

**Incidents in the Life of  
President [Timothy] Dwight,  
Illustrative of his Moral and Religious Character:  
Designed for Young Persons**

*(Author Unknown)*

**PREFACE**

The author of the following little work was aware of the difficult and delicate task which he attempted when he commenced it. Perhaps his success in the undertaking would have been greater had he not been so much pressed by the conviction that it was thus difficult and delicate. Without for a moment claiming to have done justice to the subject, he still hopes, however, that his labor may not prove entirely in vain. Should it only excite in a single youth the ambition to imitate the noble example of him, the virtues of whose life and character the work in a humble manner attempts to portray, that labor will not have been in vain.

**INTRODUCTION**

It is a trite remark, that greatness and goodness in the present world are far from being inseparably connected. Numerous examples to illustrate and prove this position might easily be adduced. We must content ourselves, however, with little more than an allusion to one. Napoleon, the late emperor of France, was distinguished for the heroic qualities of his mind and the number and boldness of his exploits. Yet how few ever imagined him, in truth, to have been a good man? He fought many battles, conquered many nations, and became the terror of the world, yet he gave but little evidence of being a friend to mankind. A man may be truly characterized as great then, and yet be far from good.

Equally true is it, on the other hand, that a man may be good and yet not great. That is, he may be benevolent and virtuous, and even eminently pious, and yet he may not be distinguished for his talents nor for the splendor of his actions. His conduct may be such as to recommend him to the love of all who know him and to the approbation of God, yet he may be poorly qualified, from the imbecility [feebleness] of his mind, to direct the movements of an army or to manage the affairs of an empire. A man may be good then, and yet not be great.

In the following pages I shall attempt to portray some of the features of one in whom goodness and greatness were combined. Not that the subject of my story was great, like Napoleon or Caesar or Alexander. He led no armies to the field of battle, nor was he a conqueror of nations. His greatness was intellectual greatness. He possessed a noble

mind. He had expanded views. He knew much, and well and eloquently could he impart what he knew. All who saw him pronounced him great. His looks bespoke superiority.

And not only was he great, but he was also good--eminently good. He was the friend of mankind and did much to benefit the world. He delighted in plans which tended to improve men in knowledge, and religion, and happiness. Of many such plans he was the author, and of all that came to his knowledge, the patron. He was peculiarly friendly to the young. Many of these he instructed in useful human learning, and not a few still live who through his spiritual instruction, sanctified to them, are members of the kingdom of God.

That man was President [Timothy] Dwight.