

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

ENOSINIAN SOCIETY

OF THE

COLUMBIAN COLLEGE, D. C.

JULY 4, 1837,

BY

EDGAR SNOWDEN.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE SOCIETY.

WASHINGTON:

PRINTED BY PETER FORCE.

1837.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COLLEGE HILL, *July 5, 1837.*

DEAR SIR: At a called meeting of the ENOSINIAN SOCIETY held this day, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted:

1. *Resolved*, That we tender Mr. SNOWDEN our sincere thanks for the eloquent, appropriate, and interesting Address delivered before us on the 4th instant.

2. *Resolved*, That Mr. SNOWDEN be requested to furnish a copy of his Oration for publication.

3. *Resolved*, That the Corresponding Secretary be directed to communicate the above to Mr. SNOWDEN.

In communicating to you the foregoing Resolutions, allow me, in the name of the Society, and personally, to express a hope that their request will be complied with.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

J. N. SCHOOLFIELD,

Corres. Sec. Enosinian Society.

To EDGAR SNOWDEN, Esq.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C., *July 11, 1837.*

DEAR SIR: I have received the Resolutions of the ENOSINIAN SOCIETY in relation to the Address which I delivered on the 4th instant, and beg you to return my acknowledgments to the Society for the favorable opinion therein expressed.

If the publication of the Address is desired by the Society, the manuscript is at their disposal, which will be handed to you by Professor Sherwood.

Please accept for yourself and for the members of the Society the good wishes and respects of

Your friend and obedient servant,

EDGAR SNOWDEN.

To J. N. SCHOOLFIELD, Esq.,

Corres. Sec. Enosinian Society.

ADDRESS.

THE anniversary of a day illustrious in our annals, and memorable in the history of the world, is well and properly observed as a National Festival, and its recurrence hailed as a season of rejoicing, and a time for the generous indulgence of patriotic feelings. Singular and favored in this, as in many other respects, we commemorate the epoch at which we not only assumed a name among the nations of the earth, as a separate and independent People, but became invested, also, at the same time, with the highest and best prerogatives of freedom known and acknowledged by our race. Other countries have passed through gradual and often slow and protracted improvements in their progress from the darkness of Despotism to the glorious light of Liberty; but we, more fortunate in our destiny, stepped forth boldly and at once from Colonial vassalage into the full and broad blaze of the meridian sun of National Independence; and our young eagle, when he first plumed his wings for flight, gazed as fixedly and with as unquailing an eye upon its dazzling splendor, as he now does, after sixty-one years have given strength to his pinions and power to his sight. And, however the contrary may be the case with individuals, and for the most part with communities, a long and tedious experience of all the phases of government, was, at least, not necessary with us, to prepare for the exercise or the enjoyment of the rights we asserted and acquired. Our career was commenced

with nothing to contaminate the institutions established, which, from the first, with all the regularity and harmony of the most ingenious mechanism, moved as they were wisely fashioned and directed, uninjured by that rust of ages which has settled upon, defiled, and deranged, in a greater or less degree, even the constitutional governments of the Old World.

For this prosperous commencement, it is our duty, and certainly one which I discharge with a cheerfulness proportionate to the obligation, to give the meed of praise to the settlers of the country and the original founders of the States. They brought with them all those noble sentiments in relation to public duties, private rights, and the limitations of power, which have distinguished the people of England from an early day, and planting the precious seed of well-ordered Liberty in the virgin soil of America, it took root, and under their care and cultivation sprang up fairer and more vigorously and healthy than it appeared where heretofore had been its exclusive place of growth. The first children who were born here were taught by their sires the great truths of Civil Liberty; and not only listened to the recital of the rights of free-born citizens secured in Magna Charta, but such as the instructors themselves had fought and bled to establish during the horrors of recent civil wars in their native country, and for the maintenance of which many of them endured a voluntary exile. Deeply imbued with the lessons of wisdom which were so eloquently taught by some of the finest writers of the language, their minds impressed with the political truths which, acted upon, gave security to their persons and property; under such teaching they became indoctrinated with the principles of Hampden, and Sidney, and Russell; and these principles, when carried out, ultimately produced the conviction that "Resistance to Tyranny was obedience to God." Nor were the reason and judgment alone influenced. The sublimest strains of poetry touched the hearts and excited the enthusiasm of those, who, in their mein and de-

portment, seemed made of sterner stuff than to be thus moved; and when Milton "woke to ecstasy the living lyre," thousands of bosoms beat high and quick in response to his noble strains. These were the men who laid deep and broad the foundations upon which their descendants and our ancestors reared the glorious fabric of American Constitutional Liberty. These were the men, who, with an indomitable will and unwavering perseverance not only conquered the wilderness, but enforced the progress of Liberty with the advance of Civilization. Anglo-Saxon blood and sentiments carried them through the work triumphantly. Happy for us that the settlement of our country was not effected by adventurers in quest of mere gold, or dissolute courtiers driven from the presence of their master, from weariness of their excesses, but rather by PATRIOTS who loved virtue for its own sake, and panted after freedom though they should have to enjoy it in the forests of an unknown land! Happy for us that the billows of the vast Atlantic rolled between the shores that were left and those which were sought; that in leaving behind them the comforts of life and the associations of early days, they parted with all that could have embarrassed the simplicity of their new situation; that crowns and sceptres, and stars and garters, and all the paraphernalia of royalty, were yielded, not only without reluctance, but with joy and satisfaction, as encumbrances in the great work for which they were assigned! Nor let us stop here. If the benignant smiles of Providence were upon this land, in these respects, we have no less cause for thankfulness in the fact, that the settlers were not wild and reckless men, tired of the restraints of law and order, who came here to live in what has been called the freedom of nature, but which is, in reality, the dominion of the passions. Nor were they visionary theorists, who hoped in the new continent to originate and propagate schemes and plans which were

"To free the world from every guilt and shame,

"And bring its primal glories back again."

Nothing of all this. Their ideas, though elevated, were plain and practical. They thought only of establishing here for the interests and happiness of themselves and their posterity, those admirable principles which at home they saw unfortunately entangled with much that was false and base. They indulged in no day dreams of a state of society allowing unlimited license to its members. If they possessed little of that spirit which acknowledged the "*divine right*" of rulers, and tamely acquiesced in demands which required "passive obedience and non-resistance," they had still less of the factious, disorganizing views of modern demagogues, who pursue shadows and phantoms, leaving substance and reality unsought for and far behind. Hence, throughout their whole history, we see a steady aim in all their efforts to *define, regulate, and secure Liberty*, rather than to give it unbounded privileges, calculated in the end to weaken and destroy its effects instead of making them lasting and permanent. Under the salutary restraints of LAWS, often harsh and severe in their enactments, they sought to curb the wills and passions of men, showing at the outset that the communities they organized were designed to be solid and stable, resting upon the strongest basis—mutual protection—confidence—and order. The People were early impressed with a sense of the necessity of a profound obedience to the LAWS, and of consequence, acquired full confidence in their ability to remedy all abuses, by a simple change of the laws, without violence or disorder. It has been a characteristic of the American People during the different changes produced in their political condition by time and circumstances, from the landing of the Pilgrims on the Rock of Plymouth, and the settlement at Jamestown, down to the adoption of the matchless Constitution under which we now live, and the laws passed in pursuance thereof, to have ever willingly and cheerfully yielded something of that natural liberty, the possession of which is sometimes rashly sought for, but never obtained, for the sake of

having firmly secured the great essentials necessary to the safety of their best and dearest rights. Nor, I may pause here to add, does this militate against the most exalted sense of personal independence, and the broadest ideas of rational liberty. It is a most false and pernicious doctrine which maintains that true Liberty can exist unregulated by Law. There may be a spurious, bastard Liberty, hailed by the ignorant and vicious, which allows crimes to be committed in its name, and suffers its votaries, flushed and drunk with excesses, to revel in low enjoyments, and delight themselves with levelling to their own standard all of men and things to which they cannot attain. But the freedom of which we justly and proudly boast, is far different from this. It is a freedom which, while it recognizes all the great truths proper to be observed in a Representative Republic, where life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness are secured to every citizen, yet, prevents wrong and injury, protects the weak and innocent, rewards virtue, and punishes vice. It is a freedom which, while it permits all men to be equal under the Law, suffers no man to be above or beyond the Law.

With these principles, the American People started on their onward career, and these, practically acted upon, led to that glorious event which we this day celebrate, with hearts swelling with praise to the Author of all Good, for his great mercies to us a nation!

Upon such an occasion, I know of no themes more grateful than those to which we have always been accustomed on the Anniversary of our National Independence. To tell of the wrongs of our fathers—of their patient forbearance—of their noble resolution, at last, to resist their oppressors—of their arduous struggle—of their glorious triumph—is an appropriate duty on a day consecrated to the recollection of these events. And should we turn from their contemplation because we are familiar with them, and because they have been often repeated? Never, never, can they be too fondly dwelt on, or too often re-

hearsed. Shall our ears, shall the ears of our children, ever grow dull and insensible to the recital of a story than which History presents none more interesting and exciting in all its details—none more abounding in the sublimest examples of patriotism and virtue? Shall we cease ever to remember and fondly to linger at the remembrance of the valor, the self-devotion, the perseverance of the *Heroes* of the Revolution? Shall we ever fail properly to appreciate the services of the *Sages* of the Revolution? Surely not, whilst we are enjoying in bounteous profusion the rich blessings flowing from their labors. Ungrateful, indeed, would be the American People, did they not wear in their “heart of hearts” a constant, abiding, ever present, reverential attachment for the names and memories of those who achieved the Independence and established the Union of these States.

To exhibit this gratitude, however, in its most sincere and appropriate form, and to prove our sense of the heavy obligations under which we rest, as descendants of men who perilled all for us, is not merely to offer the incense of praise to the dead, or enrich by our bounty the few of those days that survive. Lip service is not the most acceptable or becoming worship at our country’s altars. We do not approach these Holy Temples on days consecrated in our History, for vain show and parade. Panegyric would be idle, and Eulogium senseless, on such occasions, were they not directed to high and noble purposes, to useful and important objects. No American citizen ought to pass these hours without, from the reflections they must call up, resolving to be henceforth more and more devoted to his country’s honor, prosperity, and happiness. We best show what we *feel* when we *act*, and can only truly manifest our zeal and devotion to the cause which our fathers espoused, by resolving to maintain in all their pristine vigor the institutions they established.

Omitting then, reluctantly, what neither the time nor the

proper limits of this address will permit to be discussed, and foregoing all the pleasure which it might afford us to take up the story of our Revolution, and go through its most spirit-stirring passages, we must be content with referring briefly to some of those causes which now seem most likely to preserve the precious inheritance which has been bequeathed to us, and which will continue most materially to aid in the preservation of the **PUBLIC LIBERTY**. We have received in the Union and Independence of these States—in the Constitution and form of Government we possess—and in the great principles upon which they are all built up, a legacy richer than was ever before committed to human keeping. Upon the manner in which we exercise the sacred trust confided to our care, **ALL** depends.

I. The chief in importance among the causes of which I have just spoken, is undoubtedly the continued prevalence of those sentiments already referred to, originally introduced by the settlers of the country, and sedulously cultivated by the men of the Revolution and the framers of the Constitution—sentiments which favor regulated liberty and obedience to the laws. Our Government has been called “an experiment.” If the mass of the people be saturated with true and constitutional principles, and just and correct ideas of their own rights and obligations, it need be considered “an experiment” no longer. *Then*, we may “defy a world in arms,” and write “*Esto perpetua*” under the emblem of the Union and Sovereignty of the States. To effect a consummation so devoutly to be wished for, all our energies are required. But no people on earth are more exposed to deception and error than our own; and nothing but their native good sense, and the opinions they have inherited, have preserved them hitherto from the deceits, temptations, and seductions which are constantly thrown out to allure them from the path of their fathers. The blessings which we enjoy, and the privileges which we value as above all price, are liable to be abused to the injury of the body politic. Advan-

tage may be taken of the very genius of our institutions which favors the largest liberty to the largest number, to create artificial distinctions in society, and by separating classes, and forming divisions, to crush the few beneath the ponderous weight of the many; *freedom* of thought and of speech may be converted into a *power* of sedition and mischief; the suffrages of free citizens may be perverted to votes of ostracism against virtue and honesty; the majesty of the People may be invoked to trample upon the laws instead of being exerted in their defence. Fortunately, for upwards of half a century, with rare exceptions, serving only to show the horrors and dangers of the examples, we have escaped from all the snares which factious pretenders or misguided men have laid for our destruction. No State has yet "shot madly from its sphere" to perplex and alarm the nation: no portion of the community has yet been persuaded *formally* to renounce its allegiance to good order and its subjection to the laws. Wherever and whenever momentary excesses or outbreaks of violence have occurred, reason has soon resumed its sway, and they have been afterwards frowned on and discountenanced even by those who at first were disposed to excuse or palliate such offences. To foster and encourage this spirit should be our constant aim. Whatever may be the views of foreign philanthropists or native-born regenerators, whose heads are teeming with plans for the improvement of mankind, we, at least, ought to be content with our situation. Bacon, in one of his Essays, has wisely remarked that "it is good not to try experiments in States, except the necessity be urgent or the utility evident; and well to beware that it be the reformation that draweth on the change, and not the desire of change that pretendeth the reformation." We have advanced, as we believe, before the rest of mankind in the science of government; let the other nations of the earth *come up to us*, before we leave the place where we now stand, or turn aside into new and untried ways to explore a route for

them to follow. That our civil institutions are perfect, or that they may not be susceptible of improvement, is not asserted; but this must be left to time, and to experience, and to *ourselves*. We want imported into our borders none of that feverish, restless disposition so frequently manifested abroad, and which so often engenders habits and views not at all in accordance with our American ideas of regulated liberty: we desire none of that *ultra* feeling, which saps and mines the foundations of society in order to effect a slight change in its superstructure. We do not see in the course of those who have gone before us, and in whose footsteps we are anxious to tread, any such movements. If commotion and disorder are necessary elsewhere to effect an amelioration of the condition of mankind, we are quite sure that they would be useless here for any purposes whatever.

II. As valuable, however, as are the principles which we have just endeavored to inculcate, they must be always accompanied, on the part of the People, by a *watchful and jealous spirit in relation to their own rights*. It does not follow that because we are a peace-loving, law-obeying people, we should be craven or recreant. Every feeling of pride—every sentiment of honor—every dictate of interest will urge to the uniform maintenance of all our legal privileges. It is our *duty* to distrust POWER—to examine its operations—to mark its progress. Moving silently and unseen, its strides are often rapid, prostrating the feeble barriers erected at first to oppose its march. If we neglect, yield to, or assist it, we are false to the faith of our fathers. It has strength enough always to sustain it, when it is exerted fairly, properly, and constitutionally. It needs no officious volunteers to swell the number of its body-guards, or form a trained and hireling band to do its bidding, whether in defending its own forces, or attacking its assailants. We have already given it, not a throne for its seat, but a fortified and entrenched position, surrounded and guarded by constitutional enactments. In its behalf we have already

done our part ; it remains for us to exercise unceasing vigilance, lest the place designed for its security may be used for our injury ; lest chains and manacles may be forged where we had erected the armory of national defence. If, in the exercise of the true principles of justice, we are to take care that the few are not overpowered by numbers, to the deprivation of their rights, we are equally bound to guard against the opposite danger. By those who do not impute all wisdom—all virtue—all discretion to mere numbers, advice of this nature will not be considered unwholesome. Wealth, ambition, and self-interest, all have their means to exercise an undue influence over the People, and, in some guise or other, they will always be found exerting these means to the agrandizement of those who are considered fortunate in their possession. If this is true with regard to individuals, and in the ordinary pursuits of life, it is especially correct when we speak of National and State affairs. Our Government is a government of checks and balances—each department has its metes and bounds all properly defined, and once to pass over them is to throw the whole system into derangement and disorder. It is made then a part of the duty of every one who loves his country and regards her welfare, constantly to occupy himself in jealously guarding his own rights as well as the rights of each and every division of the Government of his choice. What was enjoined upon the Roman Dictator on investing him with supreme authority, our Republic commands of her humblest citizen—“*ne quid detrimenti Respublica capiat.*” We have at home and among ourselves, enough to call forth all our energies, and keep alive all our activity. We have to see that the Executive does not encroach upon the Legislative power ; that neither be directed to the injury of the People ; that the Judiciary is maintained in its independence ; that the States exercise their sovereignty ; and, yet, that the Nation is supreme. This is the work before us which we are bound to perform, and at which “no man having put his

hand to the plough can look back." It is a GREAT WORK, full of labor, and requiring an unceasing devotion and ardent patriotism to its fulfilment. Shall it be said, at last, that we have disappointed the hopes of the world?

III. In enumerating the causes which will probably most conduce to the great end which we have in view, it would be unpardonable to overlook or omit to mention *the General Diffusion of Education*. Valuable as knowledge is in every situation, and useful as its results are to any nation, it can nowhere be so inestimably, and, at the same time, so practically important as among us. Elsewhere the rays of science and learning serve to gild and illumine the thrones of monarchs—*here*, they give light and life to every cottage on our mountains or in our valleys: elsewhere there is an aristocracy of letters as there is of blood—*here* we disseminate the blessings of education as freely and equally as we do the honors or rewards of our political Republic: elsewhere genius and talents are too often bought up by power, and the effusions of mind as well as the results of literary labor directed by the purchaser—*here*, they must be exerted, unless they are stamped with venality and corruption, in the cause of free principles and liberal institutions; for with us the fountain of patronage flows from a source not accessible to the mere fawners upon birth, place, rank, and wealth. Most of the objections that are urged against our system of government, are founded upon the idea that the People are always uninformed and ignorant. However truly this may be urged against other nations, it should not be held valid here. We should remove the basis on which these cavillers have maintained their opinions, and the enemies of popular governments will lose the only ground on which they stand, and which has even plausibility to give it recommendation. It is not, however, to make a theory for ourselves, or to silence the arguments of our opponents by demonstrating their fallacy, that we are to urge this subject. In advocating the universal dis-

semination of knowledge throughout our country, we have other and more practical objects in view. We are to contend for its necessity and importance, because it is to have a bearing upon ourselves—because it is to operate here at home—because it is to affect our children and their posterity—because it is to uphold all that we have been taught to be valuable, and all that we know to be excellent. Let us talk as we will about the political virtue and honesty of the People—about the general correctness of public sentiment—and the strong, inherent, natural sense of right and wrong which exists in every community. It is, after all, the **EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE** which is to preserve their morals—guide their judgments—give weight and dignity to their opinions—and clothe their decisions with impartiality and wisdom. Educate the People, and they will learn to respect themselves, and to estimate properly the characters and qualifications of all who appear before them. Enlighten them, and they will not only see their own faults and imperfections, but be able to judge properly of the pretensions of their instructors and leaders. The vice of our day is an overweening national confidence, pride, and importance. We show this too often in the haughty manner we assume, in our bold presumption, and more frequently still in our fretfulness and irritability. We writhe under the sarcasms of strangers as if every pointed paragraph were an insult, and every sharp jest a studied calumny. Long accustomed to the flattery of those who are seeking our favor, we have acquired an opinion of ourselves which may not be altogether just or correct. It is time that we should be disabused. It is time that we should *know ourselves*. The People should despise the impious and disgusting cant of those who tell them that their voice is the voice of God, and that they are as omniscient as they are omnipotent: they should frown into silence the demagogues who would persuade them that they can do no wrong. To effect this we must *educate the People*. We shall enable them to do this

only by giving them a knowledge of the history of the world, and the experience of mankind; by teaching them to trace effects to causes, and to follow out the motives of men as exhibited, not in their professions, but in their actions. And the education that is desirable, is not partial or limited. To abridge or contract it here, would be to destroy its energies and effects. It should extend to the bounds of the Republic, and comprehend within the range of its operations every free citizen. It is not the phrase of the day to acknowledge a want of confidence in the People; nor, if it were fashionable so to speak, would we admit the correctness of the idea when applied to a virtuous, intelligent, and *educated People*: but a good man may distrust, and an independent man will express his distrust of a vicious, uninformed, and ignorant community. What has he to expect either for himself or for themselves from such? What reliance can he place upon their stability—their integrity—their honor? Can he forget that *King Numbers* has, in all ages of the world, when unregulated, unrestrained, and *ignorant*, been a tyrant and a despot, exercising his sway, amidst anarchy, ruin, and bloodshed; and does he believe that it would be different now, and that our *nature* has changed by the revolutions of Time? No! He knows that the judgment of the whole Athenian people, which condemned Socrates to death, was as false, and corrupt, and infamous as the edict of the single Roman Emperor, which, in later years, consigned Seneca to an untimely end: He knows that the horrors of a popular revolution have absolutely surpassed in blackness and enormity all the crimes of any one Tyrant of whom we read in the long catalogue of the oppressors and destroyers of our race. It is then, because we truly respect the People, and ardently desire their moral elevation, that we so strenuously urge the spread of knowledge among them. We would not minister to their passions or prejudices, but we would cultivate their minds and improve their hearts. With us they are the law makers and the rulers. Their representatives and

the objects of their choice occupy the posts of distinction—sit in our legislative halls—administer the laws, and regulate the affairs of this great nation. Upon them, ultimately, rests the responsibility of preserving the Government in its purity and their own liberty uninjured. No other people ever had so much to perform, and no other people ever required so much virtue and intelligence to perform all this *well*. Can they realize our hopes if they grope about in darkness? Can they do what is before them to do, if they are blinded? No! Let the light of Education shine full upon them, as full of promise and of safety to us in our journeyings through the weary pilgrimage of life, as was of old to the chosen people of God, that miraculous interposition, which “went before them by day “in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way; and by night in “a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and night.”

With these general remarks, naturally induced by the occasion, and however feebly expressed, such as have been given with an earnest conviction of their truth, and the importance of the object which they are humbly intended to aid, permit me now to address myself, particularly, to my young friends, whose representative I am, and by whose partiality I have been called to speak before this assembly.

For words of deep wisdom and long experience, you will not look to me. From others, whose years and learning entitle their counsel and advice to your respectful consideration, you properly expect both; and happy will it be for you all, if, guided by their precepts and example, you walk in the way in which you should go. To their affectionate exhortations—their friendly admonitions, and their salutary counsels, you cannot be indifferent; and, in after life, to have treasured them all in your memory, and to have made them the rule of your conduct, will be your highest gratification. I may be allowed, however, as one almost of you and with you, but a short distance removed from you in years, and but just started in advance of you in

life, affectionately to commune with you with a solicitude and heartfelt sympathy which no words of mine can express. We have drank at the same fountains of learning, and been nurtured by the same Alma Mater. Some of the most pleasing associations of youth are connected with the scenes with which you are daily familiar; and honored with your confidence and friendship, my heart yearns towards you as my younger but beloved brothers in whose future welfare and prosperity all my feelings are interested. Your *proper course* in life is opened before you. As far as the necessary and unavoidable evils inseparable from our existence will permit, its "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace." It is there that I hope, hereafter, always to find you, and in that event, future solicitude may be ended; for your success is certain. Your reward will be bestowed by your country, your friends, your neighbors; and, what is better still, your own self-approving consciences.

My young friends, you will commence the duties of active life at an important period of your country's history. You are, at once, to take your stations among those who are to control and direct the temporal destinies of this great nation. In whatever situations you may be placed, however diversified may be your pursuits, you will be among those under whose auspices the public liberty is to be preserved—the constitutional rights of the People maintained, and the just and necessary powers of the Government to be asserted. When you leave the Halls of Learning, and assume the *Toga Virilis*, you will be called to act the part of MEN, whose influence from that moment will begin to expand itself indefinitely, for weal or for wo. When the Roman youth were about to put on the garb of manhood, they were conducted to the Forum, and there, in the presence of the People, and with imposing ceremonies, almost dedicated to their country. If the form and ceremony be wanting with us as outward symbols not now necessary, no ingenuous and patriotic youth will the less regard the obligations which rests

upon him in that event. He then enters into a solemn covenant, which he cannot break without dishonor, to be a faithful citizen of the Commonwealth, and at the sacrifice of all that is dear, he must keep that covenant intact. You and each of you will, in a short time, assume all the responsibilities of such a situation. It is your part, then, to commence early in forming your judgments, and adopting your sentiments on the important subjects on which you will have to act. Before you adopt them, however, examine them well; see if they are sound and correct. If you honestly approve of them, cherish, support, and extend them. Stand by them if you believe that they will do the state good service. Inquire not if they, or any opinion which you may with calmness and reason adopt, be *popular*: that is a word which ought not, at least, to be prominent or often used in your vocabulary. I do not ask you to despise or reject popularity, because the favorable opinion of our fellow-men is always desirable, and in many cases, is a proof of merit; but let, in the words of an English jurist, the popularity which you prize be one which seeks you, and not one which you run after. If you consent to sacrifice the right for the expedient, you lessen your own self-respect, whatever temporary personal advantage you may gain, and the sense of degradation will far outweigh the miserable benefit you may receive. If you condescend to be a modern People's man, trimming your sails to every breeze, you may find a still lower deep to which you may reach: you may find that you can be despised and denounced by those for whose favor you made shipwreck of your characters. As much as you may loathe the menials and slaves of great men who cringe and fawn upon the dispensers of their bounty, recollect that the same despicable meanness is often exhibited by the flatterers of the People, and for the same base purposes. Be above the arts of a demagogue, which, however successful they may sometimes prove, never bring true happiness and solid enjoyment. What to men in your situation,

with enlarged understandings, cultivated mind, and patriotic feelings, would be the possession of place, or rank, obtained at the cost of your own dignity and honor. Be assured, in that event, you would not be compensated for the pain, and mortification, and disgust which you would have to endure. If honors are not to be secured but at the price of character, let those who think them worth the pursuit submit to the forfeit. From you better things are expected. You have been taught to look to other sources than the distinctions and emoluments of *public life* for your highest consolations and chief enjoyments. The studies that you are now pursuing are not only to prepare you for the world, and contribute to the eclat of your appearance upon the stage of action, but they are to minister to your happiness always and in every situation—"at hæc studia, adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ormant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent;" and most of all will they delight you in calm and philosophic retirement. Believe not that you cannot aid your country, and build up your own true fame, without you mingle in the *melee* of party strife, and contend for political power. You can be patriots and honest men without being party politicians. Interested you must always be in the success of republican liberty—strenuous you cannot fail to be in the support of the true principles of our Government; but you may be all this without attempting to clutch the glittering baubles which too often dazzle the sight and mislead the judgments of men. I do not ask you to "fling away ambition," because an honorable ambition to be useful is praiseworthy; nor should the noble aspirations of genius be checked when they are directed to noble ends. But it is not an *honorable* ambition in this country to toil and pant after popular rewards, without regard to the means used or the principles involved in the struggle. Better, far better would it be for you to remain in comparative obscurity, cultivating the fair, delightful plans of peace, than to follow in this respect the ig-

noble examples too frequently placed before our eyes. And even in this retirement, the true distinction and solid honors you would gain, would be worth more to you than all the huzzas of crowds and the applauses of factions. Pursuing your duties as humble private citizens, you will, unconsciously, be gathering the love and respect of the People. They will esteem you for your independent bearing; they will confide in you for your acknowledged acquirements; they will cherish you for your virtuous and patriotic conduct. The noisy, blustering demagogue, will fume and fret away his brief hour, and be forgotten, whilst the gratitude and affection of your friends and neighbors will grow every day stronger and stronger, and be more and more widely diffused. How much more real and substantial such a fame, than any acquired by the common arts and frauds of cunning minds! Yes, my friends, such a result as this, follows from our continued love and attachment for the learning we begin to acquire in the freshness of youth, and our preference for the enjoyments derived from a cultivated intellect over others with which we are presented. May we not, in view of this, adopt and apply to ourselves the language which a refined and brilliant writer has placed in the mouth of a scholar—the creation of his own fancy, but yet the counterpart of reality: “As for our studies, how can we, who have drank of the old “stream of Castalia, how can we change them, or ought we so “to do? Are they not our food, our aliment, our solace in sor- “row, our sympathizers, our very benefactors in joy? Take “them away from us, and you take away the winds which “purify and give motion to the silent currents of our life. “Whatever may be the infirmities of our bodies, and the har- “assment which will molest the most fortunate, we have our “refuge and comforter in the golden-souled and dreaming “PLATO, and the sententious wisdom of less imaginative philoso- “phers. Nor, when we are reminded of our approaching dis- “solution, by thoughts which will sometimes come unbidden

“upon us, is there a small and inglorious pleasure in the hope
“that we may meet hereafter in those islands of the blessed,
“which they dimly dreamed of, but which are opened to us with-
“out a cloud, or mist, or shadow of uncertainty and doubt, with
“those bright spirits which we do now converse with so im-
“perfectly—that we may catch from the very lips of Homer
“the unclouded gorgeousness of fiction, and from the accents of
“Archimedes the unadulterated calculations of truth.”
