

are not ashamed to go back for the fabulous charter of their legitimacy. And from that hour it has gone about among the kingdoms of the earth, working its pleasure, whether for good or for evil. You may track its lion step across the Syrian sands, when it led the fanatic hosts of Christendom to pour out their libations of blood, and sacrifice their human hecatombs, in pious worship of the Prince of Peace. Or you may find its handiwork in modern England, when it spoiled of its crown the unworthy successor of a line of kings; washed away his balm, and laid his head upon the block; turned loose an incensed people to hunt down the remnant of that old house of tyrants, and purge the realm of their unclean influence. But by and by, as if in very wantonness, reverting to its ancient faith and affections, it recalls the fugitive princes from their exile, and rebuilds the dynasty it had overthrown.

But, if the will of the people has always been the sovereign, under whatever forms it has been disguised, by whatever ministers it has exercised the functions of sovereignty, it will be asked, how are we to explain certain dark passages of the history of man? If the people have been really the master, whence came those odious institutions which have preyed from age to age, like an hereditary disease, on the aggrieved nations? How stole the serpent into the Eden of democracy? In what chamber of the people's deputies, was the order of knighthood created? What bill of rights was it that stipulated for the inviolability of the Canon and Feudal Law? What late do the articles of abdication bear, wherein the major portion of mankind, wearied with the cares of government, resign their irksome state, and sell themselves for slaves to their fellow-men? Where was the popular assembly convened, which followed up the splendid distinctions of chivalry in Europe, with the emoluments and honors of modern aristocracy; "gilding a little that was rich before," and lavishing on an overgrown peerage civil immunities, and injurious monopolies? If Public Opinion is supreme, how came in those abuses which plunder the many of wealth, and honor and freedom, to lay the costly spoils at the feet of a few? Crowns, principalities, and orders of nobility, — are these the trophies with which Public Opinion has strown its path? Yes. Even these were called into being by the word of the people. And all those political evils which have plagued the suffering race of men, first sprung into life at the will of the people, and received at its own hand their bloody commission; like fiends raised by the enchanter, whom they will shortly torment. Folly was the disease of which Public Opinion was sorely sick; Ignorance was the deadly charm by which it was bound; and is it strange that it lay powerless along the land, the victim of petty tyranny? — It was only Samson submitting his invincible locks to be confined by the fingers of Delilah with the pin of a weaver's beam. And Oh, how faithfully the old patriarch told its history, when he prophesied the fortunes of his unworthy child! "Issachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens; and he saw that rest was good, and the land, that it was pleasant, and he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant to tribute."

But these seasons of patient sufferance do not always last. And long periods of torpid quiescence are succeeded by awful reactions. It is this moment when Public Opinion changes, — this turning of the tide, — that is the sublime moment in the annals of nations.

"Its step is as the tread
Of a flood that leaves its bed,
And its march it is rude desolation."

It bursts through the mounds and levées that dammed it up, and strikes terror into ancient societies, and institutions that lie peacefully over the land, by the roar of the inundation. It is when great events are pending, when the scales of human destiny are hung out in heaven, and the eyes of

men grow dim with watching the doubtful balance, — when old systems fail, and old principles are a by-word, — when the strong attractions which keep society in its orbit are dissolved, and the winds of Passion go sighing by, — it is then that Public Opinion re-collects itself to meet the solemn emergency; leaving its ancient seats, it shakes off the dust of centuries, and carries the human race forward to the mark they are prepared to reach.

It was in a crisis like this, that the keys of heaven were wrested from the successors of St. Peter, and the light of the Reformation let in upon a mourning church. And when the clearer light of another age revealed the abuses still unreformed, Public Opinion invaded once more the ground that was fenced with ecclesiastical interdictions, continued the heroic work, and finally launched its little fleet of pilgrims on the main, to follow the setting sun, and lodge the floating ark on the mountains of a New World.

And here in the West, it is at the bidding of Public Opinion, that Liberty has unrolled the sky of half the globe, for her star spangled banner. It is at the same high mandate, that Science throws across our rushing streams her triumphant arches; yokes together with a Cyclopean architecture the everlasting hills, and then leads over their giddy summits the peaceful caravans of commerce.

But, with all its splendid triumphs, it is still an unsteadfast and turbulent principle, as inconstant as an individual mind. And the annals of our race are but accusing records, which show how Public Opinion has given its voluntary and omnipotent sanction to every form of crime. It has crossed great enterprises, and broken brave hearts. It has doomed to the faggot and the rack the champions of truth, and the children of God. It is as much the parent of the Holy Inquisition, and the Court of the Star-Chamber, as of Bible Societies, or the Royal Academy.

What, then, is our security? Can we rear no bulwark? Can we dig no trench around our noblest and most venerable establishments of Church and State? Are we all embarked in a frail vessel, and may this blind Polyphemus sink us at pleasure with a swing of his arm? Where is the origin of Public Opinion? It is in private opinion. Each great national feeling, wave after wave, has been first the opinion of a few, the opinion of one. Here, then, is the great check, and safeguard, and regulator, in individual character and influence. Obviously, no external force can act on the all-surrounding energy of a public mind. In vain would we plant sentries, or patrol a watch about this unmastered power. The way to explode a magazine is to apply the match to a kernel. The way to move the public, is to affect individuals. Every honest citizen whom we can enlighten; every mind throughout the nation, by which right views are entertained, and proper feelings cherished, is one more improver of Public Opinion.

Let it be deeply considered by us, since it thus originated, how much every superior understanding is its natural counsellor and guide; and to what extent such men as Swift, Burke, and Mirabeau were the ministers of this real Autocrat; that no longer those titular gentlemen, who, in London and Paris, on solemn days, wear crowns and solemn dresses, but Canning, and Scott, and Malthus, are now the sovereigns of the world. It is in this fact, that Public Opinion has grown wiser, and will continue to become more informed, that I find the superiority and the hope of our times. And the humblest individual, aware that his opinions are a portion of the sovereign law of the land, would do wrong to conceive his influence to be insignificant. It is not insignificant. Not a thought you think, not a syllable you utter, but may, in its consequences, affect the prosperity of your country. Our world is framed like a vast whispering gallery, — one of those curious structures of human skill, where every breath is audible, and the word that at first was faintly spoken, scarce trusted to the silent air, is sent swiftly onward and around the vaulted walls; a thousand babbling echoes repeat and prolong the sound, till it shakes the globe with its thunder.

Come out of your individual shell. Give your thoughts to the interests

of your race, and, like the genie in Oriental story, who, creeping out of the casket of a few inches, in which he had been imprisoned, regained his colossal proportions, you will grow to the stature of a godlike intelligence. Nor will you fail of your reward. Those who, by their mighty influence, exert a wise control over the will of the people, always receive from the public opinion they have enlightened, their just meed of praise. It is a spectacle we can never behold without emotion, the supremacy of one mind over this concentrated intelligence. It claims our reluctant reverence for characters in which the amiable virtues are wanting. The moral merit of Cromwell is exceedingly questionable; but his astonishing mastery of the public mind, and the energies he wielded in the cause of liberty, have procured him the endless gratitude of freemen.

"For, if we would speak true,
Much to the man is due,
Who from his private gardens, where
He lived reserved and austere,
As if his highest plot,
To plant the Bergamot,
Could by industrious valor climb
To ruin the great work of Time,
And cast the kingdoms old
Into another mould."

But, where virtues and talents have alike contributed to invest an individual with this authority over his cotemporaries, public opinion rejoices to pay its instructor a hearty tribute of deserved praise. It has lately been signally manifested, in the deep sympathy in our loss, on the resignation of his seat at the head of the university, by one, for so many years, its ornament and pride. I cannot speak of President Kirkland without a crowd of affectionate recollections, which, I am sure, are familiar to all who hear me. For he was one of that truly fine genius which identified his character with the institution in which he sat. Whilst he remained here, his elegant mind rained influence on all that harbored in its halls; and it was not easy for dullness to come under his eye without being sweetened and refined. The stranger who saw him, went away glad that there was so much savor in human wit. He was a living refutation of that ancient calumny, that colleges make men morose and unskilful in the science of human nature. He had a countenance that was like a benediction. And what with his liberal heart, his rich conversation, and the grace of his accomplished manners, he reflected a light upon this seminary, which a just community have not failed, and shall not fail to repay with lasting honor.

Example.

OF A VALEDICTORY ENGLISH ORATION.

SECOND DEGREE — *Master's Oration.*

In selecting for our topic, "The Spirit that should accompany our Republican Institutions," let it not be anticipated that we are bringing hither a political tirade to fret and rave about ourselves, or that we mean to run mad at the sound of our own voice, as it pronounces the word "republic." We have not arrayed ourselves, gladiator like, to attack or defend public measures, — to despatch in the few moments allotted us all the political questions that now interest us as a people, — or to set right the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of our government, in the short period of twenty minutes. We come not to battle with politicians, whoever they may be, and whether they stand on either bank, or in the middle of the Rubicon.

We come not to sweep down regiments of them with a sentence, or to blow up the country with a magazine of words. No; we would dwell upon this spirit, without taking the word "politics" upon our lips. These have entered into and contaminated every other place, — let the house of God, the temple of literature, be sacred a little longer. Let there be one spot left, where rational, thinking man may retreat from political, talking man. We will not be the first to tread it with a sacrilegious step. No; in the spirit in which the prophet of old put off his shoes on Mount Horeb, "because the ground whereon he stood was holy," we would venture in this place to speak of that spirit which should guide and animate us in the enjoyment of our peculiar institutions.

And addressing, as we trust, nay, as we know, a republican assembly, born under the influence, surrounded and supported by the spirit of free institutions, what inquiry can be more important than that which opens to them the way in which they can most safely keep, and most perfectly enjoy these institutions? The work of attaining them is accomplished. The battle is over, the victory is won, and our fathers are at rest. These institutions are now ours. Praise cannot make them more, nor detraction less so. They are ours, bought and paid for. But they are ours under a solemn responsibility, — under none other than the trust that we will preserve, exalt, and extend them. But we shall discharge this high and honorable trust, only as we hold them in a right spirit, and exercise them upon proper principles. We speak not extravagantly, then, when we say, that in maintaining and holding sacred that spirit which will adorn and perpetuate these institutions, and give them the only thing they want, their free course, consists the whole duty of our generation; and that when this ceases to be important and interesting in our eyes, we cease to deserve them. Honor and gratitude have been to those who attained, — honor and gratitude shall be to those who preserve them.

The spirit, then, in the first place, whose claims we would advocate, is a spirit of national modesty. We use the term in distinction from that national arrogance or vanity which we deem unbecoming and dangerous.

We are aware that the history of our country is a peculiar one, — peculiar in its interest and importance, and not to us only, but to the world. We have read, with a thrilling interest, the story of our father's doings, dwelt upon their glorious anticipations, and hailed the fulfilment of them, as year after year they have been developed. But where, in all this, is the occasion of arrogance to ourselves and denunciation of others, as if we stood on the only elevation, and, what is more, had reached that elevation ourselves? Our duty, we have said, is to adorn our institutions; ostentation is its very opposite, — to diffuse them abroad; detraction of others will defeat us. But who are they who would thus stride the earth like a colossus? Where is the history of their toil, and danger, and suffering? Where are the monuments of their personal valor and heroism, and splendid achievement? Where is the record of their martyrdom? We have seen the conceited descendant of some rich ancestor, decked in the robes which that ancestor has toiled that he might wear, — fluttering about, the puppet of an hour, yet walking, as he imagines, a god amidst the surrounding pigmies, — talking as if the world were made for him alone, because, forsooth, he really cannot conceive, — as certainly no other can, — how he could have been made for the world. We have seen, I say, this poor imitation of humanity, and looked with contempt on what we could not pity. But what do they more, or better, who, in the costume of national vanity, are stalking about amongst the nations of the earth, vainly declaiming about *their* institutions, — theirs, because they happened to be born where these had been planted, — and sweeping down the institutions of others, for the modest yet cogent reason of the Pharisee, that they are not as their own.

But we would see amongst us, as a nation, that modesty which we admire so much in domestic life. Individual modesty, — we have all seen her, —

is a lovely damsel, with simple mien, retiring manners, and chaste array. There is nothing about her to remind one of a flower garden in distress, or a rainbow bewitched. What is gaudy, she hates,—display is her abomination. The scene of her glory is at home, acting, not speaking her praises. This is individual modesty, and national modesty is the same damsel grown into a discreet and stately matron. She has changed her robes, it is true, but not their character nor her own. She is still the same, only more perfect in her principles, as she is more extended in her influence,—seen only in the unassuming deportment of her children,—heard only in the voices of their enterprise,—known, as every good tree is, only by her fruits. We would honor the matron, as we courted the damsel. We would hold her fast, for she is our ornament;—we would love her, for she is altogether lovely.

We would not,—for it is the spirit that, in the second place, we would advocate,—we would not, for we dare not, decry that national pride, honest, open, high-minded pride, which originates in self respect, is nurtured by all the generous sympathies that gather round the name of our native land, and which brings forth as its fruits national enterprise and strength and what is more, national virtue. National pride in this sense is patriotism, and who shall decry patriotism? But the vanity that we condemn is opposite in its every look, feature, and gesture, to this honorable virtue, and it is because we think it so, that we do condemn it. Vanity is mean,—patriotism is noble. Vanity is dangerous,—patriotism is our bulwark. Vanity is weakness,—patriotism is power. The organ of the one is the tongue,—that of the other the heart. An old poet has said of a somewhat different passion,—and there are those who hear me who can bear witness to its truth,—that

“Passions are likened best to floods and streams;
The shallow murmur,—but the deep are dumb;
So when affections yield discourse, it seems
The bottom is but shallow whence they come.
They that are rich in words must needs discover,
They are but poor in that which makes a lover.”

And there is philosophy as well as poetry in the idea.

Is it asked, then, who is the friend, the firm, true-hearted, ever-to-be-trusted friend of our institutions? We would answer, not he who is perched upon the house-top, shouting hosannas to the four corners of the earth, and proclaiming to the world, “Lo, here, and here alone, perfection has taken up her abode;” but rather he who has placed himself at the bottom, in the most honorable of all attitudes, that of strenuous yet unassuming exertion;—not he who talks, but he who does the most. Is it asked again, where, then, are we to look for the praises of these institutions at home, and their acceptance and diffusion abroad? We would answer again, not to the dangerous sweeping panegyrics of us and ours, or the more dangerous sweeping denunciations of all others and all things else, but to the good they have done, the evil they have prevented, the happiness they have diffused, the misery they have healed or mitigated. Ask of honest industry, why she labors with a strong hand and a smiling face. Ask of commerce, why she dances, like a sailor boy, in the breeze, joyous and impatient. Listen to the busy, gladsome hum of art mingling with the voice of nature on every stream, and the song of contentment blending with and perfecting the melody. Behold education, the inmate of the humblest dwelling,—man enlightened, thinking for himself, and worshipping his maker in the only acceptable way, his own way. Look at yourselves, your children, your homes. And if you see not, hear not, feel not, the praises of these institutions in all these, eloquence cannot varnish them. Let them be gone, they are not what they seem to be.

The spirit, again, whose claims we would advocate as an accompaniment of our institutions, is a spirit of national moderation. The theory, and may it ever be the practical effect of these institutions, is this, that every free

member of the community, be he high or low, rich or poor, has a right, equal and unquestionable, to think, speak, and act upon every measure originating among and interesting us as a people. And, still further, the full development of these institutions demands the fair and unshackled exertion of this right. Take this single fact in connexion with the history of man. What is the history of man, we mean political man, as he is a member of the community and the subject of government? It is but a history of parties,—of this side and that side of some undefinable line, the direction of which no earthly philosophy can trace. Yes; strange as it may seem, and inconsistent with that rank in creation to which man has laid claim, ever since the time when Abraham and Lot went one to the right hand and the other to the left, men have divided themselves into parties, at the name of which the human tongue falters, and the human understanding shrinks aghast. And this has been the case, while, instead of a general freedom of speech and action, a few only of men, a very few, have been acknowledged to be human beings, and all the rest have been left to make themselves out so. What is to be the consequence now, when all are admitted to be so? Jarring and confusion, and consequent destruction, have made up the story of mankind, while tyranny bridled their tongues, and despotism hung like a dead weight upon their spirits. What is to be the result now, when tyranny and despotism have been hurled “to the moles and the bats,” and the tongue and the spirit of every man are admitted, required to be free? The history of our race, we perceive, reads us but a sorry lesson upon the subject. And the history of our own country forms by no means a perfect exception to the rule; for an old Spanish author, not a hundred years ago, declared, “that the air of that country ycleped America, was marvellously infectious, and inclined men’s minds to wrangling and contention.”

But the spirit which, if any can, must put an end to this hitherto close alliance between freedom and contention,—the spirit which, like our liberties, is nowhere to be found in history, but which must spring up with and protect them, is a spirit of national moderation,—that generous, Christian spirit, which is cool while it thinks, and charitable while it speaks and acts,—that spirit which, if experience does not sanction, reason does, and which, if to be found in no other record, is yet found and enforced in that of the pattern of all institutions—Christianity. Yes; the single consideration,—and we need no other,—the single consideration of the broad extent of our liberties, is in itself the most eloquent advocate of moderation. Perfect freedom must take her for its handmaid, for wherever it has started without her, it has failed. That which, if any thing can, must distinguish the history of the present from that of all past time, is the operation of the true republican principle, that the full enjoyment of liberty by all depends upon the moderate use of it by each.

But why argue an abstract principle? Who are they that oppose it? What is it that impedes its progress? We are not decrying,—God forbid that we ever should,—a spirit of free, open discussion. On the contrary, we advocate it as the life-blood of our institutions, the very promoter of moderation. It is an abandonment of this fair discussion, that we condemn as fatal to it,—a willingness to act in obedience to other than our own unbiassed judgment. It is they who would surrender their personal independence for the bondage of partisans, who would sacrifice their sacred birthright of free thought and action, to become the meanest, because the voluntary slaves of another, who must answer for the discord and confusion that result. Who is he that talks of freedom and equality and rights, and yet thinks as another man thinks, acts as he acts, and simply because that other bids him so think and act? If this be liberty, that liberty of which we have heard so much, give us back again the dark ages, for then, at least, we shall not see the chain that binds us to the earth.

Opposed also to this spirit of moderation, is that desire of controversial distinction in the younger members of the community, which, when it has

well spiced their tongue and embittered their pen, produces what is called a young politician. I know not a more amusing, were it not so dangerous a specimen of our race, as this class of inexperienced yet fiery combatants. They come into the world, and the first cry you hear is, "We must fight. Our fathers and our grandfathers fought, and why should not we? True, we have nothing very special to fight about, but still we must fight. The old party fires have been burning only half a century; why put them out so soon? And the questions that kindled them, though a little out of date, have still two sides left and what need we more?" And so the battle begins, — would that it might end where it began, — in simple, unattained, and unattainable nothing. We admire their zeal, applaud their ingenuity are astonished at their more than Quixotic valor; but we laugh at their simplicity, we wonder at their folly, we deprecate their effects. We would trust our institutions to cooler heads and safer hands. Experience, — that grey headed old gentleman, who followed time into the world, and who was cotemporary with wisdom, ere the foundations of the earth were laid, is altogether the safest guardian of such precious treasures. True, he may not harangue with quite so much rapidity and fierceness as these fluent usurpers of his place; but the words which drop slowly from his honored lips are full as wise and full as worthy of preservation as theirs. And though he stand leaning upon his staff, and looking with straining eyes, we would trust to his vision quite as implicitly, as to that of the stately, elastic youth, who, with younger and brighter eyes, does not always see. We would call back this venerable seer from his obscurity. He is growing old fashioned. We would array him in a modern costume, and set him in our high places. The free air of our country will renew his youth, and he, in return, will build up our institutions in the spirit of wisdom and moderation.

We would banish from amongst us, then, these and all other dispositions which stand in the way of that national moderation which we deem so essential. And then, behold a contrast! Place yourself upon the highest elevation that overlooks your country. Banish moderation from the multitude beneath you. You may have heard the roar of the thunder, and the lashing of the ocean, but you have heard music, literal music, compared with the roar and lashing of an immoderate, uncharitable, angry, free people. But look again, — she has returned. Behold the sublimest sight which the earth can afford, — ten millions of freemen, different each from the other, yet with a common country, a common interest, and a common hope, meeting, discussing, differing indeed in opinion about common measures, — but the time for action has come, — they have gone up like Christian men to discharge their duty to their country, — it is over, — they have gone, like Christian men, to discharge their duty to themselves. Be the latter picture ours, and freedom will indeed be a goddess; be it ours, and we could almost say that a little vanity would be excusable.

From speaking of the spirit which should animate us as members of our great republic, the occasion naturally brings us for a moment to the spirit with which we meet as members of that smaller republic of letters, whose anniversary has this day brought us together. To those of us who here meet again, where a short time since we parted, the occasion is one of mingled feelings. We have gathered again in this great congregation, and around this sacred altar; but not all. In the little time that has elapsed since our separation, three of our number, and among them one who, in the event which has placed him whom you hear before you, would have so much more ably filled the spot where I am standing, have joined that greater congregation, around a holier altar. The thought is a solemn and melancholy one. But as, in the wisdom of Providence, they were not permitted to enter upon the public stage, the feelings at their loss belong not to the public. It is not here that we should speak of their virtues, which we loved, — or of their talents, which we respected. These feelings belong to us as individuals, and as members of that little circle, their connexion with which we shall always hold in pleasing recollection.

But we look round again and behold another wide breach has been made within this short period, in which all of us have a common interest. The venerable head of our institution, * — the guardian, instructor, friend, the father of his pupils, — he under whose benignant auspices we commenced and completed our collegiate career, and who dismissed us from these hospitable walls with a parental blessing, no longer occupies that seat which he filled so long, so honorably, and so usefully. We would mingle our regret with the general feeling that has gone with him to his retirement. We would send to him the grateful remembrance and filial affection of those who will ever be proud to remember their connexion with him. We would bid him farewell on this spot, consecrated by associations which will ever bring him to our remembrance. In the name of that education which he advanced, of that literature which he encouraged, of that religion which he diffused, we would bid him an affectionate farewell. We pray that the old age of that man may be serene and cheerful, whose youth has been so brilliant, and whose manhood so useful. The smiles of a kind Providence be ever with him. The conscience of a faithful steward is his reward here, — his reward hereafter he has learned from higher authority.

With these feelings of regret to sadden this otherwise joyous occasion, may it not have been well for us to have occupied it in dwelling upon the spirit that should accompany those institutions, into the midst of which we are hastening. It is to the young men of our times that the call of our institutions on this subject is the loudest. Be it theirs, then, to cultivate and diffuse this spirit. And then, what if no trumpet-tongued orator shall rise up to proclaim their praises, — what if eloquence be dumb, — the tongue of man silent? They have a heaven-born eloquence, sweeter than music, yet louder than thunder, — the eloquence of truth. They have an argument, which, though it speak not, is heard through the universe, — the argument of a good cause, on a sound bottom. Let the spirit that should accompany them be abroad, — let national modesty, moderation, charity, independence, and, above all, the spirit of Christianity, be their guard, and then, like Christianity, the powers of nature may strive against them, but they will stand, for they are founded upon a rock. Man cannot overthrow them, and the Almighty will not.

Example

OF A VALEDICTORY ORATION IN LATIN.

Omnibus nunc rite et feliciter peractis, restat, auditores spectatissimi, ut vobis pro hac benevolentia gratias agamus, omnia fausta precemur, et pace decedere et valere vos jubeamus. Si spectandi et audiendi vos tædet, ut citissime abeatibus præstabimus.

Sed primum, omnibus qui adestis, quod tam frequentes convenistis, tam attente audistis, tam benigne plausistis, gratias bene meritas agimus; — vobis præcipue, virgines dilectæ, matronesque honoratæ, juvenibus virisque spes et solatium. Quid nostra comitia sine vobis? Quid nos disertos, eloquentes denique efficeret, si non ut aribus oculisque vestris nos commendemus? Etsi nonnullæ

"Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsæ," —

et ignoscimus et probamus. Cur venimus nos javenes, nos viri, nisi ut spectemur, audiamur et ipsi? Sed plures, nimirum, ut audiatis, ut oculis, linguis, votis faveatis. Igitur grates, sed

"Grates persolveres dignas
Non opis est nostræ."

* Rev. John Thornton Kirkland.

Vir excellentissime, nostræ reipublicæ princeps, te ex animo salutamus, ac virum tantum, bonisque omnibus tam probatum, nostris adesse comitiis gaudemus.

Virum tibi conjunctissimum, patriæque et virtutis fautoribus carissimum, ac, dum vixerit, integritatis, prudentiæ, omnisque virtutis exemplum, in sedes altiores arcessitum, tecum lugemus. Sed bonorum animis, omnium desiderio, "Manet mansurumque est quidquid in eo amavimus, quidquid admirati sumus. Placide quiescat."

Præclara quidem nostræ reipublicæ felicitas videtur, quum inter tam multos virtute eximios nemo ob amorem erga illam insignem se reddere potest; quum omnia prospere pulchreque eveniunt. Florentibus rebus, summâ hujus reipublicæ tranquillitate, summâ concordia, respublica mihi quidem et aliis multis ut confido carissima tuis auspiciis evasit nova; * olim quidem terris nunc re et legibus a vobis disjuncta; ut aliam sese libertatis vindicem exhibeat, alium amicitiae vinculum adjiciat. Perduret atque valeat. Vale, vir excellentissime.

Et tu, honoratissime, cui virticem ætate provento albentem civiles usque ambiunt honores; et vos, Conciliarii, Curatoresque honorandi, quibus faventibus et adjutantibus, vigent res summa nostraque Academia, valete.

Vale et tu, Præses reverende et, si mihi liceat, carissime, cujus præsidic lumen veritatis, patrum auspiciis in nostræ Academiæ penetralibus olim ac censum, fulsit fulgetque novo semper purioreque splendore. Esto sempiternum.

Valete Professores eruditissimi ac præstantissimi! Quibus eloquemur verbis quantâ observantiâ vos habemus, quam gratis animis vestrum in nos assiduorum laborum, curæque vigilantis recordamur? Sit vobis hoc excelsum et pene divinum munus et præmium. Omnibus qui merentur certissime eveniet.

Amici sodalesque carissimi, iterum denique, post aliquod temporis intervallum, convenimus, ut his sedibus amatis, quas veluti beatorum insulas dolentes reliquimus, nostræ custodibus juventutis merito honoratis, nobis invicem et illis valedicemus. Quis enim, quum temporis inter camænas et cum amicis acti reminiscitur, dolorem non sentiat quod his omnibus nimium cito sese eripere, marique incerto ac tumultuoso se committere oporteat, nunquam rediturum, nunquam sodalium ora jucunda aspecturum! Interjecto jam nunc brevi tantum triennio, multos optime dilectos oculis animoque frustra requirimus.

Quid ego non audio tantum? Eorum quos inter-lectissimos habuimus, alter mortii occubuit, alter in terris externis abest. Quid illos aut alios quos amavimus a me nominari necesse sit? Quisque vestrum eos requirit, quisque desiderat. Valeant omnes qui absunt, et vos, amici fratresque, valete!

Vos quoque valete, omnes qui adestis, — senes atque juvenes, quibus fortuna fida et quibus perfida, — matronæ virginesque, quibus sit decor quibusque desit; — vobis adsint ante omnia virtus,

"Lis nunquam, toga rara, mens quieta,
Vires ingenue, salubre corpus;
Quod sitis esse velitis, nihilque malitis."

* Anno 1820, resp. Maine a rep. Mass. se separavit.

XCVI.

A BOWDOIN PRIZE DISSERTATION.

*Example.**Essay on the Literary Character of Dr. Samuel Johnson.*

While an author is living, it is not extraordinary that mankind should form an erroneous estimate of his works. The influence which prejudice and partiality often possess over the minds of his contemporaries, is incompatible with a correct decision of his merits. It is not until time has effaced the recollection of party feelings, when the virtues and foibles of the man are forgotten, and the warm emotions of friendship or resentment are no longer felt, that the merit of an author can be fairly ascertained. So variable is public opinion, which is often formed without examination, and liable to be warped by caprice, that works of real merit are frequently left for posterity to discover and admire, while the pompous efforts of impertinence and folly are the wonders of the age. The gigantic genius of Shakspeare so far surpassed the learning and penetration of his times, that his productions were then little read and less admired. There were few who could understand, and still fewer who could relish the beauties of a writer whose style was as various as his talents were surprising. The immortal Milton suffered the mortification of public neglect, after having enriched the literature of his country with a poem, which has since been esteemed the most beautiful composition in his language; and his poetical talents, which entitled him to a reputation the most extensive and gratifying, could scarcely procure for him, in his own times, a distinction above contemporary authors who are now forgotten. Ignorance and interest, envy and political rancor, have concealed from public notice works, which the enlightened intelligence of after ages have delighted to rescue from oblivion; and it is no less common for posterity to forget ephemeral productions, which were the admiration of the day in which they were produced.

In a retrospect of the literature of any age, the mind views the respective authors as a group of statues, which a cursory glance of the eye discovers at a distance; and although, on a nearer examination, it could admire the features and beauties discoverable in those of a diminutive appearance, yet the energetic expression and lofty attitude of some who overtop the rest, exclusively attract our notice and command attention. Perhaps there has been no age concerning which this remark is more justly applicable, than the eighteenth century. In that period, a most numerous army of authors took the field, greater perhaps in number, but not exceeding in height of stature, excellence of skill, or brilliance of achievement, the great men of the three preceding centuries.

In contemplating this collection of writers, the attention is necessarily withdrawn from those over whom the towering genius of Dr. Johnson seems to bend, and is attracted by the colossal statue which represents the gigantic powers of his mind. Whether we regard the variety of his talents, the soundness of his judgment, the depth of his penetration, the acuteness of his sagacity, the subtleness of his reasoning faculty, or the extent of his knowledge, he is equally the subject of astonishment and admiration.

It will not, perhaps, be hazardous to affirm, that within the range of an