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Philanthropy.

The attainment of happiness is the great desideratum of the human family—
 The grand focus in which are concentrated all our hopes and for which we exert all our energies. In order that we may attain this precious boon an All-Wise Providence has endowed us with faculties for loving and benefiting our fellow-creatures. We are so constituted and our relations to those around us are such that we experience most happiness in communicating happiness to others. Hence no one of all the sentiments to which ^{we} are governed is so productive of happiness as Philanthropy—
 Why there is something sacred—something wielding a magical influence in the very name. It falls upon the ear like some fairy's song, or like the melodious strains of the Eolian harp at even. It is a gem planted by the hand of God himself on our "sin-cursed" earth.

It buds and blooms, ^{and} the fruit of ^{it} which shall only be fully realized in eternity. There are those, however, who pretend to say that man is naturally indiffer-ent to the welfare of his fellow-creatures and what is a great deal worse, that he is instinctively the enemy of man. As a proof of this, they point to the many dark and bloody scenes of the world's history - to the many instances where -

"Man's inhumanity to man

Makes countless thousands mourn"

The human victims daily sacrificed to gratify the superstition of some barbarous tribe - The savage hordes of New Zealand feasting on the flesh of their fellow-men - The Indians of America torturing their prisoners in every conceivable way and enjoying a diabolical pleasure in beholding their torments - The kidnapper tearing the poor negro from his wife and children - from home and all its endearments - The unfeeling task-master and overseer lashing unmercifully his degraded slaves - The blood-thirsty inquisitors insulting their

victims in the name of the "most merciful
Savior" - the midnight assassin treacherously
plunging his dagger into the bosom of
his neighbor - these and a thousand like
iniquitous scenes which have disgrac-
ed the earth prove clearly that this
principle of Philanthropy is restricted
in its operation and depressed far,
far below the standard which its
great Author has so justly claimed
for it. It however has an exist-
ence - Its gentle feelings are the
same in every case and in every
period of life. They bloom though
unconsciously even in the bosom
of the lisping infant - The
artful Hockanuttas trained to no
code of morals instinctively shrink
from the murder of an inno-
cent man. Howard, who was "second
to none in the cause of humanity
and benevolence" - who so much im-
itated Christ by traveling from place
to place, and administering to the
wants of the people, fell a martyr in

The noble cause of Philanthropy --
Such self-sacrificing benevolence is
not common. He counted not friends
on the land of his birth dear, so he might
afford consolation to the distressed:
As thousands blessed him while living
millions will lament him now dead
A greater loss his country, may I not
say the whole world has seldom sus-
tained. Howard is no more but
his principles can never perish.

That man whose heart shrill not
at the woes of his fellow-men, and
who listens not to the story of his
fortunes with interest -- that man
who, seeing his neighbor in distress and
by some kind deed, some gentle
word or tear of sympathy can soothe
that distress, and refuses to bestow it
deserves to be branded with infamy.

Were this divine principle in
full operation among the intelligen-
ces who people the globe, this world of
inhumanity would be transformed in-
to a paradise -- the moral desert would
become a fruitful field and

"Glossom as the rose" - Eden in all
its loveliness and beauty would
again appear. Nations would leave
the art of war no more. For the sword
would be substituted the plow-
share and for the spear the prun-
ing hook. No longer would human
sacrifices bleed on pagan altars - no
longer would the New Zealanders
feast on the flesh of their enemies
- no longer would the mothers
of China imbue their hands
in the blood of their innocent
offspring. Lusty despotism would
throw aside its iron scepter and
the nations would be ruled with
the law of love. The fires of the
inquisition would cease to be
kindled and the supposed heret-
ic would no longer be consigned
to the horrors of a gloomy cham-
ber. Peace would descend from
heaven to dwell with men. Prospe-

ity would follow in her train
Science would enlarge its bound-
aries and shed its benign influ-
ence on all ranks. What hap-
piness would then result. It
would be the motto of every man,
and when his race on earth had
terminated - when his feet came
to dip the mystic waters of Jordan,
with ecstatic bliss he would ex-
claim:

I care not whether death be sky or sea
Or fairer earth where erst the roses bloom
I sleep: if friends as my poor life they scan
Read only this "He was a friend to man"
Dickinson Coll. Josiah F. Kennedy.
July 9th 1855

J. T. Kennedy

Aug 9th / 55 -
Rich. Cole

Commencement Oration of Josiah F. Kennedy, Class of 1855
Transcribed by Chris Altieri, May 2008
Edited by Tristan Deveney, June 2008

Philanthropy

The attainment of happiness is the great desideratum of the human family—The grand focus in which are concentrated all our hopes and upon which we exert all our energies. In order that we may attain this precious boon our All-Wise Providence has endowed us with faculties for loving and benefiting our fellow creatures. We are so constituted and our relations to those around us are such that we experience most happiness in communicating happiness to others. Hence no one of all the sentiments with which we are governed is so productive of happiness as Philanthropy-- Why there is something sacred—something wielding a magical influence in the very name. It falls upon the ear like some fairy's song, or like the melodious strains of the Aeolian harp at [illegible word –even?]. It is a gem planted by the hand of God himself on our “sin-[illegible word]” earth.

It buds and blooms, and the fruit of it shall only be fully realized in eternity There are those, however, who pretend to say that man is naturally indifferent to the welfare of his fellow creatures and what is a great deal worse, that he is instinctively the enemy of man. As a proof of this, they point to the many dark and bloody scenes of the world's history—to the many instances where—

“Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn”

The human victims daily sacrificed to gratify the superstition of some barbarous tribe—the savage hordes of New Zealand feasting on the flesh of their fellow man—the Indians of America torturing their prisoners in every conceivable way and enjoying a diabolical pleasure in beholding their torments—the kidnapper tearing the poor negro from his wife and children—from home and all its endearments the unfeeling task-master and overseer lashing unmercifully his degraded slaves—the blood-thirsty inquisitors [illegible word] their

victims in the name of the “most merciful Savior”—the midnight assassin treacherously plunging his dagger into the bosoms of his neighbor—these and a thousand like iniquitous scenes which have disgraced the earth prove clearly that this principle of Philanthropy is restricted in its operation and depressed far, far below the standard which its great Author has so justly claimed for it. It—however—has an existence-- Its gentle feelings are the same in every race and in every period of life. They bloom though unconsciously even in the bosom of the lisping infant-- The artless Pocahontas trained to no code of morals instinctively shrinks from the murder of an innocent man. Howard, who was “second to none the cause of humanity and benevolence” – who so much imitated Christ by traveling from place to place, and administering to the wants of the people, fell a martyr in

the noble cause of Philanthropy--. Such self-sacrificing benevolence is not common. He counted not friends or the land of his birth dear, so he might offer consolation to the distressed. As thousands blessed him while living millions will lament him now dead. A greater loss his country, may I not say the whole world has seldom sustained. Howard is no more but his principles can never perish.

That man whose heart [illegible word] not at the woes of his fellow –men, and who listens not to the story of his fortunes with interest—that man who, seeing his neighbor in distress and by some kind deed, some gentle word or tear of sympathy can soothe that distress, and refuses to bestow it deserves to be branded with infamy.

Were this divine principle in full operation among the intelligences who people the globe, this world of inhumanity would be transformed into a paradise—the [illegible word] desert would become a fruitful field and

“blossom as the rose”—Eden in all its loveliness and beauty would again appear. Nations would learn the art of war no more. For the sword would be substituted the plow-share and for the spear the pruning hook. No longer would human sacrifice bleed on pagan alters—no longer would the New Zealanders feast on the flesh of their enemies—no longer would the mothers of China imbue their hands in the blood of their innocent offspring. Lordly despotism would throw aside its iron scepter and the nations would be ruled with the law of love. The fires of the inquisition would cease to be kindled and the supposed heretic would no longer be consigned to the horrors of a gloomy dungeon. Peace would descend from heaven to dwell with men. Prosper-

ity would follow in her train. Science would enlarge its boundaries and shed its benign influence on all ranks. What happiness would then result. It would be the motto of every man, and when his race on earth had terminated—when his feet came to dip the mystic waters of Jordan, with exstatic bliss he would exclaim—

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July 9th 1855