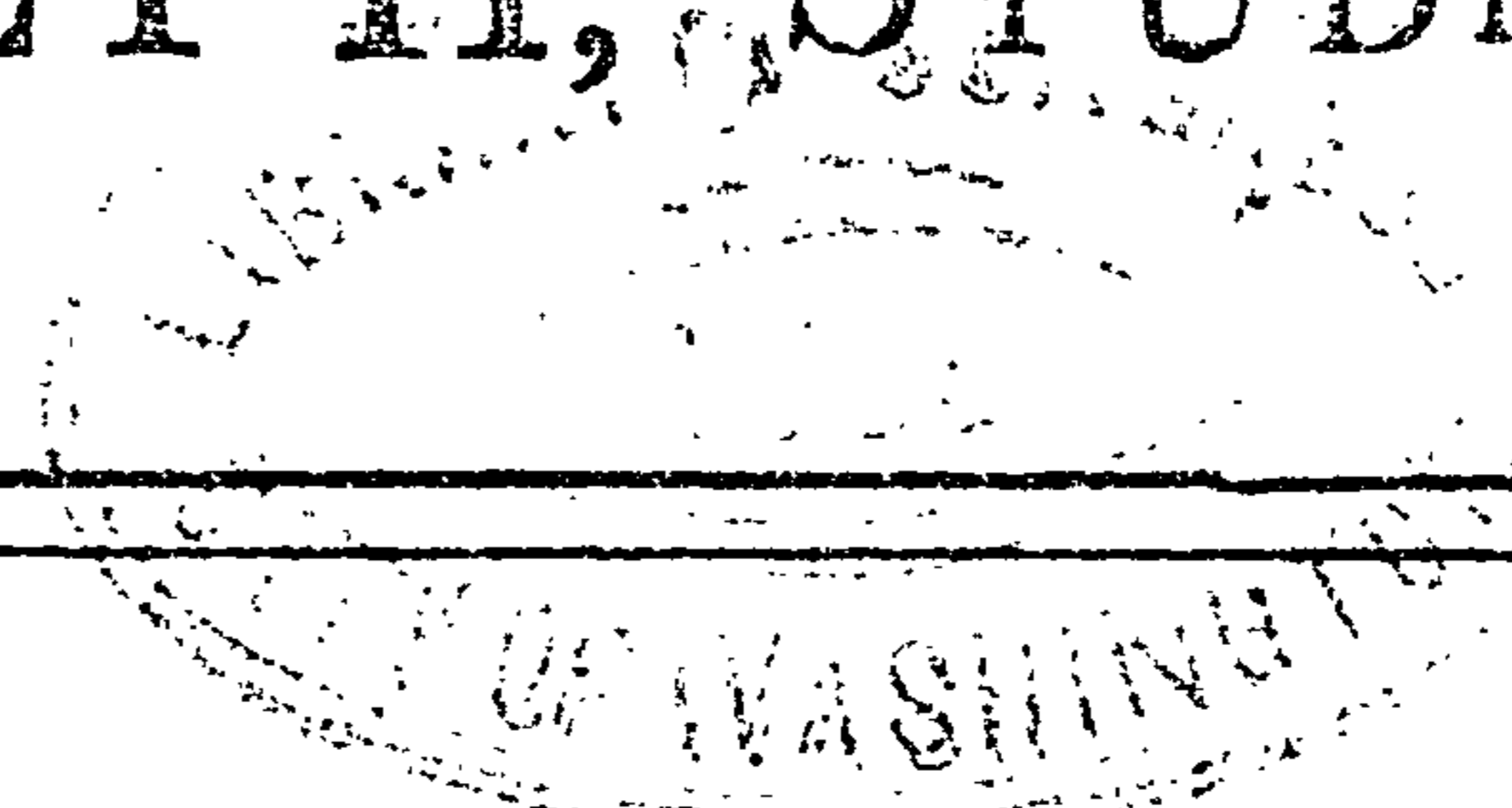


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O F I T S
F O U N D A T I O N,

AUGUST 15, 1771.

By E. RANDOLPH, STUDENT.



W I L L I A M S B U R G:

Printed by W I L L I A M R I N D, M D C C L X X I.

10

TO THE REVEREND
SAMUEL HENLEY,

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY,

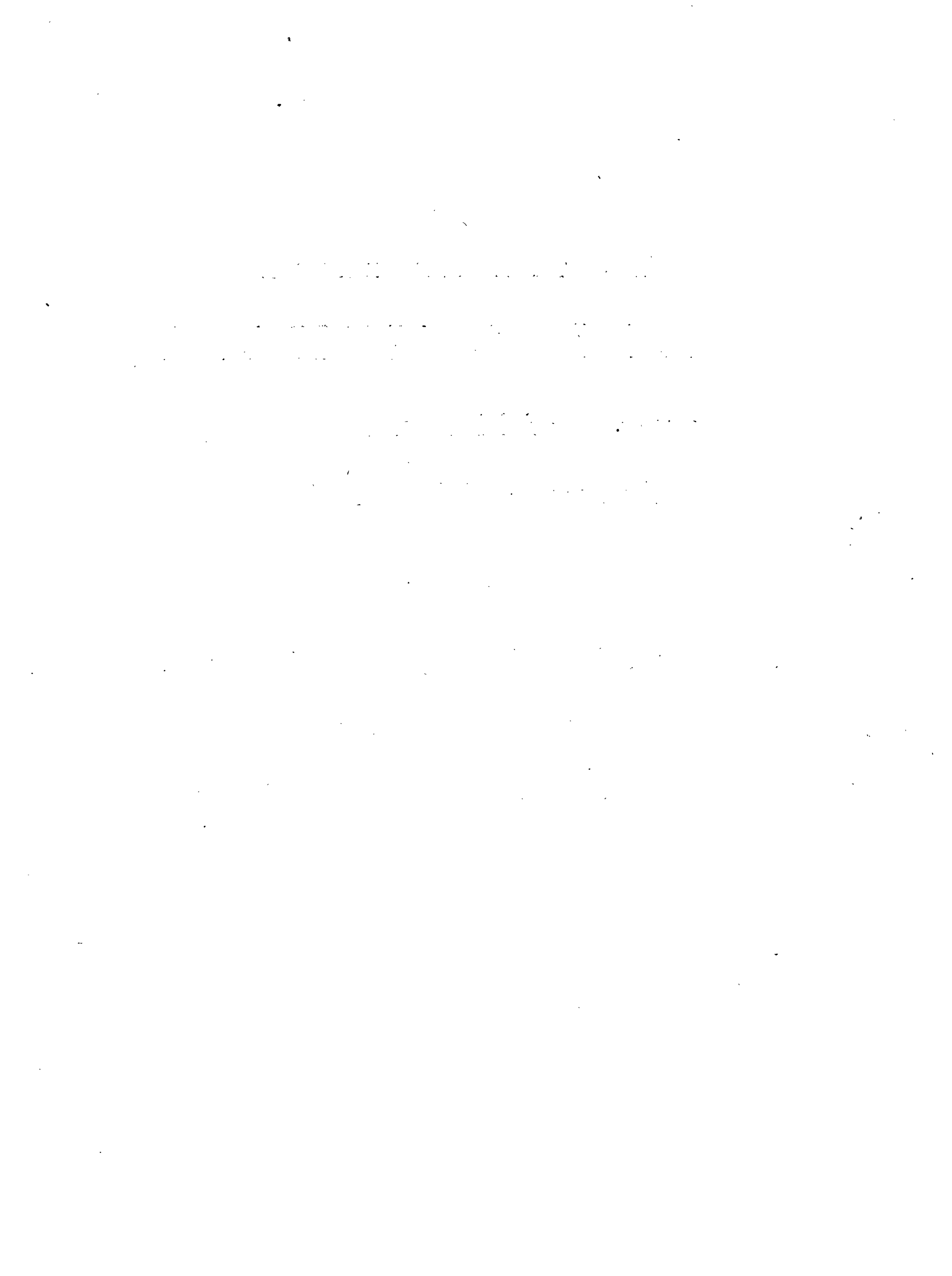
IN WILLIAM and MARY COLLEGE,

THE following ORATION, in Testimony of the utmost
Esteem, and Gratitude, is most respectfully inscribed, by
his

Much obliged,

Obedient Servant,

EDMUND RANDOLPH.



Mr. PRESIDENT, GENTLEMEN of the SOCIETY, GENTLEMEN,
and FELLOW STUDENTS,

I SHOULD be ungrateful indeed, did I not with Pleasure, embrace this Opportunity to commemorate the Munificence of our Royal Benefactor. For, as far as I can trace back the Scenes of Life, or recal the fleeting Ideas of my Childhood, these Walls, reared by the pious Hands of William, have sheltered me in my infant Studies. I am well aware, that I shall sink in the Attempt, but I depend on your Benignity to support me: I am conscious also, that it requires an Apelles to pourtray an Alexander; but should I be fortunate enough, to drop, during this Essay of Youth, any Thing, worthy your Attention, I should exclaim, *Εὐχρησά*, with more than Ægyptian Joy, as having found my Reward in the Approbation of the Learned.

“Heaven,” says Pope, “first taught Letters for some Wretch’s Aid, some banish’d Lover, or some captive Maid:” But surely then only are they equal to their Dignity, when they “raise the Genius and mend the Heart.” The Tears of the Macedonian, as he stood by the Tomb of Sigeum, flowed from a Sense of his unhappy Fate, in wanting a Homer to celebrate his Actions: But how had he wept, how miserable had he been, if he had thought, that the boldest Flights of Genius, like the Leaves of the Sybil, must have been given to be dispersed by the Winds? How had the Glory of Antiquity perished in hopeless Oblivion, had not Letters interposed to perpetuate its Existence? Without their Aid, in vain had the Poet sung the Anger of Pelides, or Passion of Agamemnon: In vain painted the Horror of Impiety in Diomedes, wounding a Divinity, or cautioned against the delusive Witchery of Fortune, by presenting Hector, now exulting over Patroclus vanquished, now dragged in Triumph round the Trojan Wall. Without their Aid, we never had beheld Æneas, bending under the Weight of filial Duty, Pharsalia had never risen to our View, to display the Havock of Ambition, nor had the dissolute Assyrian been prepared for Death by the written Herald of his approaching Ruin. Through them the Wisdom of

Greece, of Rome, of the whole World, passes before us in one continued Mirrour, Ages, long elapsed, reflect a searching Light upon those which are to come, and the Divine Indulgence commissions us to be happy, by thus revealing the Mysteries of Learning. Consider! Man comes into the World, a naked, helpless Animal, free from Biasses of every Kind: Consider! He cannot remain in a State of Neutrality. He may indeed, while Vice insinuates on this, and Virtue awes on that, Side, in the Intervals of Hesitation put on the Smile of Revelry to one, and sickly over his divided Looks with Melancholy to the other, but must shortly, like Hercules, determine on the Path, as each suspects the Influence of its Rival. Vice is daily reinforced with Millions: Even Custom herself has enlisted under its Banner. Let it but wave the Crimson Standard, Fancy, with all her Train, comes fluttering around: Let it but give the Blast for the nocturnal Orgy, Intemperance, Debauch, and Lust gambol in the Van, while Disease and Misery follow in the Rear. Amid such Tumult and Disorder, where shall Virtue find a Friend? Should she strive to mix with the Croud, by them she is pushed back with Contempt: Should she retire from factious Strife, she is proclaimed the chimerical Existence of a distempered Brain. Because she allures them not to the Shores of Ruin, by the Songs of Guile, the Young are too apt to consider her Habitation, as the Exclusion of all Joy. But let them recur to Learning, their Prejudices will be removed, they will know how to prize that which is estimable. Whether we be versed in metaphysical Speculations, or contemplate the Wonders of the material World, we shall reap these Advantages. If we resign ourselves to the former, they will teach us "to abstract, extend, and spiritualize our Ideas," will render us superior to the ensnaring Nets of Sophistry, will qualify us to unveil Falshood in Disguise, to trace Scepticism in its Labyrinth of Subterfuges, and oppose Truth to the laboured Disquisitions of false Refinement.

But while the Hand of Science detects to our Eye, the connecting Fibres as it were, and vital Principles of Nature, while we explore the several Properties of Matter in all its primary Forms, and artificial Combinations, we are capacitated for inhancing the Com-

forts and Means of Life. Then, then indeed! we turn our Eyes up to the Heaven of Heavens, haste to distant Planets, and descry other Systems. In the Laws which govern their Revolutions, we admire unbounded Goodness, in the Forces, which retain them in their Orbits, Almighty Power. Mere Sense circumscribes the Views of none but the ignorant, the Terms of Space we here can never know; for to us new Firmaments now arise, new Suns now kindle up to our Imagination, in infinite Succession, “in regular Confusion, and we hail thee, O GOD,

“ Father of all, in ev’ry Age,

“ In ev’ry Clime ador’d,

“ By Saint, by Savage or by Sage,

“ Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.”

Yet Virtue disdains no Heart which is open to her Reception. She may be found under the Cottages of Ignorance, as well as amid the buzzing Schools of Letters. Nay, I will add, that she may exist independent of Learning, that the thoughtless Clown oftimes possesses more Probity than the skilful Critic. But, when the Statuary’s Chizzel has hewn off the formless Mass, that encumbered the latent Figure, when it has given Strength of Features, Elegance of Shape, and Expressions of Life, how far does this polished Marble disclaim all Connection with the Rudeness of its kindred Quarry?

It is you, fair Science, who touched Confusion into Order, and spurred into Action “the lethargic Powers of the human Breast.” Before the Days of Literature, though the Secretions of Matter had exhibited the Form of a World, the Savageness of Mankind seemed to continue, the Anarchy of Chaos. Uncertain of his Den, “the sad Barbarian” roved from Field to Field, “fought the fierce, tusky Boar for his Acorn Meal, and where the descending Night overtook his wearied Steps, there he laid him down, to refresh himself for the Morrow’s Contest. While the “mixed Tempests” of the Winter, forbad the Chace, while the leafless Tree denied her Fruit, and the general Pulse of Nature seemed benumbed, whither could he betake himself for Amusement, whither fly for Sustenance, how rescue his

active Limbs from motionless Torpidity? A Friend he knew not: The "tender Ties of Relationship" could not bind the boisterous Soul of Licentiousness, untutored by the Precepts of Learning. He was "desolate in Crouds," and how could Solitude afford him the Companion of the Scholar. Worse than the Beasts of Prey, he cared not for Futurity, and must have starved in emaciating Penury, had he not rifled the Stores of the Brutes. But it was Discipline, which taught him to melt at another's Woe, to sympathize with another's Joy, and forgive the ungenerous Robbery of his Birth-right. It was she, who called out from amid the Woods, and Wilds of Nature, the uncivilized Herd of Men, changed their "blood-polluted Furr into the woolly Vestment," and united them by common Interests, and social Laws.

But if the Sluggard still clings to his downy Bed, if Intractibility, cannot now be soothed to Application, and Folly still rebels against its Happiness, behold! the Hand of Majesty extending the Laurel to reward, and the Trumpet to proclaim. Whither have the Monuments of Roman Glory vanished, like fantastic Visions? Whither the Child of Justice?—Numa is gone to "hide his diminished Head." Whither the willing Victims to their Country's Safety? Decius, Paulus, and Curius fall a ready Prey to Oblivion. Whither the Patron of Learning?—Hast thou fled, Augustus? Indeed: And "blushing drops his Wreath" at the more illustrious Name of William. The fortuitous Title of Inheritance often serves as a Ladder, upon which Demerit may climb up to Honours, and the Crown, though thrice refused, is but a doubtful Evidence of Sincerity. Yet William challenged not the Preference under the Sanction of the Nassau Race, but under the Protection of the Nassau Virtues. Nor did he buy the Devoirs of a Parasite to make a Parade of his Integrity, but under the Shield of Innocence defied the Shafts of Calumny. What is it to us, that no Footsteps of victorious Rage were left in his Camp, no Tincture of Monarchal Pride stained his Royal Purple, and, when with eager Haste he thundered on the Foe, with eager Haste he lent the Hand of Mercy to raise him up? The

Horror of Bellona shocks the Solemnity of this Day, and the milder Influence of Minerva demands the Character of William, as free from the Bustle of martial Life.—It shines with the Eclat of more than Roman Virtue, unclouded by Roman Vice. Nature seems to have reanimated him with all the Glory of his Ancestry. The Ravages of Superstition began to lose their Force and Fury, when this Prince embarked in the Cause of Religion. Numerous Conspiracies were projected, numerous Snares laid against his Life: But the Favour of Heaven put forth a Star to lead him into the Path of Security, gave him Power to tread upon the young Lion, and the Adder, and look! Whatsoever he hath done, it hath prospered.

The Flowers, which, without his Care, had blushed unseen, he transplanted into this his own fair Garden: The latent Gem, which soon had mouldered into Dust, is here prepared to glitter on the Crown: Nay, the Fount is here struck out, where the Muses choose to inhabit. *Cadmus instructed Greece in Letters, and Greece was grateful: Triptolemus first opened to the astonished World the Treasures of the teeming Field, and the astonished World demonstrated their Gratitude by following his Example: But can we, the Offspring of his Care, mention the Name of William, and not be enraptured with his Praise? Dare we not, with heart-felt Joy, admire his Virtues, his amazing Virtues? Methinks I read in the Looks of this infant Throng a Desire to speak, methinks, they all unite their Voices, and dictate to me, what they feel. “How happy,” say they, “are we under the Shadow of the Royal Wing? It matters not to us, though “the World be made for Cæsar,” provided we can find a Refuge in the Royal Favour. *To him it is perhaps owing, that the savage Indian is not now defiling this holy Spot, exulting in barbarous Triumph over his captive Fellow Creature, pinioned at the Stake of Slaughter, and panting with an impious Thirst after the unhappy Victim’s Blood. Even the British Lions felt the Greatness of their Charge: William and Mary, the unalienable Object of his Love, were entrusted to their Care.” No Medean Charm could stupify their Vigilance: The golden Fleece of Heaven rested in impregnable

Security. The Art of Raphael might picture the unfurrowed Snow, as an Emblem of Chastity, or paint the speaking, correspondent, Glances of the Eye, as Symbols of true Affection; but Invention itself would be baffled in its Attempts, to rival her Innocence, or the tender Regard of their united Hearts, by Fable or Allusion."

But alas! how frail, how fickle is the State of sublunary Things! how like the transient Colours of the fleeting Bow! And yet we foolishly imagine, that Summer Scenes can bloom amid the Storms of Winter, give ourselves Credit for the Morrow, and with the Falcon soar in the empty Space of Hope, till the Object of our Prey eludes us. "Fair laughed the Morn:" Wrapt in pleasing Fancy, we fondly thought, as Heaven had restored to us a William in a Norborne, some Guardian Angel would have warded off the fatal Blow. This sweet Deception played before our Eyes in all its fairy Mazes, led us from Scene to Scene, pictured Joy behind, Joy in endless Perspective, till at last the Enchantment ceased, when we heard the Knell of our Friend, our Pattern, our Botetourt. We beheld him pale, as afflicted Patience on a Monument. We touched the Hand, which once smoothed the rugged Pillow of Disease: 'Twas cold. We closed the Eye, that once shed the pitying Tear: 'Twas quenched. The Voice which once infused Balm into the wounded Spirit, now spoke no more. Man! foolish Man! does thy Heart exult, should Fame herald thee abroad, the Hero of thee Age, should animated Busts bespeak a pompous Parentage, or gilded Roofs receive thee, as their Lord! For a Moment stop thy Career, approach, where Berkley lies, approach where Berkley is intombed, and see the Vanity of human Expectations. This great Man—great let me call him—was placed on the Pinnacle of Admiration. He had Wealth, sufficient to glut even Avarice itself, and Titles to lull asleep the most restless Ambition. But he coveted Riches, merely to consecrate them by a proper Use, he desired Authority, only to enforce his Example, and what he wished for he received, as the golden Censer receives its Frankincense, to "spread a sacred Gale of Blessings around on all." He kept his Eyes, steadfast on the End, and Aim, of his Being.

from his Piety, his Presence, our sacred Chapel derived a daily Lustre, and, though his Attention to the Commands of his Maker could not disarm Death of his Power, yet at least did it disarm him of his Terrors. He thought himself, as yet, but an Embryo in Existence, and that he then only was entering on the Theatre of Life, when Fate drew up the Curtain of Futurity. "The Almighty spoke." The Scene is past, and weeping Science, absorbed in Woe, pays the last Tribute of her Gratitude, a Tear. She stretches forth the Laurel, but the Laurel droops: The baleful Cypress with its funereal Gloom saddens the silent Vault. There we saw him interred, there committed to the Dust, and, while Despondence sat on every Face, in the pealing Anthem, the pensive Look, the broken Sigh, you read, you heard, that Berkley was no more. But in vain do we weep for him, since

" The dread Path once trod,
 " Heaven lifts its everlasting Portals high,
 " And bids the pure in Heart behold their GOD."

But, my Fellow Students, how can we better solace ourselves for the Loss of our Friend, than by endeavouring not to need him?—What avail the hidden Treasures of the Mine, if fettered Indolence dissuade you from the Question? What avails the yellow Harvest, if the Husbandman denies his Sickle? "Beast, Bird, Air, Fire, the Heavens, the rolling Worlds, all Nature lives by Action." Nothing lies at Rest, but Death, and Ruin, nothing can purchase Ease, and Quiet, but Industry, and Perseverance. "Who would suffer the Slings, and Arrows of outrageous Fortune, who would bear the Whips, and Scorns of Time, the Oppressor's Wrong, the proud Man's Contumely, or groan, and sweat under a weary Life, but that the Hopes of an undisturbed Asylum for impotent Old-Age, cheered his drooping Spirits in the round of Misery?"—"The Heart-Ache, and the thousand natural Shocks, which Flesh is Heir to," daily prove the Insufficiency of earthly Bliss, and Reason bids us crop its Pleasures, as we pass through this Vale of Tears. But before we can enjoy them, we must labour to know, where they bloom, how

to unmask the Deceit of Ruin, which bristles with its Bed of Thorns, disguised by the false Appearance of the Rose. Consult your Breasts, and tell me, if Pleasure lies in the Smiles of Beauty: Tell if the precious Moments of Mortality were intended to be sacrificed at the Shrine of Lust, or if Duty enjoins us to tread in the Footsteps of the Brutes. This cannot be your Creed, these cannot be your Wishes. You are reasonable Beings, and can therefore steel yourselves against the envenomed Dart. Envenomed indeed; for, like the deadly Present of Nessus, it burns, and burns, and will for ever burn. Whither then shall we seek for Pleasure? In the brimming Goblet? —In the brimming Goblet seek for Destruction: In the brimming Goblet lay down the Distinction of Humanity, and in the midnight Revel call forth the Beasts to associate with their new Relation. For, can the blushing Cup afford one cordial Drop to Remorse, give an Opiate to Pain, and “steep the Senses in Forgetfulness?” It may cheat us of our Remorse, it may cheat us of our Pain, as we quaff the luscious Potion; yet in the End it does but dissolve a Pearl which the combined Wealth of the World cannot repurchase, it does but open new Sources of Misery, rushing with redoubled Force. Let us not put it to the Trial: Let not the Examples of those, who have miscarried, speak with as little Credit as the Prophecies of Cassandra, and thus will Youth arrive at true Philosophy, real Pleasure, and solid Happiness. Arise, renounce the Errors of your Age, and approve yourselves worthy of Royal Patronage. If past Hours have escaped, unimproved, quit not the present Opportunity, but, like the holy Patriarch, clasp the parting Angel to thy Bosom, until he bless thee. Let future Statesmen, future Lawyers, future Divines here spring up, but such Statesmen, such Lawyers, such Divines, as shall strive to do Honour to their Family, their Country, and this, their *Alma Mater*.