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Dis Leitation - Encouragement dies to Wath and Senins Unigenoraria

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When we look alroad into the world, we, some uptly precine how few there are who have gained that hight of knowledge and usefulners, to which all might attain. Hence, there seems to exist, within as, a natural tendency to admine the man, who, by the powers of a cultivated mind; lan astonish the world! and indeed we are forced to do this, without taking into Consideration the as-sistance which he may have had, in his advancement.

Ly deanh the benerage offered him, and become great, what &Motions must spring up, within as when we look at that man, whowithout one friend, save Patience, to enlourage him; one arm, but
that of determination, to sustain him; or one templing price,
but that of tril pto uward him; bursts the strong fetters of advensity; sumounts all difficulties, vises with a steady flight, for
about his fellow men and lolms a hattons distress or sources
a people's indignation by his Eloquence, and humbles
a houghty world, by his Mod.

amples, whose fewers has but Encreased their lustre and hilliancy, and the Claims of those who might be come of this class forms the subject of this dissertation.

It is to be much regretted that the poor, cither ignerant, of their own powers or disheartened, by the many unpropetious Eineun stances surrounding them, or beliving that all their own efforts will only tend to sent them deeper in Embarass ment, will solame by sealmit themselves fit Aubycots to intellectual supinemess and filless remorse. We landidly believe that, lould they bewell Conveneed of their quat and immutal powers, which now lay dormant, and of their ability to improve them, we should have for less of igns sauce, sice, and misery to lament, and more of intellectual and maal greatness to admin, in the world.

It is remembered in the history of the part and known amound the things of the present that many of the qualent men men Superior in intellect and morals that have adorned the Walds annals were men who were devaith of all which in ourday, too after Constitutes hoppiness, save an innincible thirt after knowl Edge and as an immable determination to acque it in spectrof.

all opposition.

the might the names of many who governed by the processorthy passion, this heartifying ambition, to excell how, notwithstanding the ridicule of Companions, the opposition of the World, - olstacles which in our day would disheaten and terrify us were usen to such a proud preminence in Leterature Science, Politics, mination; from the Schollar, Exclamations either, of great low of dup, abiding Enny. Medisin pardon, for leting from amoung the many the case of Prof Heyne who, with persevering toil, a wealthy determination and a sure step pose, from the humble accupation of a poor weaver to the most honourable affice in the gurtly proud institution of Gottingen! Of Durace who from an

illiterate peasant belane one of the most honour abligamoung the officers of a brown; of Alex Murray who regesting his site ation as the phere boy belance a disterguished prof in Edinghung; of Um gifford who above time, compelled by porerty, to work out his problems of peiers of leather handering by his martin, for adif ferent and more suitable purpose; of another took Charge of the most celebrated review in the world and he came a guide to all literary Men: of a Simpson and Figurson both very familian to enery mathematical student: Of Sanderson who though, with his pourty, deprived of sight, when a hale, gan to Edingburg its hightest Chains and Chabenged Confection with the most billiant stars in the Literary world. Such are Examples of those who well knew and Severely feet the wants of the lonefuls of life. It is not however necessary to search the records of foreign Countries of part times. We can and do find Examples in the history of our arm age and Country. the Med Scarely mention Franklin who is known to con-Engleader and familian to Encysterdent of America and whom fame is that of Science. A helon night be named. Although like Sanderson deforeved of Sight and the Comfatt of life, he has firmly identified his name, with the respection bility of Rutgers College, and with the advancement of Classi Cal Education, in America. Others might be lited but these are sufficient to show what the poor, the unfaturate, have become and to promise sur Cess to the youth, whose hopes have been seatered by adversity withing black or Bushed by Afflictions Buel hand. "he are dan offirm that the destitution of the Com

fals of life implies a like destitution of critillet Nor land any reasonable, man demy that the Cultivation of the critical lectual is as important as the Cultivation of the moral and Phisical powers.

We admit that we can form but an imperfect colea of the height of Monal or intellectual grandeur, to which every one, by his Exertions, might altain. The landidly Compessitual, with out our personal Exertions, the wealth of Proasus or the extraction of the Scipias, would but sink as diepenin the unfathornable dipths of grorance and hise but we will know that many lacking not in exertion, have, from the trant of the means of bodily support or of a equing knowledge, here compelled to weaper into ignorance, sink into misery, or fall an Early viction to havid Death.

form inthregard to him whose pourty alone prevents him from Engaging with us, the delicious puit of knowledge?

the Conoding lanker of the mind: Let the unfortunate but Exceedingly apt blind: Let the Unfortunate but Exceedingly apt blind: Let the Young man who from his Exceedingly labour and midnight toil fathe sustenances, the body and Mind has subjected himself to the Sparly distance has been with demonaical fung, sets, on her throne, and loughts to scorne the Convulsare throse of her defeated victim: Let the spectre of the once many youth who go aded on by the horid famine of the Mind, has be come a victim to the loaths one whahlants of the Grave.

Let the still small voice within as answer.

They will say that am Enlamagement and aid is due

to the improvement of anothers talents. They will tell us in language not to be mesunderstood, and with a reproach not to be dioregarded that to our charge, must restymuch of the mis Ery of the human race. They would proint as to the graves of thousands who, for that knowledge which came not, have Wasted their bodies and shipmrecked their commutal souls. They lould tell us of many, who on we have known, who have been com pelled, for want of assistance, to turn from the pursuit of knowl Edge while we man faturate, have wethheld, from them, that small aid which, while it would have Saved them many years of tail has only assisted as in our our selfish indulgence, in unging us nearer distruction. These would certainly be the mildert answers we could receive, in regard to those who have toiled, suffered anadica to a Egune that feart of the mind that pure banquet of the Soul which would fit them for a higher, holier, a more useful, and distinguished sphere of action. I amaroun that I have Chasen for my subject one which lacks not of war propularity which savours of in trustin, and which gains for me not a evenning smile a landuring sentiment but a finger of storm a term of uproach. It pains me not however, to leave my duty nor should it pain me to proclaim it Aged men - your lourse of life is marly um, and your goal is already in sight. Let the remaining portion bedistinguished, by one act, towards the poor hus mon they youth, which while it will make your death bed Soft as downy pellows are will gouse many a glad heart to gurl forth its Jay and will highten many stars, in the firmament of that would to which you are fast hastening. young men - devote but a portion of those means, which too often are squandered in self gratefication and ingury to the Education of that less futurate youth whois your equal in energuspect, some the passessing of this worlds goods, and you will discour much to bindyout to honour pirtue and religion. Christian - oley that present of the bible in behalf of the poor youth, and you will do much, by your assistance, to adorne your own life and to add a hight and living testimony to the purity of your holy religion. Let no one of us withhold from him who now stands a suppliant at the door of the aged, the youth the shilan Thrapirt, the Christian, and the schallar that aid the denial of which That Enriches as but makes him poor indeed" Let us all determine that if the penilence of the present and the maltice of the feeting can Expiate the neglect of the part, we shall lean the world highter in intellect; holier insprinciple: man Godlike in presticks than when we entered the theatre of action and we shall leave america for beyond her sister kingdens in the march of Intellectual and made improvement. Thus as we depart, when depart we must we will do so happy froud, with the reflection that we leave a nation great: a people prosperans; but more particularly the paor virtuais, cutellectual, triumphants

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Commencement Oration of William Woodward, Class of 1838
Transcribed by Benjamin T. Patch, August 2012
Edited by Alix Miller

Encouragement Due to Worth and Genius

When we look abroad into the world we, sorrowfully, perceive how few there are who have gained that height of knowledge and usefulness, to which all might attain. Hence, there seems to exist, within us, a natural tendency to admire the man who, by the powers of a cultivated mind, can astonish the world; and indeed we are forced to do this, without taking into consideration the assistance which he may have had in his advancement.

If such are our feelings on beholding the man, who has only drank the beverage, offered him, and become great, what emotions must spring up, within us, when we look at that man, who without one friend, save Patience, to encourage him; one arm, but that of determination, to sustain him; or one tempting prize, but that of toil, to reward him; bursts the strong fetters of adversity; surmounts all difficulty; rises with a steady flight, far above his fellow man, and calms a nation's distress or rouses a people's indignation by his Eloquence, and humbles a haughty world by his nod.

Of this latter class we have seen many striking examples, whose fewness has but increased their luster and brilliancy, and the claims of those who might become of this class forms the subject of this dissertation.

It is to be much regretted that the poor, either ignorant of their own powers or disheartened by the many unpropitious circumstances surrounding them, or believing that all their own efforts will only tend to sink them deeper in embarrassment, will so tamely submit themselves fit subjects to intellectual [supineness?] and fruitless remorse. We candidly believe that, could they be well convinced of their great and immortal powers, which now lay dormant, and of their ability to improve them, we should have far less of ignorance, vice, and misery to lament, and more of intellectual and moral greatness to admire, in the world.

It is remembered in the history of the past and known among the things of the present that many of the greatest men, men superior in intellect and morals, that have adorned the World's annals, were men who were devoid of all which, in our day, too often constitutes happiness save an invincible thirst after knowledge and as an invincible determination to acquire it in spite of all opposition.

We might cite the names of many who governed by this praiseworthy passion, this beautifying ambition, to excel, have, notwithstanding the ridicule of companions, the opposition of the world – obstacles which in our day would dishearten and terrify us – risen to such a proud pre-eminence in Literature, Science, Politics and Religion as to call forth, from the less fortunate, voices of admiration; from the scholar exclamations either of great love or of deep abiding envy. We desire pardon for citing, from among the many, the case of Prof. Heyne who, with persevering toil, a worthy determination, and a sure step, rose, from the humble occupation of a poor weaver to the most honourable office in the justly proud institution of Gottingen; Of Duvall who, from an

illiterate peasant became one of the most honourable among the officers of a Crown; of Alex Murray who, rejecting his situation, as shepherd boy, became a distinguished prof. in Edinburg; of Wm. Gifford who, at one time, compelled by poverty, to work out his problems of pieces of leather handed him by his master, for a different and more suitable purpose; of another took charge of the most celebrated review in the world and became a guide to all literary men; of a Simpson and Ferguson both very familiar to every mathematical student; of Sanderson who though, with his poverty, deprived of sight when a babe, gave to Edinburg its brightest charms and challenged competition with the most brilliant stars in the Literary world. Such are examples of those who well knew and severely felt the wants of the comforts of life.

It is not however necessary to search the records of foreign countries or of past times. We can and do find examples in the history of our own age and Country.

We need scarcely mention Franklin who is known to every reader and familiar to every student in America and whose fame is that of science. A. Nelson might be named. Although like Sanderson, deprived of sight and the comforts of life, he has firmly identified his name, with the respectability of Rutgers College, and with the advancement of classical education in America.

Others might be cited but these are sufficient to show what the poor, the unfortunate, have become and to promise success to the youth, whose hopes have been scattered by Adversity's withering blast or crushed by Affliction's cruel hand.

No one dare affirm that the destitution of the com-

forts of life implies a like destitution of intellect, nor can any reasonable man deny that the cultivation of the intellectual is as important as the cultivation of the moral and physicals powers.

We admit that we can form an imperfect idea of the height of moral or intellectual grandeur, to which everyone by his exertions, might attain. We candidly confess that, without our personal exertions, the wealth of Croesus or the [extraction?] of [Scipios?], would but sink us deeper in the unfathomable depths of ignorance and vice, but we well know that many, lacking not in exertion, have from the want of the means of bodily support or of acquiring knowledge been compelled to relapse into ignorance, sink into misery, or fall an early victim to horrid Death.

Conscious as we are of this fact, have we no duty to perform, with regard to him whose poverty alone prevents him from enjoying, with us, the delicious fruit of knowledge?

Let the orphan, whose cry is for that which will check the corroding canker of the mind: Let the unfortunate but exceedingly apt blind; Let the young man, who, from his excessive daily labor and midnight toil for the sustenance of the body and mind has subjected himself to the [charity?] disease which racking his system, with demoniacal fury, sets, on her throne, and laughs to scorn the convulsive throes of her dejected victim; Let the spectre of the once manly youth who, goaded on by the horrid famine of the mind, has become a victim of the loathsome inhabitants of the Grave.

Let the still small voice within us answer. They will say that our encouragement and aid is due

to the improvement of another's talents. They will tell us in language, not to be misunderstood, and with a reproach, not to be disregarded, that to our charge, must rest much of the misery of the human race. They would point us to the graves of the thousands who, for that knowledge which came not, have wasted their bodies and shipwrecked their immortal souls. They could tell us of many, whom we have known, who have been compelled, for want of assistance, to turn from the pursuit of knowledge while we more fortunate have withheld from them that small aid which, while it would have saved them many years of toil, has only assisted us, in our own selfish indulgences, in urging us nearer destruction.

These would certainly be the mildest answers we could receive, in regard to those who have toiled, suffered and died to acquire that "feast of the mind that pure banquet of the Soul" which would fit them for a higher, holier, a more useful, and distinguished sphere of action.

I am aware that I have chosen for my subject one, which lacks not of unpopularity, which savors of intrusion, and which gains for me not a winning smile or concerning sentiment but a finger of scorn or term of reproach. It pains me not, however, to learn my duty, nor should it pain me to proclaim it.

Aged Men – your course of life is nearly run, and your goal is already in sight. Let the remaining portion be distinguished, by one act, towards the poor but warn thy youth, which while it will make your deathbed

"soft as downy pillows air," will cause many a glad heart to gush forth its joy and will

brighten many stars, in the firmament of that world to which you are fast hastening.

Young Men – devote but a portion of those means, which, too often, are squandered in self gratification and injury, to the education of that less fortunate youth, who is your equal in every respect, save the possession of this world's goods, and you will discover much to bind you to honor virtue and religion.

Christian – obey that precept of the Bible, in behalf of the poor youth, and you will do much, by your assistance to adorn your own life and to add a bright and living testimony to the purity of your holy religion.

Let no one of us withhold from him who now stands a supplicant at the door of the aged, the youth, the philanthropist, the Christian, and the scholar that aid, the denial of which

"Not enriches us but makes him poor indeed."

Let us all determine that, if the penitence of the present and the practice of the future can expiate the neglect of the past, we shall leave the world brighter in intellect; holier in principle; more Godlike in practice than when we entered the theater of action and we shall leave America far beyond her sister Kingdoms in the march of Intellectual and moral improvement.

Thus as we depart, when depart we must, we will do so happy, proud with the reflection that we leave a nation great: a <u>people</u> prosperous: but more particularly the poor virtuous, intellectual, triumphant.

Wm. R. Woodward