ness. First the Cynic John with hair cloth and fasts, then the God-man Jesus with the bread of life.

Meanwhile the scholar has his function, too, in this baptism of repentance. For him, too, the age has its problem and its task. What other reformers are to the moral culture, he must be to the mind of his age. By taste averse, by calling exempt, from the practical movements around him, to him is committed the movement of thought. He must be a radical in speculation, an ascetic in devotion, a Cynic in independence, an anchorite in his habits, a perfectionist in discipline. Secluded from without, and nourished from within, self-sustained and self-sufficing, careless of praise or blame, intent always on the highest, he must resist the superficial attainments, the hollow pretensions, the feeble efforts, and trivial productions, of his contemporaries, with the thoroughness of his acquisitions, the reach of his views, the grandeur of his aims, the earnestness of his endeavor.

It is to such efforts and to such men that we must look for the long expected literature of this nation. Hitherto our literature has been but an echo of other voices and climes. Generally, in the history of nations, song has preceded science, and the feeling of a people has been sooner developed than its understanding. With us this order has been reversed. The national understanding is fully ripe, but the feeling, the imagination of the people, has found as yet no adequate expression. We have our men of science, our Franklins, our Bowditches, our Cleavelands; we have our orators, our statesmen; but the American poet, the American thinker is yet to come. A deeper culture must lay the foundation for him, who shall worthily represent the genius and utter the life of this continent.

A severer discipline must prepare the way for our Dantes, our Shakspeares, our Miltons. "He who would write an epic," said one of these, "must make his life an epic." This touches our infirmity. We have no practical poets,—no epic lives. Let us but have sincere lives, earnest, whole-hearted, heroic men, and we shall not want for writers and for literary fame. Then shall we see springing up, in every part of these Republics, a literature, such as the ages have not known,—a literature, commensurate with our idea, vast as our destiny and varied as our clime.
not yet the case with us. A young man commences study with a view to the Orthodox ministry. But he is well aware of what he is expected to learn, to believe, and to preach. He knows that, if he deviates by a perceptible hair's breadth from this established line, he will gain neither a parish nor a hearing. He must either change his plan of life altogether, or take good care to see no truth and listen to no arguments, (except to refute them,) which could tempt him to swerve from the old path. You may say that you are in no danger from this, because you have your eye fixed on the liberal ministry. But let me here tell you a secret,—which on second thought is no secret. After all,—young as you are, I daresay, you have long ago found it out for yourself. I allude to the fact, that although, as liberal Christians, we have renounced the Orthodox doctrines, we still cherish too much of the exclusive spirit. We are too desirous of uniformity of faith, too fearful of future progress, too fearful of uniformity of faith, too fearful of future progress, too fearful of future prog
tends to go alone; and see the decrepit, the worn and withered figure of the one, in contrast with the fresh and buoyant movements of the others. The latter breathing the free mountain air, where all the winds of doctrine are let loose, with health in every feature and life in every motion, inspired with the joy of youth and the consciousness of power; the former lagging behind the magnificent procession, in which all Sciences and Arts are pressing forward to truth, clad in the weeds of widowhood and poverty, with sunken eye and wasted brow, and no hope, but that of decent burial, when the last asthmatic breath shall have been sent forth.

In Europe a new life has sprung up from the ashes of a departed faith; a hag-like, scholastic theology has given up the ghost, upon being brought out of darkness into daylight; and a virgin form appears radiant with beauty, and already uttering the same words with which angel voices heralded the birth of Christ. It is for our young men to welcome this glorious visitant to their bosoms. It is for them to naturalize a truly liberal and generous theology on our own blessed soil. Their mission is arduous, but it cannot fail of its completion. I rejoice that you have commenced the study of theology, just at this epoch in our progress. I know you have a free mind which will never blench from inquiry, and a bold one, which will not fear to utter its thoughts. Let it be filled and consecrated with the heavenly spirit of Christ, let your youthful energy be blended with the meekness and gentleness and wisdom of your Divine Master, and you will have everything to hope and little to fear.

I sincerely congratulate you on the advantages you will enjoy, under the guidance of so frank and healthy a mind as his, whom you have chosen for a teacher. I am certain (for I know him well) that he will never prescribe to you articles to be believed, but will only direct you to the great lights above and within, which you must see for yourself. You will do well to imbibe his spirit of perfect tolerance. A minister must be wretched without this. It will secure him from all the little disgusts, which a various intercourse is apt to engender; it will enable him to bear with every diversity of expression and of character, as well as of faith; and to enter with strong heart and hope into all the practical details of his profession, which are usually so irksome to the man, whose dainty fastidiousness has no sympathy with what he deems vulgar or common-place.

If you read German, let me recommend to you "Herder's Letters on the Study of Theology." You will find them a fruitful source of noble and glorious thoughts; and can never read them without feeling your heart elevated and made better, though they may not impart much positive and exact instruction. If you do not read German, the perusal of that book alone, would repay you for the six months' study of leisure hours, which it would cost to acquire the language.

I am sure you will not take ill of me the freedom with which I have answered your letter. I have no fancy for giving advice, and I do not intend for such what I have now written. It is rather the expression of sympathy, which I know from experience is always welcome to a young man, from those who are a few years in advance of him, in the path which he is about to enter.

December, 1836.

R.