~~It is~~ In the actual condition of Christ's Hospital, forms and seasons of religious worship are regularly attended to;— but it must be remembered that a strict attendance upon the outward acts of religion, as a part of the routine of school duty, will not of itself make Boys religious; and may, if unwisely managed, produce the very contrary effect.

(b) It is further directed that the children throughout the School shall be instructed in the knowledge of the Christian religion; and ~~that~~ the Upper Grammar Master is charged with the supervision of such instructions.

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But charging an Officer with the performance of a duty is not altogether the same thing as enabling him to perform it; and regulations, justly approved of in theory, may be greatly impeded by practical difficulties, and rendered almost nugatory in their actual operation.

(c) The discipline of the School as far as relates to punctuality and order in routine duties;— and the punishment of vicious or disorderly conduct, is well maintained, as far as the present machinery will admit; and produces a large amount of practical good. But this machinery, though admirable in some parts, which are both wisely arranged, and hallowed by the lapse of time, is in other respects capable of improvement. Neither is a discipline of this kind however excellent, all which is needed to accomplish the great end desired:— it requires the further aid of—

(d) that which is the most powerful of all the means of religious and moral training;— namely a wholesome influence brought to bear upon the hearts, consciences, habits, and whole conduct of Boys, not so much by any formal instruction imparted, or by the fear of punishment, — but the presence, conversation, advice, force of character, and kindly interest of those with whom they are brought in contact.

So important is this moral power, that without it no other method will be productive of much good:— and neither religious duties and religious instructions will restrain from ungodliness and vice;— nor will exactness of discipline commonly do more, than place a
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temporary and insufficient curb upon the outward demeanour. Most and
 especially then in our case where Boys are removed at an early age train
 from the force of home-impressions, and brought together in large masses in the
 here, — it is a deeply interesting and grave consideration whether this branch
 of their training is well provided for or not. — It is with a deep
 sense of my own responsibility that I venture plainly but seriously to state of the
 that in this respect the internal economy of Christ's Hospital is eminent-ly
 ly defective. In making this statement it is necessary for me to have
 notice some peculiarities which distinguish this Institution. — a grave
 It is obvious that the most powerful influence for good, that can upper
 bear upon Boys at school, should be, and under favorable cir- habits
 cumstances always & will be, the influence of the Masters under whose orders
 care they are placed. Now in other Schools Boys generally reside But
 under a Master's roof, and consequently within reach of all the idently
 effects which his presence, character, advice, reproof, encouragement, too fe
 and domestic arrangements can produce upon them; — and the sharp
 humanizing, Christianizing influence of a good and experienced to pro
 Master has its full effect out of school, as well as in the hours powe
 of study. — But here the Boys are entirely removed from the Mas- from
 ter's sight, except during the actual hours of the School-room. Wara
 In point of fact all the Masters, except the Upper Grammar Master, 4. 11
 are expected to be merely teachers of certain branches of knowledge, might
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and are not required to have either work, care, or interest in the moral training of the children. Indeed it has not been thought necessary in the appointment of Masters, to select men of ascertained experience, and practical skill in influencing Boys for good. To meet this grave deficiency, which may seem to arise out of the constitution of the Hospital, but which might, to a great extent, be advantageously supplied, nothing which can be called a sufficient compensation has hitherto been provided. — Again in other Schools there is a gradation of ages throughout the whole number of Boys, which gives the upper and older Scholars great weight in affecting the whole tone and habits of the School; and consequently, if only the Head-Clasp be well ordered and duly trained, their influence is felt throughout the rest. — But here from our peculiar circumstances, the gradation of age is suddenly stopped at its most influential period; and the Grecians are too few in number, — too isolated in position, — and too widely and sharply separated in rank and sympathies from the rest of the School, to produce much perceptible effect upon its character. While the power of our Monitors under present arrangements is commonly found not to be very great, and being besides exercised only in the Wards is necessarily quite inadequate to remedy this deficiency. — It must be farther added that the absence of Day-rooms which might be used out of school-hours for numberless wholesome purposes, the absence of a Library, which would encourage a taste for reading

and voluntary improvement, and keep many a Boy from idleness and vice; — the absence of almost everything, which might develop and strengthen the better feelings and tendencies of Boyhood; — helps to encourage some of the worst habits, and to throw Boys upon the gratification of their lower appetites, as their only source of pleasure; than which nothing can be more prejudicial to all moral good.

But now I must conclude this brief review of the Subjects to which I have ventured to allude under a deep conviction of their great importance, and a low of the desirableness, — yea! — the necessity of their being thus stated in the most solemn manner, and under the hallowed sanction of the religious services of this day. — And who that reflects at all upon the momentousness of the educational questions, which affect the whole future career in life of those who go forth into the world from the sheltering walls of Christ's Hospital; — who that with the eye of a Christian keeps in view the fact that the character, — the soul, — the eternity, of the children of this House is interested in the training, which they here receive; — can fail to acknowledge that there is ample scope for the highest wisdom, the most intelligent and prudent counsel, to remedy the existing defects, and carry out a sound, vigorous, and comprehensive reformation. — By wisdom and understanding the evils complained of may be very greatly diminished, and perhaps entirely removed. — There is nothing in these defects which need be perpetuated, or which with God's blessing or human wisdom may not

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be happily overcome. Rather let me say that a glorious ~~work~~ field lies open to the Governors of this Institution, wherein to achieve for themselves a noble distinction, - a name of honour, which will not be forgotten in this place, if it may be told to after times that by their honest candour, - by their uncom- promising courage, - by their enlarged and enlightened views, - by their dis- interested exertions, - by their wise and well-timed reforms, - they raised the education of this place, both in its intellectual and its religious aspects, from a low and unsatisfactory condition to a high standard of efficiency.

And earnestly do I hope and pray, that all who are engaged in the Govern- ment of this great and noble House may duly feel the sacred responsibility of their position; - and may rise with willing hearts and hands to encounter all the difficulties, which may impede the full development of its great resources, and keep it far behind the requirements of the age. In these times it will not do for Christ's Hospital to rest upon its antiquity, and its past renown. It must prove itself equal to its mission in the present generation. And if by the grace of God its Governors are enabled to use their powers with the intelligence, zeal, and discretion, which the case demands; this noble House may yet stand higher than it has ever done in the just estimation of the country; - may prove itself worthy of its Royal Founder and of the royal and distinguished names which grace its records; - and, what is of far higher moment, may prove ~~itself~~ a blessing indeed to thousands of its children, - a strong

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defence to the cause of true religion and useful learning, — and above all
an honoured instrument for setting forth the glory of Him whose sacred
name it bears, and to whose service it is consecrated for evermore. —