AN

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE SOCIETY OF ALUMNI

OF

WILLIAMS COLLEGE,

AT THEIR TWENTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY,

August 16, 1843.

BY THOMAS ROBBINS, D. D.
Pastor of a Church in Rochester, Ms.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 24 CONGRESS STREET.
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ADDRESS.

MR. PRESIDENT,* BRETHREN, ALUMNI OF WILLIAMS, GENTLEMEN, LADIES, OF THIS ENLIGHTENED AUDIENCE:

FORTY-SEVEN years ago, I had the privilege of offering congratulations to the Corporation, and Faculty, and Friends, of this Institution, at its Second Commencement. We have now, through the good hand of our God upon us, an opportunity of assembling on a like occasion, half a century from the time of its legal organization. The Act of Incorporation was passed by the Legislature of the Commonwealth in June, 1793, conferring the usual rights and powers of a collegiate institution, by the name of Williams College. I remember reading in a newspaper at New Haven, an account of the first meeting of the Corporation, soon after the Act was received, and of their appointment of Mr. EBENEZER FITCH as President. It was also stated that the qualifications for admission would be much the same as those at Yale College.

The principal Donor, and indeed the Founder, of this Seminary, was Col. EPHRAIM WILLIAMS, born

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at Newton, in this State, about the year 1713. His father, Col. Ephraim Williams, removed to Hatfield, when this son was young, and afterwards became one of the first settlers of Stockbridge. The son, in early life, followed the seas, and, with an enterprising spirit, visited England, Holland, Spain, and other foreign countries.

In the war between England and France, from 1740 to 1748, Mr. Williams was connected with the troops raised in this country, and became distinguished in the military profession. From the close of that war to the commencement of the war of 1755, the frontiers of New-England were in an unsettled state, in consequence of their proximity to Canada, and the partially hostile state of the Indians. Mr. Williams had the command of the line of the Massachusetts forts west of Connecticut River, and in time of war resided much at Hoosack Fort, three and an half miles east of this place. He was looked upon by the people of the Province as likely to succeed to the important station and character long held by Col. John Stoddard, of Northampton, a leading man in the province, and the military protector of the western settlements.

Mr. Williams was possessed of gentlemanly manners, dignified character, popular with all classes of people, and especially with the soldiers. At the commencement of hostilities in 1755, he took the command of a regiment raised in the Province, and joined the army under the command of Gen. Johnson, advancing to meet the French invasion from Canada. As they came in conflict with the enemy

near Lake George, Col. Williams, at the head of the advanced guard of a thousand men, received a mortal wound, from a musket ball, through his head, and did not live to witness the victory of the day. The battle was fought on the eighth of September; the enemy was defeated, with much loss, and Baron Dieskau, their commander, was wounded and taken prisoner. The Massachusetts troops, on that day, gave an earnest of what they were to do twenty years afterwards.

Col. Williams, by his will, made a little before his last military expedition, having no family, left the most of his property, consisting in new lands, with notes and bonds, for the perpetual support of a Free School in a township west of Fort Massachusetts, previously called Hoosack Fort, if the township should be called by his name. His executors were Col. Worthington, of Springfield, and Israel Williams, Esq., of Hatfield, who managed the legacy with great prudence and success. In 1785, the General Court incorporated William Williams, Theodore Sedgwick, and others, "Trustees of the donation of Ephraim Williams, Esq., for maintaining a Free School in Williamstown." In 1788 the Trustees voted to erect a building for the accommodation of the Free School; and the General Court granted them a lottery to raise four thousand dollars. The inhabitants of Williamstown raised by subscription two thousand dollars for the same purpose. The brick building now standing, eighty-two feet by forty-two, and four stories, well built, was erected in 1790, at the expense of about eleven

thousand dollars. The funds then remaining at interest amounted to about the same sum.

With an expectation that the Free School would become a College, Dr. Fitch was early requested to leave his connexion with Yale College and become its preceptor. After much hesitation, he accepted the appointment, and the school was opened, with one assistant, and soon after a second, in October, 1791. It soon became highly prosperous, and collected students from a distance, as well as the vicinity.

In the Act of Incorporation of the College, in 1793, the General Court made a grant of a thousand dollars a year, for four years, for the procurement of a Library and a Philosophical Apparatus. In October of that year, the College was duly organized, consisting of three small classes. The Academy continued several years in connection with the College; it was found to be a convenient place for the preparatory studies, and students more advanced had the privilege of reciting with the college classes. The Tutors of the College were the Teachers of the Academy.

For a few years from the commencement of the College, some students were admitted with a competent knowledge of the French language, instead of the Greek. From the year 1795 to 1799, Mr. Samuel Mackay, a gentleman of amiable character and a good scholar, was Professor of the French language.

Dr. Fitch made a public profession of religion, while a Tutor in Yale College, and soon after

received a license to preach the Gospel, in May, 1787. In June, 1795, he was publicly ordained in this town, by the Berkshire Association. The Rev. Ephraim Judson, of Sheffield, with whom he had studied divinity previous to his license, preached on the occasion.

At the time of the establishment of Williams College, there were but four other Colleges in New England; Harvard, Yale, Providence, and Dartmouth. The two latter commenced nearly at the same time. The first class at Providence graduated in 1769, the first at Dartmouth in 1771. Williams soon took a respectable rank among these Colleges. The first class, graduating in 1795, consisted of four members; the second, six; the third, ten; the fourth, thirty. In 1798, when our country resolved to resist the hostile aggressions of France, and pledged their support of the government by numerous addresses; one was sent by the students of this College, with the approbation of the Faculty. President Adams, in a very kind Answer, spoke of the flourishing state of so young a literary Institution.

Some of the means which contributed to the early prosperity of this College, were that the necessary expenses of the students were less than at any other; that, in this retired position and the character of the community, there were less inducements to dissipation; and, we may add, the fidelity and labor of the Instructers. The principal means of instruction at that time, in all our Colleges, was the personal application of the student, and the recita-

tion of the classes. The extensive practice of Professional Lectures, at the present day, is very useful for youths that love study, and will study, but it necessarily makes many superficial scholars. Few persons will submit to the labor of *thinking*, if others will think for them.

With a part of the grant of the Commonwealth, when the College was incorporated, a competent Library was procured, well selected; and a Society Library by the students was soon commenced, both of which have been regularly increasing.

The first three commencements were held in the small Meeting-House, the first one built in the town. The fourth was in the present house, then in an unfinished state. The early commencements were attended by numerous collections of people from the vicinity and from a distance, and by various distinguished and literary characters.

A Catalogue of the College was printed in the Fall of 1795, containing seventy-seven students. The following Note was appended. "Besides the above members of College, there are about forty students in the Academy connected with the College." This Catalogue included the students, exclusive of the faculty; and, so far as I know, was the first Catalogue of the members of a College that was printed. The same thing was done by Yale College, the year following, and the measure was subsequently adopted by the Colleges generally. For some years it was done on a single sheet; they are now usually printed in a pamphlet, containing the names of all connected with the College. The

first Triennial Catalogue of Yale College, in the form of a pamphlet, was in 1778; the first at Harvard about the same time. Previous to that time they were printed on a large sheet. A Catalogue of the graduates of this College was published in 1799, and has been continued Triennially.

The President's house was built in 1795. The East College was built in 1797–98, from the avails of a township of land in the District of Maine. The land, with another township, was a grant from the General Court in 1796. This was a brick building of four stories, one hundred and four feet by thirty-eight; it was convenient for students, and regularly occupied till the winter of 1842, when it was destroyed by fire.

At the first Commencement, in 1795, President Fitch delivered an able and popular address to the graduating class, but the practice was not continued. During the administration of President Griffin it was resumed, and continued some years. It seems, however, to be due to the graduating classes to have the Commencement day for their own exhibitions.

The Commencement of 1807 was a mournful occasion. President Fitch's eldest son, having been admitted as a member of College, died the preceding evening. The President presided at the public exercises with great propriety, and the morning after, attended the funeral of his son.

The members of this College have boarded, uniformly, in families in the vicinity.

The College suffered a temporary depression about the year 1821. President Moore accepted a

call to preside over Amherst College, then recently established. His continuance there was short, being soon removed by death. The prosperity of Williams was soon restored by the active labors and splendid talents of President Griffin.

The members of this Institution have enjoyed from the first, the best privileges of religious instruction. They have been favored with the regular ministration of gospel ordinances, with the views of divine truth adopted by the Reformers, and by the Fathers of New England. The College has been frequently visited with the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, and many of the students, as we trust, have been truly born of God, and fitted for great usefulness in the church of Christ. A very interesting account of these revivals, by Professor Hopkins, has been published in the American Quarterly Register. A Saturday evening Conference was set up by the students, quite early, I believe before the organization of the College, which I suppose has never been intermitted.

The three Presidents, that have preceded the one now in office, are deceased. A very valuable Memoir of President Fitch has been recently published by one of the Alumni.* It is executed with care and fidelity, and with much labor, in consequence of the President's Diary and papers having been destroyed by fire. Unnecessary eulogy is scrupulously avoided. A biographical account of President Griffin is much wanted.

* Rev. Calvin Durfee, of Dedham.

Having presented these few sketches of the early history of this Institution, Brethren Alumni, in view of the advantages we have enjoyed for early education, I would call your attention to some thoughts relative to our obligations to our Alma Mater, to our Friends, and to our Country.

Correct education qualifies a person for increased usefulness, in every department and station of human life. The course of education in the New England Colleges is general, affording an introduction to the various departments of science, and laying a foundation for future improvement. In our country, pursuits and stations being open to all, the opportunities for honorable distinction are inviting; and, with the ordinary favor of Divine Providence, no one can fail of being a reputable citizen, without a manifest dereliction of duty. The Seminary of a liberal education has a high claim upon its sons for their grateful fidelity. The student has the benefit of no small amount of capital, devoted exclusively to his use, of the labors of faithful teachers constantly caring for him, and of the general solicitude of all who are concerned in the supervision of the Institution. A preceptor seldom forgets a pupil, or ceases to take an interest in his prosperity. It becomes then a question of some interest,—How can a young man, favored with a liberal education, do honor to the Alma Mater, who, with unsparing hand, has done so much for him?

A few things will be suggested in answer to this inquiry.

I. In the first place, he must not lose his

Literary character. He went to College for the sake of acquiring science. This has been liberally bestowed upon him; and his College looks to see its effects. It is not the object to make him a practical mechanic, or a politician, or a fine gentleman, but a scholar. And, having obtained an advantageous introduction to the circles of science, if he makes progress in the good work, and attains to eminence in any of its important branches, he answers the end and the hope of his early privileges. The community look to a person of college education for college attainments; and to excel in these is all that is required. But this they have a right to expect.

A primary reason why young men, after leaving College, decline in their literary character, as they often do, is, they look for too much. It is a principal embarrassment of learning in our country, that so many seek the character of a *universal genius*. American youth are not apt to be deficient in ambition, or labor; but they will expand their views for a grasp beyond their capacity, or the means they can command. Let a young man of the best talents, attempt to excel in literature, in the various departments of science, in the mechanic arts, in agriculture, in the fine arts, and he will be likely to fail in the whole. But let him deliberately resolve to excel in one or two of these, he will be likely to succeed, and it will be an honorable success. Divine Providence has so constituted things that steady persevering effort will usually obtain its object.

No person suffers in character for being ignorant

on subjects to which he has not turned his attention. The lawyer or jurist are not considered deficient because they are unacquainted with anatomy; nor the architect because he is unskilled in agriculture. A scholar, distinguished in the knowledge of languages, rhetoric, history, poetry, is not the less esteemed because he has not attended to botany and zoology. All know that the human mind is limited, and one that would be versed in all subjects, is commonly believed to be master of none. We have much more confidence in a professional man, or a scholar, who limits his researches, than in one who claims an acquaintance with the various branches of science.

II. One that would excel as a scholar, should seek to know his own natural talent. All have their gifts from a bountiful Creator, and there are few who cannot be useful, and even distinguished, if they will faithfully cultivate the talent that God has given them. *Gnothi seauton*, a favorite precept with the ancients, was deemed too great to have originated in human wisdom, and must have come from the gods. It is a common thing to see persons engaged in pursuits for which they are unqualified, and their efforts, though honest and persevering, will be abortive. One may be distinguished in a mechanic art, that would fail in a learned profession. A professional man that is doing well, not unfrequently, leaves his profession to become a merchant; and he usually becomes a bankrupt.

In the different departments of science one may

be eminent as a historian, another as a geographer, another as a mathematician, a chemist, a botanist; but let them change their respective pursuits, and the most of them would be likely to be indifferent in their profession. There is occasionally a genius, like that of Alexander Hamilton, that will grasp any thing, and be eminent in any pursuit. But such are very rare. Newton, Linnæus, Milton, stand alone.

III. The acquisitions of a scholar can never be obtained but by labor and perseverance. This is indeed the gloomy part of the prospect; the up-hill labor in the path of science. But it is unavoidable. This truth cannot be presented to young students too often, or too earnestly pressed upon them. It is the *sine-qua-non* of all literary eminence. And it is to be urged the more earnestly because there are no exceptions in the case, and because it is one of the last that an intelligent young man is willing to believe. We have few eminent scholars in this country, and simply because few will devote sufficient time and labor to the object. There is no case in which the motto upon the bee-hive, "Nothing without labor," is more applicable than this. What is the reason that so many of our young men, who leave College with a high reputation for talents and attainments, afterwards disappoint the expectations of their friends? Their literary reputation has attained its zenith, they rise no higher. They confide in the suggestions of flattery, they rely upon their genius to surmount every obstacle, and do not learn

their error till it is too late to obtain the remedy. In a few years the ill-calculating youth sees his class-mate, who in College held the place of mediocrity, far before him in reputation and useful knowledge. The reason is briefly given: one relied on his talents, the other on his labor.

Dr. Johnson has given a just representation of the labor of a student, in the Preface of his Dictionary, and with much feeling, as he was constitutionally indolent. "Among these unhappy mortals is the writer of Dictionaries; whom mankind have considered, not as the pupil, but the slave, of science, the pioneer of literature, doomed only to remove rubbish and clear obstructions from the paths through which Learning and Genius press forward to conquest and glory, without bestowing a smile on the humble drudge that facilitates their progress." This was the hypochondriac complaint of the great scholar; — yet, the appellation often given him, "The Giant of English literature," is derived, principally, from his Dictionary. A characteristic term was often given to students in the last age, which I regret to have gone out of use, because it was singularly appropriate :—Painful; a painful student. It is impressive and strictly true.

We know of no men who have attained to eminence in literature or science who have not been distinguished for laborious application. This was true of President Dwight. President Edwards usually studied twelve hours in a day, for many years, and he began this course in early life. Dr. Hopkins told me he had repeatedly studied eighteen

hours without eating. Gen. Hamilton and Col. Burr were men of laborious application in their studies.

Let the young men of our country who aspire to literary eminence, look at these characters, while none of them can claim talents superior to theirs, and learn the cost at which it must be obtained. European scholars, at the present time, as well as the past, have been laborious and painful students. The extent and variety of knowledge, indicated in Paradise Lost, must have been the accumulation of many laborious years. Newton was not only distinguished for long and profound thought, such as few intellects could have sustained, he had also a very extensive acquaintance with books. He could rectify ancient chronology, as well as solve the most abstruse problems of mathematics. Boyle, born and bred amid the fascinations of wealth, associated with the first classes of society in England and foreign countries, was still the self-denying student; his insatiable thirst for knowledge carried his mind above all other objects, and he gave a powerful impulse to that system of philosophy which was soon to dissipate the darkness of preceding ages. The learned Bishop Burnet said of him, in his funeral sermon at Westminster, "Which of all Boyle's writings shall I recommend? all of them. To him we owe the secrets of fire, air, water, animals, vegetables, fossils; so that from his works may be deduced the whole system of natural knowledge." He was a principal founder of the Royal Society. His works, in five folios, show the vast

extent of his acquisitions and labors. He was a friend and correspondent of our second Governor Winthrop.

Copernicus, was cotemporary with Columbus: the two great men of the age of the Medici. One presented to the human race the unknown half of the Mundane sphere, while the other led the human mind to a just conception of the boundless Concave with which it is enlightened and adorned. Luther soon followed to dissipate the darkness of the Monastic ages, and let in upon the moral world the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Copernicus was thoroughly versed in all the learning of his time. He was early led to an examination of the Ptolemaic system of natural philosophy, then universally adopted and followed. It is said of him, "In his thirty-fifth year, Copernicus bent all the powers of his mind to this interesting subject; and, after twenty years' laborious study, the cycles and epicycles of former astronomers were removed from the machine of the universe, and the sun was nobly and independently placed in the centre, to illuminate and govern the whole.

A long period was necessary to convince the understanding and remove the prepossessions of the world upon this subject; but it was effected. The system of Copernicus was greatly enlightened and improved by Boyle, and afterwards demonstrated by Newton. Lord Bacon, the illustrious star of the reign of Elizabeth, after making himself thoroughly acquainted with the artificial philosophy of the schools of the middle ages, reasoning from assumed

causes to their uncertain effects, boldly struck out a new course, taking the works and providence of God, as they stand before us, and thence deducing their nature and various operations. The natural world, the character and history of man, are presented to our senses.

Chatham, the great English statesman, was almost as familiar with the human character, and the state of the world, in the ages past, as in his own. The same was true of Sully and Richelieu. Edmund Burke, one of the first ornaments of the British senate, for the extent and variety of his knowledge, was supposed to have no equal among his cotemporaries. Hume and Gibbon, the first historians of the last century, possessed immense stores of erudition, acquired by long and laborious study, from childhood to advanced life. Their two great works are the result of the indefatigable toil of many years. In the Greek and Latin languages, and the works of their illustrious authors, they were as much at home as in their own. When we read the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, our admiration at the dignity of the narrative, and the immense variety of authorities with which it is sustained, is not less than our regret that so great a mind could be totally misled by a dislike of the Christian salvation. Never has the world had such a proof of the need of the divine warning, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men—and not after Christ." They who would learn the true philosophy, must sit at the feet of Him who spake as never man spake.

Sir William Jones, one of the first scholars that Great Britain has produced, a master of most of the Oriental, as well as European languages, to whom the Christian world will ever be under the highest obligations, for the light he has thrown upon the historical parts of the Old Testament, was constantly devoted to intense study, till he sunk under the weight of his labors, at the age of forty-eight; the age of Hamilton, Pitt, Nelson, and others of great distinction. Napoleon closed his career at the age of forty-six; he had a miserable existence six years longer. I mention these facts, in this place, to show how much the labors of some men have accomplished, and what a station they have attained in the annals of our race, in a comparatively short period.

IV. We may notice some of the encouragements to the pursuit of literature and science. A respectable, and even a high standing in this respect, is attainable. This may be said with safety, because it is frequently accomplished. We have been too much accustomed to believe that such attainments are reserved for distinguished genius. We often make an incorrect estimate of the genius of a young man, and still more of a youth. Precocity frequently misleads the judgment in such a case. How different is the relative standing of the members of a College-Class, when they enter, and when they graduate. Genius is an indefinite term; it has, at least, many shades of signification. One has a genius for one object, and one for another. I knew

a boy of perhaps fourteen, that was considered hardly *compos mentis*, very stupid, poor for any business; yet he knew every plant and herb that grew in the woods, and could go and find the root in the winter.

One of the best species of genius that we know of is a disposition for application. The eminent Dr. Webster, lately deceased, has seldom been spoken of as distinguished for genius. Public sentiment, in this respect, has rather been against him. Because he was known, principally, by his Spelling-Book, a work, by the way, of no ordinary intellect, he has not been generally ranked among the men of genius and talent in our own country. Yet he attained to the rank, in the opinion of good judges, of the first philologist of the age. It may be safely said, that, in this important department of literature, he was not surpassed. And in his large Dictionary, he has left the richest legacy to his countrymen that has ever been left by any literary man. It is, undoubtedly, the best Dictionary in the English language. "And while a nook remains, where English minds and manners can be found," it will be resorted to as an authority. No American author has realized as much pecuniary profit by his works as Dr. Webster. He has always been a man of excellent character, of public spirit, and a good citizen.

The class at Yale College of 1778, to which he belonged, has long been considered as one of the most distinguished from that Institution. Their Tutor was the Rev. Dr. Buckminster of Portsmouth.

The class contained Oliver Wolcott, Joel Barlow, Uriah Tracy, Josiah Meigs, Zephaniah Swift, Asher Miller, Noah Smith, Stephen Jacob, and other distinguished men; and no one has been more useful in life, or left a higher reputation at his death, than Dr. Webster.—And now, my young brethren Alumni, graduates and undergraduates, behold a model of character, presented to the literary young men of the United States;—Who can say that such an eminence is unattainable? I heard a gentleman say in New Haven, many years ago, he little thought that Mr. Webster, when in College, would ever be employed in correcting and improving our language. How has all this been effected? By a correct course of life and a steady persevering industry. This is the whole secret;—means within the reach of all. A name of respect and esteem to endure for ages.

The Rev. Dr. Hyde, of this county, was a proper sample of the character now in view. He knew his own powers, made the best use of them, was diligent and methodical in business, a man of study, seldom said or did an unwise thing;—he was a very useful and successful minister, and enjoyed and left a desirable reputation. What young minister cannot do the same?

The attainments of a Scholar are the work of time. Eminent men, more commonly, begin their acquisitions very young. President Edwards began his studies at an early age. The only son of intelligent parents, he early acquired a great thirst for learning, and his progress was never interrupted.

Fed on plain food, the steady habits of study in early life prepared his physical constitution for intense application; and you may say without an hyperbole, his Freedom of the Will, History of Redemption, and Religious Affections, were the result of the labor of forty years.

A special defect in our system of education is the neglect of the years of childhood. Divine Wisdom has so constructed the human mind, that important acquisitions may be made at almost any period of life. In early childhood the little ones will learn to speak English, Russian, Greek, with perhaps equal ease, and pronounce like their teacher. But this cannot be done at ten years, still less at twenty. From four to eight years, or ten at farthest, they must learn to read and spell, a *sine-qua-non* in a good education, and if not obtained at this period, it never is, but imperfectly. Uneducated preachers, invariably, preach without Notes. The principal reason is, they cannot read well enough to deliver from a Manuscript.

Reading and orthography being acquired, let your son read Latin, Greek, French, then learn to construe, and then to parse. Simple arithmetic may be learned early, and I think simple numbers are learned more easily than when incumbered with illustrations. Geography, and especially grammar, are too philosophical for the young mind. Children can remember, and imitate, but they do not abstract. They want no authority but the dictum of the teacher. The anomalies of language do not disturb a young learner; he learns from authority.

In our mode of education, the period from nine to twelve years, an important period, is almost lost. It is the time when habits of application should be acquired, when the physical constitution is forming, and may be formed to endure great mental application. It is quite common that an English lad is as forward in his learning at twelve years, as ours are at fifteen. We suffer much time to be lost. From nine to fifteen years is the time to learn the languages. At fifteen or sixteen years of age, a lad may be able to read the Latin and Greek classics with facility, and what is gotten at that period is not likely to be lost.

History may be read with profit, cotemporaneously, with the acquisition of the learned languages. It is good for a youth to speak in Latin, and think in Latin; in that way he will imbibe many of the thoughts of the great minds of antiquity, whose thoughts were mighty.

We are all aware that the discipline of our schools, or rather the want of discipline, is such that it would be difficult to effect what we have now contemplated. Modern theorists would banish corporal punishment from our schools, with capital punishments from our criminal code.—The great men of the British nation have not been educated on these refined principles. Dr. Johnson says he was a good scholar when he was young, because he "had a faithful Master who whipped him if he did not get his lesson." Dr. Lightfoot has given us a like fact in a little different manner. On the subject of the Confusion of Tongues, he says, "This punishment of

theirs at Babel, is, like Adam's corruption, hereditary to us, for we never come under the rod at grammar-school, but we smart for our ancestors' rebellion at Babel." When we have produced Johnsons and Lightfoots without such discipline, we may talk of laying aside corporal punishment.

I am well aware that there is many a noble-minded youth, who finds that his early education has been neglected, who yet has a laudable, ardent desire to ascend the hill of science. Let not such be discouraged. Many of the first scholars in all civilized countries had done but little at twenty years of age. This is eminently the fact with the distinguished literati of Germany. And it has ever been the same with us. Let the young man enter upon his work in earnest, with the undivided object of acquiring a classical education, leaving ulterior pursuits at the disposal of divine Providence, constantly bearing in mind that it is not his genius but his labor that must accomplish his object; let him be very careful of his health, and his eyes, and, with the favor of Heaven, where he is to look for all success, he need not be disheartened. In every stage of his progress, he is to remember that he has got but little, and much is yet to be done. "Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum, Tendimus in *Scientiam;* sedes ubi fata quietas ostendunt." But, if he cannot make this, as I have stated, his undivided object, if ulterior views engage his attention, and his mind is fixed on distinction in a profession, a seat in Congress, or the favor of the Fair, he will accomplish but little. Eminence as a

scholar is enough for his ambition, or his desire for usefulness. Every distinguished scholar is a rich blessing to society, to his country.

As an encouragement in the pursuit of science, let the youth be assured that a great field is yet unoccupied. Thucydides had no occasion to weep, when he heard the history of Herodotus read at the Olympic Games, lest there should be nothing left for him to record.—Oh, when will the God of heaven give us a Thucydides, to write the American Annals, as that Athenian did for Greece? Even Cicero could exclaim, "Quid dulcius Herodoto, Quid gravius Thucydide!"——I remember a common observation when I was young, "The learned professions are full, there is no room for any more." This has certainly been said for fifty years; and the evil or the good, whichever we term it, has not increased. Accomplished scholars and able writers have relatively diminished. We have books without end, and the multiplicity destroys the value. A great part of them are written with such haste, and so little regard to materials and documents, that the most of them are very defective, and often doubtful as to facts.—We have no good National or Universal Geography. Still more are we in want of a National Gazeteer. And, for the higher seminaries, we want a good system of Natural Philosophy. I need not enumerate. On the subject of a National History, I will speak shortly.

Aside from such deficiencies in our literature, the works of an able judicious scholar, on any important subject, are always wanted, and ever will be.

And the light ephemeral productions, constantly showered upon us, cannot displace them. I would present a single illustration. What a volley of Comments, Expositions, Criticisms, Hints, all of about equal value, have lately been thrown upon the unfortunate prophet Daniel. One of the most illustrious characters of our race. And yet, an Exposition of that portion of sacred prophecy, worthy of the greatness of the theme, would be a most valuable addition to our theology. For if the Christian world is not wholly misled, the great visions of Ulai are hastening to their accomplishment.

It is an encouragement for a student that he knows not his own resources till he has made the experiment. A particular department of study may appear to him unoccupied, but it is one in which he has not been conversant, and it is contemplated with reluctance. Let him make the trial, prepared to meet with obstacles, and he will find the field of labor constantly expanding, presenting new inducements, and his soul is filled with his theme. Many of the best works in literature have commenced with no matured object, and have far surpassed other productions of the same author, on which he might have high expectations. He did not know himself. Dr. Young apologises for neglecting more important studies, to write his Night-Thoughts. A work on which his reputation as an author principally depends.

It is, happily, a primary principle of the human character to be pleased with one's own employment. Let the modest student enter upon the way, and be

steady in his course, his ardor increases with every attainment, his mind expands, his invention is strengthened, his taste is purified,—in the completion of his object he has disappointed himself, if not his friends. By every successful effort, he is prepared for additional labors, and becomes a blessing in his day, and for days to come.

V. There are obstacles in the pursuits of science which are not to be overlooked. These should be duly estimated by the adventurous student, lest he be disposed to relinquish his object when he comes to the encounter. One is, the community are but indifferent judges of literary merit. It is not uncommon that a publication of much value, a work of labor and learning, may be in a measure overlooked, while one of a contrary character, possessing some factitious attractions, may have a great run. A distinguished clergyman, a few years since, delivered and published an able Historical Discourse, the work of several months, on an important subject, and there were about a sufficient number of copies sold to pay the charge of publication. Soon after, he wrote a sermon in five hours, on the death of a suicide, attended with tragical circumstances, and the sermon soon went through three editions. The author has the consolation that his historic discourse will ever be doing good, and will be a document of high authority ages hence.

The labors in science are not to be confined to the business of authorship; they are to be directed to professional duties, and to the employments of

public life. In these pursuits, literary and scientific attainments are highly important, and seldom fail of having a due influence, still, in all professions there are pretenders, novices, who, by artificial means, and retailing the knowledge of others, acquired clandestinely, bear away the palm from true merit and virtue. Such things are painful to our feelings, and it is trying to the benevolent heart to see the community thus defrauded; but these evils will exist in man's imperfect state. Still, true learning will be seen and known, it cannot be concealed, it will be appreciated by the judicious and discerning, and will seldom fail of being highly useful.

A great discouragement in the paths of learning is that the way is long. This is true. Great attainments in science are never made without long and laborious application. No mental power can grasp the whole at once. An unhappy impression has existed in some of our Seminaries, that three or four hours in a day of close study, is enough for a student, that it is as much as his health will admit, and as profitable as a greater length of time. All this is trifling. An injurious sentiment for any literary institution. In study there must be close thought indeed, and also writing and reading. Writing can be done no faster than the mechanical execution, and reading has its limits in like manner. Some will run over a volume in one or two hours, and say they have read it. Their knowledge will be inaccurate and confused. Read the works of Plato, of Livy, of Blackstone, of Edwards, in that manner, and what would you get of the spirit, of

the rich thoughts, of those great writers? It is well to intermix reading and writing, but ten hours in a day is none too much to be employed in application. We like the "ten hours' system."

The course is long! a relative term; where is the goal? By what scale do you make your measure? The path of science is a way without end; its benefits are gathered on the whole course. The enjoyment of discovery, the excellence of truth, the privilege of doing good, the security of a good reputation, are the perpetual rewards of the faithful scholar. Newton labored, without intermission, from early life to old age, much of the time with intense application; and he had that enjoyment which he sought and loved, during his long life. What employment is more laborious than that of the traveller? I believe none. Yet his labor is never finished. Behold the indefatigable Audubon, now traversing the Rocky Mountains, at the age of sixty years. I spake with him some months since, on his contemplated tour; his wishes are nothing less than to ascertain the genus and species of all the birds of the forests, and to make known to his countrymen the best pass from the Mississippi to the Pacific. His attainments, notwithstanding all his privations and toils, are his constant reward, while there is but one Being that can say, "I know *all* the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine."

A greater obstruction in the pursuit of extensive literary acquisitions, than any other, especially in our country, is the limited circumstances of most

students, which render it necessary for them to be engaged in the duties of active life. A partial remedy for this inconvenience, sometimes adopted by students, is by exchanging one misfortune for another, in a state of celibacy. An unwelcome suggestion indeed. I am not insensible of its alarming nature. But the names of Erasmus, Boyle, Newton, Locke, afford some relief to this infelicitous class, while they stand in the first ranks of literature. The laborious student, toiling for the good of his fellow men, may well be considered one of the exceptions the apostle Paul would make from the common rule of duty.

One that is engaged in the duties of professional life, or as a teacher, or in public office, finds many embarrassments in the pursuit of study. Still, there are not a few, who surmount these obstacles, and make great advances in general literature, without abating, but increasing, their reputation and usefulness in their profession. Such are Lord Brougham, and Sir Robert Peel, in the British Parliament; such was the late Gov. Clinton of New York; and such are Adams, Webster, and Everett, in our own Commonwealth. Indeed it is not common that men of leisure do much in learning; this is more often done by men of business. But, to do this, there must be a great thirst for knowledge, persevering application, and no time lost.

We entertain a hope, that in the progress of our country, our high literary institutions may be furnished with scholarships, and funds, devoted to the support of students, who would pursue their studies

after the close of their college course. In this way a large portion of the great scholars of Europe have been produced. There have been rich men and princes in European countries, ever since the revival of learning, who have patronized meritorious students, and enabled them to be devoted, exclusively, to literary pursuits.

The want of books, has ever been spoken of in our country as a hindrance to the pursuit of science. This evil, though gradually diminishing, is not inconsiderable. Our public and private libraries, are more generally composed of the common works procured from the bookstores, which seldom have such as are often wanted by laborious students.* The hurry and activity of our countrymen afford small partiality for the folios and quartos, the black letter and the learned languages, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Many works of that period, of great value, are very scarce with us, if found at all. The works of Bishop Bull, the ablest English writer on the doctrine of the Trinity, are hardly known in our country. The writings of the early authors of New England, some of them distinguished for scholarship and correct thought, are but little known. The books of our country are widely dispersed; could those that are valuable, great and small, contained in families, closets, garrets, often unknown to the possessor, be collected in public deposits, and duly arranged, the evil of which we speak would be greatly diminished. As

* Some booksellers have adopted the practice of procuring old books, much to the benefit of the literary community.

things now are, the student is often subjected to much labor and expense, or, which is more common, ventures upon his conclusions without sufficient authorities.

VI. I will now say a little on some of the departments of Literature that claim the attention of the American scholar. One is the learned languages. A great part of the literature of the world is still in the languages of Greece and Rome. And though much of it is translated, it is always impossible to convey in a translation the full spirit and beauties of the original. Previous to the last century, the most of the works of the learned authors in European countries were written in the Latin language. This was the case with the works on the Civil Law, and Medicine, almost as much as Theology. The most of the Reformers wrote in Latin. The science of medicine, as well as some others, was much cultivated, in the middle ages, by the Saracens. Those works, some of them written originally in Arabic, are mostly in the Latin language. We have a periodical work, principally scientific, published in Leipsic, in quarto, a volume a year, from 1682 to 1760. There are a few extra volumes, making ninety in the whole. Written in Latin, a common vehicle, the contributors were the learned men of all European countries. It gives a correct view of the state of science for a period of eighty years. The title is "Acta Eruditorum," in monthly numbers, and is understood to be the first periodical, except newspapers, published in Europe.

This work of vast and varied learning, will probably ever remain in its primitive language.

A familiar acquaintance with the learned languages expands the mind, and makes it familiar with the copious and impressive thoughts of the best modern writers, as well as with the great men of antiquity. A good knowledge of the Latin language helps one, essentially, to a correct grammatical knowledge of our own.

It is indispensable to a theologian to be familiar with Latin and Greek; if he is not, a learned antagonist in polemic discussion will claim the advantage. Those who have not admitted the doctrine of the Trinity, have had the address to manage the discussion so as to make it a test of true learning to reject the sacred passage in John, respecting the "Three that bear record in heaven," as not genuine. It was this that misled Adam Clarke. A good expositor in some respects, but having a passionate ambition for the reputation of great learning, he dare not do otherwise than reject that important portion of divine truth.

The Catholics assail us in the same manner; that it is our ignorance of the learned languages, and of the writings of the Christian Fathers, that leads us to disown them as the true church of Christ. The truth is, there has ever been much more learning in the Protestant than the Catholic church, from the time of the Reformation; yet they will continue the charge. Our defence must be matters of fact. The most of our expositions on the Scriptures are in the Latin language.

The physician, the anatomist, the jurist, the statesman, can never be competently skilled in his profession, without a familiar acquaintance with the writers in the ancient tongues.

Another department of Literature claiming the attention of every scholar, is History. The history of our race is blended, more or less, with all our attainments in literature and science. "The proper study of mankind is man." History is a statement of the human character, and the transactions of man, in all the varieties of condition and circumstances in which he has been placed.—A large portion of Divine Revelation consists of history, written under the unerring guidance of the Spirit of truth.

All nations have their histories preserved, in one form or another; among uncivilized tribes, this has been generally done by tradition, often in song. The great multiplication of books at the present day, and the numerous periodicals, have a tendency to do away traditionary history, and this venerable and impressive mode of domestic instruction is going into disuse. Perhaps the present mode has superior advantages, but we cannot witness the change without regret. "Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation." There is a life, a feeling, a permanence of impression, in an oral narrative, which a printed page can never impart. King Philip's war was just a century before that of the American Revolution. And I much question whether the events of the latter, with all our books

and schools, are as well known by the youth of New England, at this time, as were those of the Indian war, a century ago.

In the study of history, the student should take a close and comprehensive view of the great subject, for permanent utility, and not mere temporary entertainment. A valuable history should be read for once, with an intention of gaining a full knowledge of the subject. Light cursory reading, with an expectation of going over the work again, is injurious to the memory, and leaves indistinct impressions.—On the question as to the order of reading history, I should incline to the opinion, after some school-book notice of that of our own country, that, for a youth that is to be liberally educated, ancient history should take the lead. That portion of history has become settled; it is not to be changed, by new evidence, or new writers. There is also a simplicity and distinctness in the events detailed, which are suited to the young mind, and calculated to make a beneficial impression. Ancient history exhibits an energy in the human character, a loftiness of thought, an individual elevation, which the arrangements of modern civilization would scarcely admit.

The seminal principles of government, of law, of the arts of life, of the fine arts, are found in remote antiquity. And, in some respects, the efforts of the human mind, at that period, have never been surpassed. The architect, the statuary, the poet, must go to Egypt, to Greece, to Rome, for their first models. And no small part of the

architecture of the present day is taken from the middle ages.—The statesman looks to ancient Republics for models of free government; and to the empire of Romulus, enduring for two-and-twenty centuries, for the permanence of civil institutions. Let the student of history follow the order of events, the progress of civil society, the perfect wisdom and order of Divine Providence, and his acquirements will be distinct and permanent.

Chronology and Biography are very important parts of history. Without the former, one's ideas will be confused, and he will never possess the accuracy of the scholar. By use, dates may be remembered as easy as facts.—In Biography, Plutarch is the great model.

In our public seminaries there is usually a misapprehension concerning the period denominated "the dark ages." There has been no age in which Christianity made a greater progress than in the sixth century. The northern tribes came down upon the cultivated provinces of the Roman empire, and subdued them by their arms, while they in return subjected their conquerors to the mild sceptre of the Prince of peace. The empire of the Caliphs, of the house of Abbas, who reigned in unbroken succession for more than four centuries, were rivals in arts as well as power, of the empire of Justinian and Theodosius. During the same period, there were great advances in civilization among the Saracens in Spain. The battle of Toloso, in the year 1212, for energy and military skill, is among the memorable battles of history. When Ferdinand

and Isabella terminated the dominion of the Saracens in that country by the conquest of Grenada, and the expulsion of that people from their territories, like Louis XIV. revoking the Edict of Nantz, they lost the best artizans and manufacturers of their kingdom.

The expedition of William the Conqueror in the eleventh century, was a great military achievement. Compare him with Napoleon. In both cases the contest was of the Gaul against the Briton. William, with his forces, crossed the English channel, in face of the shipping of his enemy, and fought them on their own ground, which Napoleon could never do. Let the battle of Hastings, in 1066, be compared with the battle of Borodino;—the mightiest effort of war. In each case the forces of the assailant had been long trained to arms, and the stake was a kingdom. William was victorious and obtained his crown; Napoleon failed to conquer, and the battle was his ruin. The principal difference between the two warriors was the difference in the times.—The greater part of the civil institutions of modern European nations, had their origin in the middle ages. From thence has risen that mixed form of government which seems to produce greater satisfaction and stability than any other.

Modern history is of great value; and among the numerous works to which the student has access, it is important that he should make a judicious selection. It is better to read a few with attention and care, than many in a desultory manner.

When we speak of the historian, we would include

the writer, as well as the reader, of history. To a few thoughts on this subject, Brethren Alumni, I would invite your attention. Our country is a great, a wonderful, country. Its whole history, as well as its origin, seems to indicate that it is designed by Infinite Wisdom to be a *Model of Nations*, to lead others to that elevation of human society, which we hope the Creator means to bestow on our race. In this view, to omit other considerations, it is of great importance that our history be well written and well known. In this would be found the origin and true nature of our constitutions, statutes, usages, civil and ecclesiastical, which have produced and sustain our unexampled prosperity. The materials of our history are numerous and authentic; but uncollected, unknown, and dissipated as the leaves of autumn. Every scholar ought to add something to the stock. Limited and local narratives are the true and safe materials of history. One that writes a good history of his own town, a century or half century sermon, when the main object is an exhibition of facts, or the life of a distinguished man, confers a special benefit on the community. Every one that writes such a work, or even a characteristic obituary, should feel his responsibility; the author of a more extended work will rely on him as an authority, and he is bound, not only to see that his statement is correct, but, according to the extent of his plan, nothing important is to be omitted. Such local narratives are the true sources of history, giving a correct character of the times. Many important facts can be collected from tomb-stones.

Every College, and all important public Institutions should have a correct history. There are few literary men who cannot confer an important benefit on the community and posterity in this way.—It is true, my brethren, there are mortifying circumstances in the performance of these duties, not to be avoided. Some popular orator, engaged to perform on a public occasion, will send to you for facts respecting an important event, or an interesting character, and sets the time for his returns ;—at the time appointed he makes a fine display, and is admired for his attainments. He trades on borrowed capital, and makes no mention of his creditor. This is a practical matter, which ought to be understood. —But if we cannot be content to labor without any other reward than that of doing good, in our thankless world, we shall do but little.

Another way, in which honest annalists are tried in their feelings, is, that popular men, who speak well, and sometimes think well, very commonly, are not readers, or their reading is confined to periodicals and works of the day. They will speak confidently of past events, which they have heard of in conversation, and in their statements, be wholly incorrect. And others, relying on their character, will state these things as matters of fact. A distinguished gentleman in New York, not long since, said, without qualification, to a numerous Methodist congregation, that the first Sabbath school in the United States was established in Hanover, in Virginia, by Bishop Asbury, in the year 1785. There were Sabbath schools in New England before

that bishop or John Wesley were born.* A single case will show the importance of correctness on such occasions. Cicero says, in one of his Orations, that the first blood shed in Rome, in a civil commotion, was at the time of the sedition of the Gracchi, about 620 years from the founding of the city. A very interesting fact, but I believe it rests wholly on the authority of the great orator.

Writers of history, in our country, if they take a subject of any extent, and mean to do it justice, have a great task to perform. The materials are not collected in public deposits, as is generally done in older countries. It will be far easier to write our national history, I have no doubt, a century hence, than it is now. Documents will be brought to light, and collected, and many publications of no authority will be duly exposed. A peculiar difficulty on this subject is the state of public sentiment with regard to the time and labor necessary for a historical work. It is expected to be done off in a short period. An historian must have long and hard labor in collecting his documents, as well as in writing, and rewriting, and revising, his work. Much expense is necessary. He must often examine the sources himself, without depending on others. Records of legislatures, of courts, towns, churches, must be examined, and conflicting authorities weighed and estimated in his own mind. He must set no time for the completion of his work, till he has begun to write it over for the last time.—

* The earliest Sabbath school of which I have seen an authentic account, was at Plymouth, commenced in November, 1669.

But let it not be forgotten, that talent, and labor, and fidelity, so employed, the author rising above the influence of prejudice and party, under the guidance of immutable truth, looking to posterity and to Heaven for his reputation and success, will not fail of a great reward. He will have an influence in forming the character of generations after he sleeps.

We have no National History, worthy of that name, and I see no prospect that we are soon to have one. Marshall's Life of Washington is well done, for the circumstances of the author. The work was called for by the public before he entered upon his labor, and he had at the same time the various cares of his eminent station.

President Adams, soon after he left his high office, was requested to engage in such a work. Had he then devoted himself to the object, before this time we should have had a National History, which, I presume, would compare, advantageously, with those of Hume, Gibbon, De Thou, or Livy and Thucydides. He thought some upon the subject, but was soon recalled to public life, in which he has since continued.

The gifted son of Massachusetts, now our National Representative at the Court of Great Britain, if he could be induced to devote eight or ten years of the better part of his life to the service of his country, in this manner, would soon silence all other attempts, and, while he would rear a monument of fame, which few in our own land have

yet done, the blessing of unborn generations would rest upon him.

The only history written in our country, to which adequate time and labor have been devoted, and, in my view, the only one that will be read in future times, is the History of Ferdinand and Isabella, by the amiable Mr. Prescott. He was employed about ten years on the work, and devoted much labor to the acquisition of the requisite information and documents. It is written with excellent judgment, and embraces a portion of history very interesting to Americans, and scarcely less so to the people of Spain. And, for the encouragement of scholars who have to contend with obstacles, I may add, a great part of this time he was so afflicted with weak eyes, as to be unable to read. He is now engaged on a history of Mexico, and he will not be hurried to the completion by the length of the way, or the prospect of emolument. I hope it is the design of Providence to make him a great blessing to his country.

The Ecclesiastical history of our country is as important as that of any part of the Christian Church since the Reformation. We have nothing but detached and very limited portions, and these often incorrect; notwithstanding the extension of the gospel of Christ was, professedly, a primary object in the settlement of most of the American Colonies. And it is a subject of pleasing recollection that the Confessions of Faith, of the Puritans of New England, the Episcopalians of Virginia, the Dutch Reformed of New York, and the Huguenots

from France, one of the best portions of our early population, were essentially the same. This concurrence in religious sentiment had a material influence in promoting a friendly intercourse among the Colonies, and preparing the way for our ultimate National Union.

The churches of New England are the only churches of modern times who have adopted the popular mode of ecclesiastical government. It was a rare experiment, but it has been successful, and has enjoyed the blessing of Heaven. Many Christians, in various parts of our country, and in other countries, are seeking for some ecclesiastical organization of a popular character; and a well-written history of our Congregational churches, would be a great blessing to the Christian world. We believe this system of church-government to be scriptural, and peculiarly conformable to our civil institutions. But no one could do justice to this subject, without much time, travel, and research. There are indications at the present day, of no equivocal character, that the Christian world will look, for ecclesiastical government, to New England or to Rome.

A volume was published, not long since, giving some account of the great religious Revival, in New England and some other Colonies a century ago. It is as well done as might be expected, in view of the short time devoted to the work, and the few materials with which the author was provided. But it is an inadequate representation of the stirring, heaven-guiding, scenes of the richest display of the grace of God this country has enjoyed. The state

of religion, previous to that revival, was not as low as is there represented. A good history of that work, and of previous revivals, from the commencement of these churches, would be beyond all value.

Other studies than those now mentioned are perhaps equally deserving of the attention of the student. The Mathematics, highly useful for the discipline of the mind, are essential to the cultivation of the mechanic arts, and to the principal improvements of the community. The scholar in his study, investigating the mechanism of the material world, lays the foundation of the numerous inventions and improvements so often introduced in Manufactures, Agriculture, and Navigation, to the great reduction of human labor, and the increase of the comforts of life.

Natural Philosophy, in connexion with the sciences of Chemistry, Geology, and various others, are connected with numerous practical effects, and tend directly to promote the welfare and prosperity of the community. The diligent student, though often overlooked, must discover and make known the elements of the natural world, from which are derived the food, the medicine, the clothing, the mental improvement, with the various comforts and privileges of cultivated society. The rapid increase of the population of the world, at the present day, which has no parallel in ages past, is, primarily, the result of the improvements in science.

The science of Astronomy, while it is eminently calculated to expand the human mind, and raise the affections to Him who directs the mighty move-

ments of creation, is connected with many practical benefits. The husbandman, the navigator, the fisherman traversing all seas, are constantly dependant on the astronomical student, who must guide their calculations, and lead them to their desired success. Nathaniel Bowditch did scarcely less for the seaman than Capt. Cook.

Geography and Statistics, very apt to be studied superficially, have an important influence on the welfare of a community. We know but little of the capacities of the world for the extension and improvement of the human race. The Old Colony of Plymouth, a tract of indifferent land, I think, will always sustain as great a population, and with as many comforts, as an equal tract in the valley of the Ohio. Massachusetts, the most populous of the American States, is likely ever to retain this ascendancy. The present territory of the United States, if it were as populous as this Commonwealth now is, would contain about 200,000,000 of inhabitants. It is generally characteristic of eminent men, that they are distinguished for their knowledge of Geography. For a statesman, this is indispensable; and scarcely less so for a teacher, or for a learned profession. We should judge from the reading of Paradise Lost, that the great poet was one of the most learned geographers of his age.

One that would be a thorough scholar should be familiar with the holy Scriptures. The most perfect Narrative ever written is the Book of Genesis. Competent judges have placed the Book of Job in the first rank of Epic Poems. Milton has said,

"There are no songs like the songs of Zion." And all the sages of the world cannot bring together such a mass of practical wisdom as the Book of Proverbs. But I will not deprive you of an extract from Sir William Jones, on this subject. He says, "Theological enquiries are no part of my present subject; but I cannot refrain from adding, that the collection of Tracts, which we call, from their excellence, *The Scriptures*, contain, independently of a divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected within the same compass from all other books that were ever composed in any age or in any idiom."

I might speak of other departments of literature and science, eminently inviting to the scholar, according to his particular talent and inclination, affording abundant opportunity for usefulness and distinction. Fellow-students, the field is wide, it is continually expanding, yea it is white, go ye forth to the harvest.

VII. We notice some of the benefits and rewards of literary attainments. These have come into view, incidentally, in connexion with the subjects to which we have attended. The first to be mentioned is, They are a sure unfailing source of usefulness. The great pattern of human life, the only perfect character that has appeared in our world, "went about doing good." The human soul can have no higher aspiration than this, and no better

presage of future blessedness. The world has been in great error in the opinion that learning is principally a matter of theory, and of little practical benefit. True learning is wholly practical, useful in every department of life, giving to every one an increased ability to be a benefit and a blessing to his fellow-men. Learning in females is eminently useful, as they are the primary teachers of every rising generation.

The acquisition of learning is an inexhaustible source of enjoyment to the possessor. Look at the vacant countenance, the listless sensations, the burdensome indolence, of the savage. The same in all lands. What is his enjoyment? His highest desire is an exemption from pain. And to this he seldom attains. Hunger and cold are his constant companions, while to social enjoyments he is a stranger. Every gradation of improvement in the human mind increases the means of enjoyment. If a student inclines to the hypochondria, let him take up a problem in Euclid, or a volume of Plutarch, or the statistics of China, and think nothing of his diet. He has no occasion to be solitary; gloomy solitude is ingratitude to Heaven. Attainments in learning command the respect of all men. The distinction that individuals obtain among others does not depend, ordinarily, on station, or profession, or office, but in their intellectual capacity and acquisitions. The amount of these is generally the scale by which persons are measured in the estimation of their fellow-men. Learning may indeed be connected with other qualities that are offensive; it is some-

times, though not often, united with odious vices, and these may destroy our confidence in the person; but they do not alter our estimate of his learning. Literary men will hold their just station in the community, whatever be their employment. The infatuation of our countrymen for public office usually ends in disappointment. Our experience has proved sufficiently that no office can elevate an indifferent character, and that it is easy for such an one to degrade the reputation of an office. Many a noted character, had he retained his proper place in the community, might have passed away with reputation; but, being presented to public scrutiny, he sinks often below his just deserts.

We have spoken of our obligations to the place of our education, to do honor to our foster-parent. Alexander felt that he owed as much to Aristotle his preceptor, as to Philip his father. He said, one gave him his life, the other taught him how to live. The character of a literary institution consists, as we have said, in the reputation of its sons. And that reputation must be, principally, that of cultivated mind. It becomes us then, to be habitually laboring for those intellectual attainments which will be but the continuation of the impulse we receive in our classical education.

No good habit is more easily lost than that of mental application; and, being lost, it is very difficult to be regained. The professional man finds himself much occupied in necessary duties, and has little time for mere literary pursuits. Much can be done at intervals and broken portions of time. A

clergyman procured the Universal History, in sixty octavo volumes, and set his task to read, by divine permission, a volume a month. This was done, without neglecting other reading, or professional labors, and in five years the task was completed, affording a general and correct view of the history of all nations and all times. Instead of spending your time in reading periodicals, and the light steam-printing of the day, let it be devoted to standard works. Those that drink at that spring shall thirst again; but they who are storing their memories at the fountain of great minds and great hearts, will find a perennial stream lasting as human life. Shakspeare, and the Spectator, and Bunyan, I am persuaded, will be as familiar to the literary community, two centuries hence, as they are now. Ephemeral publications may help one in conversation, to which a feeble intellect may attain, but they debilitate the mind and destroy the memory. They are read to be forgotten. Every kind and degree of useful knowledge is beneficial to the professional man; it invigorates all his labors. I was early taught that each part of the circle of science strengthens every other.

The business of Instruction, seems likely to become a profession, in our country, as it is in many others, an honorable profession. Every additional attainment in knowledge increases the reputation and the usefulness of the teacher of youth. The greater the fountain, the richer is the stream flowing from it, and its fertilizing effects will appear in distant times.

The attainments in literature which honor our Alma Mater, honor our parents, our friends, our country. Who are the characters, in all countries, that glow in the recollection of the world? It is not the aspiring statesman, who rises to a temporary elevation, soon to be supplanted by a rival; not the destructive warrior, nor the man of wealth;—it is, with few exceptions, the man of letters, the man of intellectual labor, who enlightens his cotemporaries and their distant posterity, relieving the ills of human life, and increasing its blessings. How much less do we honor Cæsar's sword than Virgil's song; what was Cromwell's power to Milton's poem? What was Charles V., the first monarch to whom flatterers could say, "The sun ever shined on his dominions," to Martin Luther, his respectful and abused subject? And where would have been the heroes of ancient time, if Herodotus, and Plutarch, and Cicero, had not preserved them?

We have said, much is to be done. Kind friends, it is true. The men of learning have got to civilize the world; to raise a great portion of our race from a painful degradation, and lead all to the blessings of industry, of self-respect, and social life. Being united in one common pursuit, the difference of station and language is of little consequence; they can labor as brethren, mutually benefiting each other, and thus introduce a brotherhood of nations. The progress of science is tending rapidly to prevent the evils of war, to break down arbitrary power, to lessen the extent and evils of slavery. Science is uniting the world in mutual intercourse, and will

lead to the universal spread of the Divine Salvation. Happy they who are sharers in the long and arduous labor requisite to this high consummation. The feeblest honest effort in the work will have a part in the glorious reward. Such will not have lived or toiled in vain.

The machinery of Divine Providence is rolling on; the heralds of the Cross will follow the Navigator and the Warrior; the lights of science will explore the recesses of the Mausoleum, the Harem, and the Convent; all true history will be confirmed, the universal brotherhood of man is established, the impostures of Mecca and Rome are unveiled; the peaceful sceptre of the Man of Calvary unites a joyful race in thanksgiving and praise. 'Go, ye swift messengers, to nations scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto, to nations meted out and trodden down, whose lands rivers have spoiled, and bring them, a present, unto the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion.'