

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

WARNING AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

A Sermon

PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH, 1906,

DELIVERED BY

C. H. SPURGEON,

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,

On a Lord's-day Evening, in the year 1864.

"I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night."—Solomon's Song v. 2.

How changeable is the creature! In the verse preceding our text, we find the spouse in a happy, healthy, heavenly frame of mind, for her Beloved was with her, and she was in the enjoyment of the closest communion with him. We find him saying, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk; eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Yet, from the height of this glorious fellowship, how soon the spouse comes down to the depths of such a cry as this, "I sleep, but my heart waketh"! Truly, the weather of our isle is not more variable than the feelings of believers. One day, the sun shines hot and strong; the next day comes a black cloud, accompanied with the lightning-flash and the voice of thunder; then come the rattling drops of hail; and anon, in a few more hours, it is hot again, or perhaps the chilly North wind begins to blow. Have you not been on Mount Tabor at one moment, and at another in the Vale of Achor? Have you not been, at one time, like the chariots of Ammi-nadib, driving so fast that the axles were hot with speed, and soon after you have been like Pharaoh's chariots when the wheels were taken off, so that you drave heavily? Now ye mount as upon eagle's wings, and anon ye sink as in deep mire, where there is no standing; at one moment, delighting in God's goodness and mercy, and the next moment, crying, "All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me." Lord, what a changeable creature is man! When thou hast taken him up to his highest altitude, how speedily he cometh down, by the force of thy hand, to the very depths! How soon dost thou bring him down from his highest eminence even to the very dust!

No. 3,013.

Christian, when the Lord favours thee, and thy soul walks in near fellowship with him, remember that there is a devil within thee and a devil without thee. Be careful of thy footsteps; even when thou art on the top of the mountain, even when Jesus is sitting by thee, and whispering in thine ear that thou art his, watch thou with the greatest possible care, for never dost thou lose thy corruption. Thy communion may be transient, but thy corruption is perpetual. To be with Christ is but a thing of a moment with thee, but to be with thy corruption is a thing of every hour in the day. I pray thee, keep this in mind; and whenever thou art in thy best frame, then be doubly careful, lest thou shouldst lose thy Beloved, and have to cry once again, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." Dr. Ives, who used to live on the road to Tyburn at the time when prisoners were always carried in a cart to be hanged there, would frequently say, when he had any friends with him, if he saw the criminals riding by, "There goes Dr. Ives;" and when they asked him what he meant, he replied, "Such crimes as that felon has committed I should have committed but for the grace of God." That is true even of you who live nearest to God. You, who have the most familiarity with Christ, and enjoy the most holy fellowship with him, may soon become the very leaders of the hosts of Satan if your Lord withdraws his grace. David's eyes go astray, and the sweet psalmist of Israel becomes the shameless adulterer, who robs Uriah of his wife. Samson one day slays a thousand of his enemies with the might of his arm, and the valour of his heart; another day his honour is betrayed, his locks are shorn, and his eyes are put out by a strumpet's treacherous wiles. How soon are the mighty fallen! Behold Solomon, the wisest of men, yet the greatest fool who ever lived. Even Job fails in patience, and Abraham staggers as to his faith. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." These observations seem to rise at once to our minds when we consider such passages as abound in this "Song of songs, which is Solomon's." We find, at one moment, that the spouse is so happy that she cries out, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love;" and, at another moment, she is searching for her Beloved, and cannot find him, and mourning because of the darkness, and of the cruelty of "the watchmen that go about the city."

The text very readily suggests three subjects for meditation:—first, a *lamentable state*: "I sleep;" secondly, a *hopeful sign*: "but my heart waketh;" and, thirdly, a *potent remedy*: "It is the voice of my Beloved." Nothing can wake a believer out of his sleep like the voice of his Beloved.

I. First, here is a LAMENTABLE STATE: "I sleep."

I think I can describe this state pretty well, because I experience it too often, and I am afraid many of you could also describe it with some degree of accuracy, for frequently you too fall into it. What is it for a Christian to sleep? Well, thank God, there is a sleep which the believer never knows. He can never again sleep that deadly sleep in which Christ found him while he was in his

sinful state; he shall never sleep the judicial sleep into which some are cast as the result of sin; he shall not sleep, as do others, to his eternal ruin: yet he may sleep dangerously and sinfully; and this is the state in which the Christian is found when he thus sleepeth,—*in a state of inaction*. You are doing something for God, but you are rather doing it as a matter of custom than as a matter of loving earnestness. You do pray; you do go up to the house of God; you do teach in the Sabbath-school; but you do these things mechanically, as a man walks who is sound asleep. You are in a sort of spiritual somnambulism. The work that you are called upon to perform, you do after a fashion; but there is none of the power of God in the work, there is no earnestness thrown into it. It is done, and there is an end of it; but your heart has been absent from it.

Coupled with this, there is a *want of vigour in everything to which such a man sets his hand*. If he preaches, there is no force or burning energy, no boiling, scalding periods; he just takes his text, and speaks upon it. Perhaps God's people are edified, perhaps sinners are saved; but that man has no enjoyment in his work during the whole time that he performs it thus sluggishly. A man, to enjoy the work of the Lord, must throw his whole strength into it. It is the same when you come to prayer. You do pray after a sort; but it is not that wrestling with the angel which getteth the blessing from him. You do knock at the door, but not with that force which causeth it to open. You have forgotten your former vigour. Whereas, once your place of prayer was the witness of groans and tears, now you can go into it, and come out of it, without so much as a single sob. And it is just the same when you read the Scriptures. Once, the page sparkled with promises, and your soul was satisfied with marrow and fatness; but when you read it now, it is very dull, and you no longer derive refreshing consolation from it. Like the temple out of which God has removed, you walk through it; there are the pillars, there stand all the symbols of worship; the altar is there, but God, the King, has gone; and a voice has been heard to say, "Arise, let us go hence;" and so, you go through the sacred edifice, and find nothing there. In this same sleepy state, we go up to the house of God to listen to his Word; and if our sleep has got a strong hold upon us, we cannot get any comfort. We begin to rail at the minister; because we are not edified as we used to be, we think that a change has come over him. That is possible; but it is just as likely, and more so, that our want of enjoyment of God's Word is owing to ourselves. We sit and hear as God's people hear, and we sing as God's people sing, and pray as they pray, after the outward form; but we go out as a man rises from his bed whereon he hath tossed all night, and we feel that we are not a whit refreshed; and the Sabbath, that was once a joy and delight to us, has perhaps become a weariness and a burden.

There is no enjoyment while a man is thus asleep; and, as there is no enjoyment, there is no consciousness of pain. Ah, beloved, I have known seasons when I would almost have given my right arm

to be able to shed tears of repentance,—when I wished that I might again have a broken heart,—when I have longed to make my soul feel even the pains of hell rather than not feel anything; for this is one of the worst states a Christian can be in,—to go nodding on through life, slumbering over eternal realities, dreaming over heaven, and nodding his head, and continuing still to sleep, when he is in the presence of the Most High God, and should have gathered up all his powers, and strung them to the highest pitch of intensity. Have not you been in such a state? If you have not, happy man are you! There are most holy men, some of the giant servants of God, who have fallen into this state, and have been compelled to cry out, “I sleep,” finding themselves happy indeed if they could add, “I sleep, but my heart waketh.”

Such a state as this is very sinful. Is it not sinful, O my soul, to be trifling with the eternal state, to be playing at prayer? Canst thou be so dull and heavy about eternal things, when worldlings are so thoroughly awake about their silver and gold and commercial pursuits? When souls are being hurried to eternity, how is it that I can still be indifferent? While time is speeding on, and eternity is so near, how can I still betake me to my slothful couch, and cry, “A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep”? Chosen in Christ, redeemed with his precious blood, quickened by the Divine Spirit, and made partakers of the divine nature, how can it be consistent with our position and condition to sleep as do others? The light of God’s grace has shone upon us, is this a time to slumber? Let the world sleep if it will, for its objects and aims are not worthy of the Christian’s high ambition; but shall you and I sleep, when heaven is before us, and hell behind us, when there is temptation everywhere surrounding us, and angels beckon us to heaven, while a glorious company of saints holds us in full survey? Come, my brethren, we must feel that such a state as this is sinful in the highest degree.

And *how dangerous is it, too!* A man, who sleeps in his enemy’s camp, is exposed to imminent peril. There lies Sisera asleep in Jael’s tent. Little dost thou know, O silly dreamer, when that woman’s hand lifts up the mallet to drive the nail through thy brain! If thou desirest to sleep, Christian, wait until thou gettest home; there thou shalt have rest enough for ever in thy Father’s house; but, to sleep here, is to sleep in the dragon’s jaw, to sleep on the top of the mast when the ship is driving before the storm. Nay, awake thou, and bethink thee of thy position and condition, and sleep no longer. O God, have mercy upon thy people who have long prosperity! There is the pinnacle of the temple; and blessed is the man whose feet slip not when he standeth here. I do not think we sleep so much, spiritually, when we have bodily affliction; though pains of body frequently make a Christian long for his rest; nor do I think we have slumbering times when we are losing our friends. Men cannot easily sleep when the funeral knell is tolling in their ears, and when they are following dear departed ones to the grave. Nor do I think we sleep much when we are the subjects of very violent temptations, and have a great many doubts

and fears; but when we are in our vessel, when the day is fine, and the sail is spread, and the wind blows softly, and the ship goes on steadily without a motion, gliding as o'er a sea of glass, then it is that the mariner, perhaps, forgets the rock and the shoal. The poet was right when he said,—

“More the treacherous calm I dread,
Than tempests lowering overhead.”

I do not like trouble; and pray God to deliver me from it. I cannot well endure bodily pain; I find myself impatient under tribulation; but I am able to say this, that if I had my choice between the severest affliction and a state of sinful slumbering, I would prefer to have the affliction. “There is no devil,” said one, “like having no devil;” that is to say, there is no temptation like the temptation of not being tempted. The worst form of danger is when a man is left to himself, when he is not much tossed about, when he is quiet and easy. It ought not to be so. The greater our prosperity, the better should we love God; and the more our spirit is at ease, the more we should serve him with both our hands, and render him hearty thanksgiving for his favour towards us: it should be so, but it is not so. In these smooth waters, we are sure to meet with mischief; and, therefore, may the Lord, in his mercy, watch over us when we are in much prosperity!

Do I hear somebody ask, “How may I know when I am asleep?” If you are a true Christian, you will soon know it by a sort of instinct, when an unutterable sense of misery comes over you. The sleep of a sinner I may compare to the sleep produced by opium, which gives its victim dreams of the most magnificent character, carrying the soul up to heaven, and then, anon, dashing it down to the depths. All sorts of fantastic imaginings are the offsprings of that deadly drug; yet the man enjoys himself while under its influence; but though it causes some happiness in the use of it, it will bring him to hell as surely as murder itself. The sleep of a Christian, when he falls into this state, is rather like the sleep produced by henbane: it is a kind of uneasy, short, disturbed, unresting rest. It does a man little harm compared with the other; and his constitution recovers from the shock much more readily. Such, I say, is the Christian's sleep: there is no pleasure in it as there is in the sinner's sleep; but his sleep is uneasy, his conscience pricks him, his heart wakes, and he finds no peace in it. It lasts but for a little time, and it does him much damage; but, still, not the deadly damage that the world's sleep of sin brings to its votaries. God save you from it! May he ever keep you from falling into that kind of sleep!

I think many of you will not need me to warn you of it. Still, if you do want to know, let me ask you to compare yourself with what you used to be. Are you as lively in divine things as you once were? Is prayer as fervent and refreshing to your souls as it once was? Do you find that willingness to pray that you once had? Do you find that you have to flog yourself into your closet, and,

when you get there, do you offer up your prayers and desires with coldness which you were wont to offer with warm and loving fervour? Do you still continue to have the blessedness you had when first you knew the Lord? If not, that is a symptom of sleep. Then, compare yourself with what you ought to be. Think how you ought to have grown during the years that you have been a believer. Are you what you ought to have been? Then, if you are not, you must be asleep, or else you would have made better progress. Compare yourself with what others have been, and you will see cause for shame; and if so, my brethren, you are asleep; you are in a dangerous condition, and I pray the living God, by the demand for watchfulness when the prince of this world cometh, by the agonies of Christ in Gethsemane, yea, by the blood of him who poured out his soul unto death, to arouse you out of this deadly sleep; for it is a state that will lead to some great and grievous sin, some black and terrible fall, unless God shall prevent it by his grace. First you sleep, then you slumber, then you sin, then you sin again, then you go deeper still, and so will you continue, unless God, in his grace, steps in to deliver you from the consequences of this dreadful sleep.

II. Yet, secondly, there is, in the text, A HOPEFUL SIGN.

I think that most of us, though we do sleep, can say as the spouse does, "my heart waketh." Beloved, it is a blessed sign that *the spouse knows her state, and truly confesses it*. She does not say, mark you, "I am a little tired; my eyes are heavy;" no; but with honesty of heart she says, "I sleep." Ah, it is a good sign when you and I know our state, and are willing to confess it before God. I have heard of a believer in Christ, who, on one occasion, was intoxicated, and he was expelled from the church as the result of it; but he was visited by many Christian brethren, and amongst the rest by one who prayed with him. They prayed together to God, but he could not get any peace. "No," said his friend, "and you never will until you come to the point, and confess your sin as it really is;" and when the man said, in his prayer, "Lord, thou knowest that I have disgraced myself; I have been drunk;" it was then that he obtained peace. He had directed the lancet to the wound; he had put before God the right state of the case; and this is what we must do, beloved, if we would have restoring and renewing grace,—we must tell the Lord what our sin really is; as the spouse did, we must confess, "I sleep."

But you will observe that *the spouse is as bold in saying, "my heart waketh," as she was in saying, "I sleep."* What does this mean, "my heart waketh"? Why, just this. "My conscience tells me that this sleepy state is not a proper one for me to be in; and my heart cries that I must get out of it. I cannot find any rest while I slumber. At a distance from God, I cannot be happy." Peter may follow afar off, but Peter cannot be happy afar off; Peter may sit and warm his hands with the servants in Pilate's hall, but he cannot warm his heart. Sinners may say, "Why make all this fuss about a little sleep? There is no great sin in it." Ah, but little sins trouble believers far more than great sins trouble sinners. If a

Christian's soul be but a little away from God, it is sufficient to mar his joy, and make him unhappy. A man clad in armour may go walking through a wood, and may never feel the thorns; but another man, who has had his armour taken off, will be scratched and torn therewith. Sinners clad in the armour of sin feel not the thorn of Christ's desertion; but saints who have thrown this armour aside, and are tender of heart, feel even his slightest frown.

My dear hearer, perhaps you are slumbering this evening, and are content to be so; then you are no child of God; but if you are slumbering, and there is some power, something within you, that keeps crying out, "O God, I would be delivered!" though this voice be never so feeble, though this cruel sleep of yours may almost have gagged it, yet still, if it doth rebel against this state, and cries out, "Lord, I would be changed; I would be different; turn thou unto me, and I shall be turned; revive me, and I shall be revived;" if there be such a longing as this in you, you are still a child of God, and well may you exclaim, "I sleep, but my heart waketh. Lord, I would live near to thee if I could. I am like a man that rideth a sorry jade of a horse; the horse will not go, but he spurreth him, hacketh at the bit, and striketh him again and again, for the man would go if he could; and so it is with me. 'The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak;' and 'when I would do good, evil is present with me,' and 'how to perform that which is good I find not.'" Lord, help thy servants, and let them not sleep any longer!

III. Now, thirdly, here is A POTENT REMEDY: "the voice of my Beloved."

Some Christians try to get themselves into a healthy state of heart by looking to the law, by self-examination, and by a thousand other remedies; but, after all, *the true cure for every disease in the Christian is in Christ himself*. You may try to chasten yourselves for your sins, but you will continue to sin if that be all that you do. Beloved, I know that the heart has a great objection to coming to Christ after being in a sleepy state. Old Legality whispers in our ears that, "You cannot go and trust Christ as you did, for see how badly you have behaved; you must not go to the fountain filled with blood now, as you did at first, for see, you have played the harlot, and you cannot go with the same confidence as you went at first." "Ah, Old Legality, I can, and *I will*." The law never did bring us out of our state of nature, and will it bring us now out of our state of lethargy? If the law had first of all quickened us, then it would be well to look for restoration by the law; but inasmuch as we found our first life by simply believing in Christ, the only way to renew that life is by believing in Jesus Christ again. I will listen, then, not to the voice of the curse, not to the condemnation of Moses, but to the voice of my Beloved, for no music is like his, and nothing can so wake my soul as hearing him speak to me. Hear, then, the voice of thy Beloved in the Gospel; he is thy Beloved still, though thou art asleep; but he sleeps not; and he calls to thee, "Come to my bosom; come,

my beloved, open the doors of thy heart to me. Come, my affianced and precious one, I have not put thee away, though thou hast grieved me, and opened my wounds afresh; I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Open the doors of thy heart to me, and let me come into communion with thee." It is the voice of Jesus speaking to you through your minister, and he cries to you, "Come to me now; trust me once again; and your spiritual strength shall be renewed."

Then turn to *this precious Book, and you will hear the voice of your Beloved there*; in words like these he speaks to you, "Turn, backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." Hear him as he crieth unto you, "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." Hear him as he cries to you, ungodly ones, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Hear, then, your Beloved's voice; and mark, dear brethren, *if you do not hear the voice of your Beloved in the days of prosperity, you will be likely enough to hear it in affliction*. If nothing else will keep you awake, the rod will. If you will sleep in prosperity, you shall have adversity; and sooner than you shall be lost, you shall lose everything. If, my brethren, God sees we cannot stand our present ease and prosperity, he will send his servant Death into our families; he will take away our possessions; he will place us in adversity; he will wither all our fair flowers, and break all our idols, and dash in pieces everything that stands between our soul and himself. Oh, that we were wise, and would hear his gentle voice! "Be not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle;" but hear what the Lord says to you from the watch-tower of his ministry and from the witness-box of his Word, and then you shall escape the rod.

And perhaps, my brethren, *the Beloved may speak to you without the ministry, and without the Word*. If he shall do so, I pray you to catch his words. It may be, while you are sitting here, or when you are walking home, or perhaps at the Lord's table, where some of us hope to meet directly, you will hear him whisper some kind, assuring word that shall sink your fears again. I have known what it is to preach, sometimes, on a Sunday here, and I have felt like a butcher, who stands in his shop cutting out joints of meat for others; they are fed, but he himself has nothing; or as a cook, who prepares and sends up dinners, but cannot so much as get a taste himself. Then I have gone downstairs to the Lord's table with a dull heart, and, perhaps, in a second, as though a strange miracle has been wrought, my soul has been as full of devout joy and holy mirth as ever spirit was out of heaven; and if you ask me how that has been caused, I would say it has been caused by some kindly look of my Beloved, some loving glancing of his eye, or some sweet word from his mouth, and my soul has rejoiced with joy unspeakable. Why should it not be so with you to-night? That is the best

thing to waken you up. If your heart is dull and heavy, as soon as your Beloved speaks, you will at once awake to spirit and to life.

My time has gone, but I want to say this to you, I am sometimes, nay, I am often haunted with the fear lest we, as a church, should fall asleep. Oh, how greatly has the Lord blessed us these many years! And what favour seems to rest upon every agency! The preaching of the Word has been very successful, but still it is open to the conversion of many. In our classes how is God honoured! Ah, you little know, some of you, what others of us see; and even we do not see one-tenth of what God is doing in the class conducted by one of our sisters here; and our Sabbath-schools may very well be a delight, for the Lord is working a great work in them; but I am always jealous over you, lest you should slumber. How easy it is to fall asleep! I often fear that my voice, which was once like a trumpet to you, will become like sleep-music; that you will become so used to it, and I, perhaps, shall become so dull and heavy, that the life of God will almost die out amongst us. My soul weepeth and crieth to God over this matter. My Master knoweth that I would cheerfully resign, that another voice might speak to you, if that would keep alive your zeal and enthusiasm. If it is, however, not my fault, even a change of ministry would not suffice. When churches grow to a great size, people think they must always continue so, and that God will always bless them as he has done. Why, sirs, as our first blessings came in answer to prayer, all future blessings must come in the same way.

I remember well, when we used to meet together in Park Street to have holy communion with the Lord, how we used to wrestle with him in prayer, so much so that I have scarcely been able to pronounce the benediction, much less give any address, because we all seemed to be carried away in the mighty majesty of wrestling prayer. We have now, sometimes, very choice seasons; but I am afraid not altogether such as we once had. At any rate, if there be any falling off, I thank God there is very little indeed; it is scarcely perceptible as yet; but how soon may there be, unless we watch and be jealous with a holy jealousy? Let us work with Christian earnestness in prayer. O you who have done little for Christ of late, I pray you, do more for him. You who think your time of service is over, and that you may retire like pensioners, and no more fight, I want you to enlist again, put on the colours once more, as if you were but raw recruits. You, who once could defy persecution, and stand up in the street to preach Christ, and laugh at all your fears, gather up your courage once again. Oh, that you would wake up, as a church, and put on your beautiful array of past times, when you were despised and persecuted, and the minister's name was a by-word and a proverb, and you yourselves, because you were linked with him, were thought to be fools and the off-scouring of all things. But now I tremble lest we should grow respectable and great, and lest men should think we are respectable, and depart from us. My soul begs and beseeches of you to renew your prayers for me, that I may preach with greater vigour. What if my ministry should become as dull and stupid as the ministry of

one-half of my brethren; what if it should become as useless and as unprofitable as the ministry of nine out of ten who occupy the pulpit? I had sooner die than live to be such a thing as many who stand up in the pulpit merely to waste people's time, and not to win souls. My spirit pants to have the consuming zeal of Baxter, and the earnest, passionate enthusiasm of Whitefield; but I cannot get it, except through your prayers; or getting it, it cannot be maintained without your vehement cries and entreaties before the Lord.

Perhaps we, as a church, have been brought to our present state for a great purpose which has never dawned upon us. We have done something for God already; we are filling the pulpits of our village churches with men sound in the faith, and earnest for God; we are erecting a great barrier against the every-day increasing encroachment of heresy and infidelity; but we want to do something more, and something looms upon us in the future,—I scarcely know what,—some high and holy purpose which this church has been brought up to this point to accomplish. Shall we draw back? Men of Ephraim, will ye draw back in the day of battle? Will you be condemned for not coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty? Shall the angel pronounce over you the sentence, "Ichabod, for the glory of the Lord has departed from you, because of your declining to continue earnest in zeal"? If it is so to any extent, let us return unto the Lord; let us take to Christ words of repentance and faith; and let us beseech him to make this church again his buckler and two-edged sword, and to make his minister once more a captain in the midst of the Lord's hosts; for the day of the Lord is mighty, and the battle of the Lord is terrible; and every man must take his place, and every soldier must draw his weapon from his thigh; for the day of the Lord draweth nigh, and the battle of God is to be fought now, even now. Let us arise, my brethren; let us rush like lions to the prey, like swift eagles to the chase; and God shall help us, God shall help us, and that right early. This church cries to-night, "I sleep;" but she *can* also say, "my heart waketh." The heart of the church is awake still. I think my voice to you to-night is an echo of the voice of your Beloved. Sisters, brothers, bestir yourselves: let us cry mightily unto God; let us labour for the winning of souls; let us pant and pray for a great increase to our membership; and God will save sinners, in answer to our prayer, and his name shall be glorified for ever and ever. Amen.

Exposition by C. H. Spurgeon.

EXODUS XII. 1—27.

Verses 1, 2. *And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.*

And for this reason that, now, as a nation, they were to begin their separate history, separate in existence from all the rest of mankind.