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THE

BACCALAUREATE ADDRESS,

DELIVERED ON

COMMENCEMENT DAY OF WASHINGTON COLLEGE,

LEXINGTON, VA., JULY 3d, 1852.



BY GEORGE JUNKIN, D. D.,

President of the College.

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XX

TO THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 1852, VIZ:—

A. TALIAFERRO, of Amherst,  
RICHARD M. TALIAFERRO, of do.,  
ROBERT C. WALKER, of Rockbridge,  
HENRY R. PAINE, of Lexington,  
WILLIAM B. DAVIES, of Bedford,  
WM. W. MORRISON, of Rockbridge,

this Address is most affectionately inscribed, by their sincere friend  
and well-wisher, THE AUTHOR.

## ADDRESS.

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### GENTLEMEN OF THE BOARD :

Fellow-citizens,—On our last gala-day, it was my pleasing duty to deliver, from this platform, “An Apology for Collegiate Education.” In accomplishing this, it became necessary to define Education, to present a distinct idea of its final cause and to exhibit its system of instrumental agencies. “Education,” it was then stated, “is that system of training which fits a man for each and every station to which he may be called, in time and in eternity.” Its final cause, or last end, is “the cultivation and enlargement of all his faculties—physical, intellectual and moral—and that in endless progression,” for the happiness of the moral universe and the glory of its Author. Its instrumentalities are the training agencies of the Family, the School, the Academy, the College, the University or School of Professional study, the business of this life and the employments of the life to come.

This analysis presented, in the centre of the seven, our own *theme* for that occasion. The college curriculum we examined in detail, yet with necessary brevity, shewing the adaptation of each branch of study toward the accomplishment of its *own* end; and all along raising a warning voice against the too common error, that the attainment of knowledge is *the* object of collegiate education; and on the contrary, holding up as *the* end, the cultivation of the mind and heart—the formation of independent thinkers and virtuous actors for human weal and divine glory.

This retrospection is necessary in order to bring us up to our position for this day; yet farther recurrence is unnecessary, because that discussion is accessible to the public in a permanent form. It is there strongly insinuated that the curriculum, being the growth and resultant of the *wisdom* and experience of the world’s educators for centuries, has approximated a theoretic perfection. That

insinuation we are prepared to endorse and defend, notwithstanding the numerous complaints which have been made to tingle in our ears, against the defects of college education and the immoralities of college life. For it is not to be denied, that parents and friends have uttered loud and unavailing complaints in both regards—i. e., in regard to the moralities of college and the intellectual training and instruction of their sons. Many a widowed mother has poured forth the heart-piercing lamentation—"Alas! my son, my ruined son! I placed him at college in the hope—the too fond hope—that he would become a scholar—a high-minded, noble, devoted son of science—and prove a stay and solace to my declining years—that I should live to see him established in his profession, respected and honored of all men—the pride of my life and the comfort of my dying day; but, alas! he has returned home a poor, nerveless inebriate!" Often has the burning indignation of the sterner parent expressed itself in severe, even wrathful scorn at the loose morality, defective information and half-trained understanding of his beloved son. He had pictured to himself a different vision—a chaste virtue, at the very least respectable scholarship, attested by graduation, if not with distinction, at least with decency. But how different is he from all this! Relaxed in morals, vain in manners and deportment, idle in habits; instead of the pale brow of the student, the flushed countenance of the bacchanal—instead of the strong, manly sense of the independent thinker, his style of thought and expression is that of the coxcomb and the beau. Instead of the qualifications requisite for entrance upon professional studies with reasonable hope of honorable success, he has only the attributes of a pettifogger and a bar-room orator.

Now, my friends, if authorized to act as their agent, I would, in behalf of all the colleges of the land, put in, in answer to such charges, the general plea of guilty. I do confess to great practical defects. It is true, that many youth who enter our colleges turn out immoral, dissipated and worthless;—many spend their time in idleness, and confirm these habits for life;—many who enter the classes, slip out at some side door, and never graduate; never run half the circle round. It is also true, that of those who are graduated, some are unworthy of the distinction; they early learn to lean on others; they take advantage of their teachers' good

nature, use various soothing arts to gain indulgence, and are finally smuggled through, *ex gratia*. This has been done, and I will not venture the assertion, that the evil no longer exists.

But whilst pleading thus to the numerous charges against colleges, we are careful to inform you, that they are all of them practical errors, and do by no means militate fatally against the theoretical perfection of the curriculum. These are accidents, not properties of the system. They are outside, and contrary to its spirit, purpose and plan; not inside and consistent with its life, energy and essence. Is it fair and honest to charge as a crime what is a mere accident? Must every system be held responsible for its abuses, as well as for its proper uses? What evils have not been accidentally associated with the divine institution of marriage—the relation of parent and child—of rulers and ruled? Is there not a truth in the adage, however erroneously it is sometimes applied,

"Bout forms of government let fools contest,  
What e'er is best administered, is best?"

Can we fairly charge the faults of the administration upon the system of government? No more can we hold the course of collegiate training responsible for the many practical evils which accidentally spring up from its utter neglect and abuse.

My present object is to trace all these noxious shoots to the one root of bitterness from which they spring; and thereby enable you, at a single well-directed blow, to eradicate the whole. This bitter root is, *Premature Entrance*. The prime practical error of college management—the *proton pseudos gymnasia*—is the youths' entering the classes at a point too far in advance. Disregarding the important fact, that the college is the fourth in order in the great systems ordained of God directly, or indirectly by man, as means and instruments for perfecting human character, the parent, the pupil and the teacher co-operate in the sad mistake of attempting a work for which no adequate powers are provided. The moral and mental development for which the family, the school, the academy are the proper agents, has been either sadly neglected or greatly misused, and the lad of fourteen or twenty, who might have been—who ought to have been, and whom the college theory presumes to have been—thoroughly grounded and settled in habits

of morality and industry, and to have attained a considerable advance in knowledge and intellectual stamina, is still a child in knowledge, a stranger to systematic industry. His corporeal system indeed is fourteen (the proper age for entering Freshman) or twenty years of age; but his conscience is a crippled dwarf of seven or ten, and his intellect nine or twelve. Can it be expected that this dwarfed conscience can grapple and vanquish the giant temptations incident to all human associations, especially to all outside of the family? Do parents and guardians really believe that there is a mysterious virtue, a kind of moral galvanism in the Freshman or the Sophomore bench, which will instantly stimulate to life and energy a moral sense that has hitherto lain almost dormant? Is it really expected that the occupation of a seat there will prove a talismanic power that shall electrify the slumbering intellect and telegraph a school-boy into a Freshman, or an academic into a Sophomore, or even into a Junior? Is this magic spell equal indeed to two years of hard study?

Clearly, such expectations are doomed to disappointment. Let us therefore look a little more narrowly into the philosophy of this thing—let us examine the radical evil under its principal conditions, that we may discover the remedy and know how to apply it.

Let our first hypothesis be, that a youth enters college without the lawful and required development of the moral sense. His conscience has been neglected. He has not acquired the habit of reflecting upon his own actions in their moral relations, and referring them to a divinely appointed rule of judgment. He has not been taught with sufficient frequency and care, the nature and perfections of God; the purity, inflexibility and reasonableness of His law, and its all pervading power; he has not been trained to habits of prayer and thereby accustomed to the idea of the divine omnipresence, and to a feeling of constant dependence on and accountability to Him. On the contrary, the very omission to cultivate these feelings and form these habits, has given occasion to the growth of the seeds of depravity innate in the soil. He has learned to treat the divine names and the holy day and sacred institutions with indifference, perhaps contempt: he has been introduced to the shrine of the fickle goddess of Fortune and been taught to pour libations to the vine-crowned Bacchus. This veneration toward heathen divinities and neglect of the true God, are

not adapted to heighten his feelings of reverence toward his earthly parents, and to produce cheerful and prompt obedience.

Now, we will suppose the boy of fourteen, thus defective, yet intellectually up to the standard, to be admitted to college, notwithstanding the law requires "evidence of good moral character." what result might be reasonably looked for? Will he bear the yoke of this government with meekness and affection? Can you expect more deference toward the substitute than toward the principal? Will he who fears not God fear man? Will he, who walks with slow hesitancy in the path prescribed by his parents, run with alacrity in the road pointed out by a Faculty who stand *in loco parentis*?

If such expectations be vain, then occasion will soon occur for admonition on account of delinquencies. Then, if the young gentleman be of good blood, and entertain a correspondent appreciation of his high personal attributes, "by-and-by he is offended;" conceives a prejudice, which soon rises into disgust, toward the Professor on whom providentially was devolved first the delicate but most important duty of his admonition. His temper sours toward the Faculty and the whole government, which thus interferes with his pleasures and curtails his liberty. Of course this will modify all his conceptions and feelings in reference to his recitations. His merits are not appreciated here—his grade is too low—there is partiality—it is not worth while for him to make exertions; no efforts he could put forth would counteract the teachers' prejudices against him. Thus the jaundiced eye of the unhappy youth gives its own tinge to every object. To please his instructors is no part of his ambition; "don't care" becomes his practical rule. Consequently, he declines in his standing; commits improprieties, in order to avenge himself on his teachers; is censured, becomes reckless, and is dismissed. Or perhaps restraining himself until the end of the session, he passes into another institution a certified Sophomore. Here the same causes produce like effects; and at the end of his second collegiate year, our fledgling, having grown too large for his nest, where he had become a troublesome inmate, either falls or is thrown out, a graduated Sophomore, beautifully feathered, and ready for aerial flights over the fields of professional study!

Such, in brief, is the unhappy history of many a youth of

talents,—what is its cause? *Premature entrance*—disregard of the moral pre-requisites of the curriculum. Where lies the blame? On the parent, on the youth, on the faculty. On the parent, for not bringing him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: on the youth, for not hearkening to the counsels of his father and for despising the law of his mother: on the Faculty, for not exercising the most important act of discipline—the execution of the law which requires, first of all, for entrance, “evidence of good moral character.”

Perfectly aware am I, however, that Faculties have a very plausible apology, in the allegation that a youth of fourteen or fifteen can scarcely be said to have a character. Ordinarily, character is used as a synonyme for reputation, and it is true, that reputation implies the person's being extensively known, which is not the case at this age. And even in the stricter sense, the habits and temperament that form character are not settled and fixed, and we hope to correct any incipient vitiosity that may exist. However this be, it is still true, that if the cultivation of conscience be not fairly commenced before the youth leaves the family circle, there is great likelihood of permanent depravity.

A second condition is where, in connexion with the preceeding, there is also deficiency in intellectual development—the candidate being behind in one or more of the studies required for entrance. On this case we shall not now delay. It is obvious at a glance, that this must greatly precipitate the catastrophe. Every symptom of the disease must necessarily be aggravated, and the day of disappointment, vexation and sorrow draw its sombre pall over the sunshine of a parent's hopes. The mode of such precipitation will appear under the next condition.

Let us view the case in its strongest light—let the moral habits of the youth be supposed good, at least negatively—let him be pure from vicious practices—let him have a tolerable development of conscience, and, of course, good disposition to study, and yet be allowed to enter six or eight months beyond the point for which he is properly qualified. This arrearage he is to bring up by extra exertion. In this case, we have first great danger of proud self-sufficiency. The very conception of entering the race so far in the rear, with the hope and intention of overtaking those in advance, tends to inflate his vanity. He instantly conceives the

idea of his superiority in talent—a feeling is thus gendered, not very likely to further either his moral or intellectual growth. For, as Swift somewhere says, “if a man think he have wit, 'tis a thousand to one but he is mistaken.” And this is true of genius; and the mistake will most probably land him below mediocrity. For a genius is above rule and law, and must be educated in an abnormal school, where there is but one teacher, one pupil and one person. College classes are arranged for the ignoble herd; genius is not confined to forms and desks, to books and lectures.

But should there prove ballast equal to the sail—should true independence of mind coalesce with true modesty—the result must be *decisive of character*; then one of two phases may occur. Let the most favorable condition be assumed—let these be associated with firm health—let there be *sana mens in sano corpore*—an iron constitution throughout; then, indeed, we shall realize the highest results. This youth will surmount all difficulties. Being master of himself, having all his faculties under his own control, the body subjected to the will, the will to the desires and the intellect, the intellect to truth, and the desires to the law of God;—he must stride over the course with steadily increasing energy, and in the end distance all competition. To a spirit thus strung and thus accoutred, no difficulties can occur; language bows before him and throws her treasures at his feet; science tenders the homage of her profoundest regards and submits herself to his plastic hands; and art will soon hail him as her master.

But where are such youth to be found? And if they were ten fold more numerous than they have ever been, where were the wisdom of adapting laws and rules to the one, and vainly attempting to bring the nine hundred and ninety-nine up to his standard? Do the exceptions make the law, or the law the exceptions? Logan, the Indian, was an eloquent orator, therefore Rhetoric and Elocution are useless studies. Such logic has made thousands of fools, but a man of sense—never!

The other phase of this case, is the more common one, where the bodily health is not adequate to the gigantic efforts of such a mind. Here, as before, the spirit, confident in its own energies, and resolute not to remain long in the rear, taxes its powers to the utmost. The student's time is all occupied: the midnight lamp and the rising dawn witness the fervor of his devotion at the shrine

of literature; and at the end of his Freshman year, he has the buoyant satisfaction of demonstrating in his examination, that half the hated distance is annihilated. Another year, and it is all gone; and he stands erect and full abreast with his passed Junior companions, who, in the true spirit of this noble emprise, cheer him on, and gladly part a gap for him in the now straightened line. The third heat begins, and, as nothing strings the nerve of effort like success in the retro-spection, and confidence looming ahead, his whole system is braced up to the utmost; he springs forward, and as the time between his shaded lamp and the glorious orb of day nightly diminishes, the distance between him and his competitors increases; he comes out incontestably before them all. But now mark the cost. Lift a little the curtain from his midnight devotion;—see through the dim gloom that anxious look, that paled cheek, that languid eye, that hand applied one moment to the aching forehead; at another, pressed against the breast, as he unbends himself a moment from his toil. Again, the eye is upon the book: still it is there,—that troublesome little pain. He rises, stretches his arms, strikes his palm upon his bosom, strides to and fro, sits down again to the beloved book; then, with a nervous spasm, he shuts it up, prepares to retire, and throws his exhausted body upon his restless couch. In three or four hours he is up again,—wonders why he feels so unstrung,—asks his physician,—is promptly told that he must spare himself, sleep more, and, in order to do this, exercise more. This advice he promises to follow in the coming vacation.

Vacation over, our student returns, somewhat improved and freshened, and enters upon his last term of trial: with the same unsubdued, resolute will, he presses onward in the course. But in a month or two, there it is again,—that same slight throb in the temples. Another month, and he is constrained to suspend his exertions and take some relaxation. Again he returns to his books, and a few weeks more bring back his unpleasant intruders. But their voices must be silenced for the present. Examination day,—the final examination day is approaching;—time is too precious; nature's protest against her oppressions is laid on the table, and his resolute will drags his emaciated form through the remaining ordeal—it is his final literary trial, and the master spirit passes through it, like gold in the furnace tried. His pale form is *the*

honored among honorables. He goes home, lays his diploma at his father's feet, places his golden medal in his mother's hand, lies down, and—dies!

Behold him, beautiful in death. The fire of genius, indeed, no longer flashes from his half-closed eyes; but mark that high, expansive forehead, enclosing the mighty machinery of thought, erst driven by a propelling intellect, alas! too mighty for it. Observe those arched brows, gently contracted to constitute the throne where genius took her seat, and has left her impress. See those deep drawn lines, where but yesterday science entrenched herself around the citadel of truth. Look upon those marble lips, which, but for one sad mistake, might have drawn another Plato and Alcibiades around the feet of another Socrates; might have controlled the destinies of the world by swaying the deliberations of another Amphycionian Council; or might have guided the minds and hearts of another Athens "to the unknown God!" There he lies, "bathed in woman's tears;" and though his father may appropriate the language of the venerable Duke of Ormond, who had been successfully vindicated before the House of Lords against a charge of treason, by the eloquence of his noble son, the Earl of Ossory, when a friend was endeavoring to console him on the occasion of that son's death—"I would not," replied he, his soul swelling with the conception of his lofty character, "I would not give my dead son for any living son in Christendom!" Though, I say, the father of our supposed graduate, could truthfully accommodate this language to his own case, does not every one feel that a great calamity, a public loss has been incurred? Now who is to blame? Have we not here another sacrifice upon the altar of *premature entrance* into the college classes?

We pass on to the most ordinary case, where there is no peculiar firmness and fixedness of character. Our present subject has nothing special to distinguish him. Let him be a sample, a representative of the great body of youth seeking classical education, as to moral and intellectual calibre. But he enters deficient as to preparation.

In prosecuting this subject, I shall present a detail in the abstract, of facts which every Professor of extended experience will readily connect into living concretions. I shall explain the intellectual philosophy embodied in the facts, including the pathology, which

confines on morals; and I shall unfold the moral philosophy. Not that I am pledged to treat these three as entirely distinct, and to finish each before proceeding to its subsequent. Time will often be saved, by deviating from the order of this division; but the matter to be presented comes under some one of these heads.

The first fact to be noted is, that the student takes his station in the class, not as an equal, but professedly as an inferior. He is so viewed by the Professor and all the class. There is an absolute contract between the teacher and pupil, that the former will not expect as full and as correct recitations from the latter as from his classmates, and these are privy to the contract, and, indeed, in a sense, parties to it. They are not to expect him to recite equally with themselves, but to view him as inferior, and to extend toward him a pitying and patronizing indulgence. From this, by the constitution of the mind, follow two evil consequences.

1. It is exceedingly difficult, in this case, for the student to retain and habitually to exercise that measure of self-respect which religion and morality equally justify. Inferiority is a relative idea, and is not debasing absolutely. The colonels of an army are inferior to the generals, and endure no self-disrespect on that account. But if, with the same nominal rank, there should be real, practical inferiority, a man of honor could not submit to it. Washington would not serve even his bleeding country, until Braddock made him equal in reality as well as in name, to the colonels of the regular army. Equality among equals is the crown of self-respect; if it be tarnished the person sinks. His felt inferiority tends powerfully to damp his spirit and perpetuate and deepen his degradation. To expect high and honorable things, is one of the means to ensure them. Let a man know that you look for little from him, and you will rarely be disappointed. Half the glory of Trafalgar was embodied in the watchword—"England *expects* every man to do his duty." "I do not *expect* you to make a good, manly, independent recitation for six months to come;"—whose spirit could long endure such a burden as this? And yet this is what we say to the youth whom we admit to an inferior standing in his class; and, except in the cases illustrated, the effects are mischievous.

2. Equally impossible is it for his teacher and classmates to keep up a due respect for one whose recitations are habitually defective. The Professor shortens the lessons, or the classmates may suppose

he does it to favor the weak brother. They dislike being kept back, become weary of the dead weight, insist on longer lessons, and aim at shaking him off.

A student thus situated is exposed to the imminent peril of leaning upon some one else. His case seems to require it. He will procure a translation, or ask one to read this sentence for him, another that, and so he works out nothing for himself. The ruinous effects upon his self-respect and the independence of his mind, lie open to all men. He who always leans on others will soon lose ability to stand;—he who always walks on crutches will be unable to walk alone. One of the greatest misfortunes to a child is to have a foolish mother, whose misguided love will never let it out of the nurse's arms, lest in its attempts to creep and walk it may hurt itself. Thus the muscles are enfeebled and the very soul is cramped and loses the spirit of its native, free action. A lad who is always helped, will never learn to help himself.

A third fact here is, obscurity in his ideas. If the deficiency is in Greek, ex. gr., though he may have been told he is not expected to master the whole lesson, but to do well what he does at all, he misses portions whilst preparing, and though he hears them read and explained at recitation, and is thus enabled to catch up an idea of the train of thought, yet must that idea be dim and indistinct. If the defect be in Mathematics, the case is worse, and soon becomes utterly hopeless. Truth rests here upon truth; but our unhappy pupil has lost the foundations, and his building cannot stand. All is obscurity. This is an appropriate preparation for metaphysical confusion worse confounded. Accustomed to half-formed conceptions already, even the clear ideas of Locke and Stewart and Brown, are to him German mist and mental moonshine, and become at once palatable to one heretofore fed on bad Latin, worse Greek, and indigestible and undigested Mathematics.

Now it is this confusion of idea—this vague indistinctness of thought, which I consider the source of the greatest mischiefs in the whole course of education,—and to the philosophy found in this region, would very respectfully ask special attention. Let us have clear ideas here ourselves, and we may save our sons from a life-time of abortive conceptions. Let us note the effects upon the intellectual and the moral man.

It saps the foundation of decision of character. Independent

thinking becomes impossible in a mind thus beclouded. By decision of character, is not here meant mere capacity to pass volitions; to entertain desires and express wishes. It is very plain, that the fickle and volatile abound to excess in desires and wishes and wills. Nor on the other hand do I mean merely a determined adherence to opinions entertained. The *tenax propositi* of a bull-dog is not decision of character. Brute obstinacy never made a great man. This, I fear, is what some mean by the phrase, "an iron will"—mere strength of emotion,—passion, deep-rooted and obstinate, but devoid of intelligence and reason. The eye of such philosophers looks constantly to results. Executive energy is the mesmeric spell of their enchantment. But the executive is not every thing in a good government. Energy in the execution of his wishes, if detached from the legislation of a sound reason, is brute obstinacy; it rises not at all into the sphere of morality; it is pure tyranny. But let it have its root in the soil of a sound rational deduction, and the fruits will be very different. But how is it possible that the deduction can be safe and the reasoning sound, if they spring from vague conceptions in a confused mind? Can the stream rise higher than its fountain? Can the conclusion be stronger than the premises? Then has Aristotle lived in vain and Locke labored for naught. But if this be absurd, then you see how indispensable accuracy of perception,—precision of thought,—clearness of idea, is to decision of character.

But another phase requires a glance—illustrating the mode of this evil influence. Vagueness of idea shakes the student's confidence in his own powers. He sees not as others see, and doubts the accuracy of his own vision. Thus another element of self-reliance is removed. This displays itself in timidity of manner. He moves like one walking upon ice that bends and crackles beneath his tread. Self-respect cannot long survive self-reliance; and thus the course is downward.

3. Again, if the two preceding be not realized,—if self-love be too strong to admit them,—then distrust in others must ensue. They profess to see what he cannot see, though his eyes are turned in the same direction. He hears them speak admiringly of the beauty of a demonstration,—the elegant adaptation of thought to thought,—the perfectness of the reasoning, where all is confusion to him. He marks their strong emotions of pleasure in view of what

they call a sublime passage in the poet, the orator, the historian, in which he sees no grandeur, feels no sublimity. He distrusts their sincerity, and imputes their raptures to conceits of fancy, or a disposition to exaggeration. Thus a moral gangrene is generated,—a leprosy, which may, ere long, overspread the whole body.

It shakes confidence in truth itself, and tends directly and powerfully toward skepticism. The metaphysic of the matter stands thus:

What the mind distinctly perceives, it necessarily believes; and this is the law of its being. What is not perceived at all, excludes the possibility of belief, for it is a negation, and belief is positive. Toward the existence of that mental state called believing, two logical conditions are indispensable, viz: an intelligent mind, and an object presented to it. I do not now inquire how the presentation takes place—whether by the bodily senses or by the testimony of others; but simply the fact. When these two occur, there is perception—the man has an idea, a thought. We believe it—sets to his seal that it is. If there is no object presented, there is no perception—no idea—no room for belief. Now, between these two extremes, there is an infinite diversity, as to the clearness with which the object is presented; and this depends upon the methods and agencies of presentation. Hence, belief must vary in degrees of strength proportionally to the clearness of the perceptions; that is, to the efficiency of the testimony and fulness of its evidence. Everything, therefore, that confuses the idea, enfeebles the belief and checks the onward tendency of the mind toward entire confidence. Confusion—indistinctness of thought is the father of skepticism and the grand-father of Infidelity; and I have already shewn that premature entrance into the college classes is, at least, the foster-mother of the vague idea.

But one turn more, and we have a new phase. It enfeebles the mind itself. All its faculties are improved by right use and injured by wrong use. This is so obviously true, and so universally admitted, that I shall not delay on it. Hence results a relative, if not an absolute crippling of the perceptive and the reasoning faculties.

From these follow, in the next place, a disgust toward that system wherein the first difficulties occur. No one likes to live in a fog all the day. The studies that are such to him, become hateful. One has no taste for Latin—another detests Greek—a third abhors

Algebra and execrates Calculus. These fruits grow on this tree. Its *vis vitæ* generates them; and if we cultivate the tree, we must abide the fruits.

But it is not practicable to prevent such a tree from injuring others in its neighborhood. The college course is complicated; still, it is a system compacted together. The human body is a system,—beautiful, infinitely complicated, yet perfectly compacted in the adjustment of part to part. If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it. The gangrene of the foot affects the head and all parts of the body. The evils of one department of study pervade the whole mind of the student, and injures him in every department. Such is the metaphysic and the pathology of this case.

This distaste for the defective study soon passes over to the Professor who gives instruction in it. Unless the heart be in a goodly measure under right influence, and the conscience considerably developed, it will be found impracticable for the youth to keep up in his own mind the proper feeling of regard for the teacher who daily points out his errors, even though he affectionately assist him to correct them. Many a man serves the public too much ever to be forgiven.

From this dislike, follow offences, peccadillos, designed to vex, tease, disturb the instructor and avenge the pupil for low grades; admonitions and reproofs succeed, which generate increased irritation, and point toward the side-door for escape.

Another circumstance must be here noted, which mostly occurs, however, at an early period of this descending movement. Unable to master his lessons, and discouraged from vigorous efforts to do so, the student finds leisure time on his hands. One of his three daily recitations being practically dropped, he has, or thinks he has, time plenty for the others, and a little to spare for slaughter. To this end, resort is had to what has no better name in the language, than the classic soubriquet of *fun*—a term which includes all the witty tricks which lie in the twilight region between virtue and vice.

The next step carries him over the border. Having now spoiled the ability and the taste for the more refined pleasures of intelligence and virtue, and, in the process, accumulated a burden of idle hours upon his hands for their dispatch, he is thrown upon the

lower propensities; and viands and wines, dice and cards, are the weapons on whose points his hours perish and by which he himself is goaded on toward the bitter end.

Admonitions, reproofs, dismissal or expulsion follow in slow but sure succession. Dishonor shuts the door behind him, and opens before him deep wounds in a father's heart, and fountains of tears in a mother's head.

Who started these fountains? That mother herself, when she neglected to develop and cultivate the conscience of her beautiful child! Who opened these bleeding wounds? That very father, when he indulged the noble boy's preference for the gun and the game-bag, over the grammar and the satchel. Who shut that door? That Faculty, when they set wide the class-room door for his *pre-mature entrance*.

How entirely different from all this is the whole moral and intellectual life of the student who comes fully under the system, *duly prepared!* With a well trained conscience, it is impossible for him to do a mean thing. With a mind adequately developed before entrance, he feels himself an equal among equals. He is at once master of his work, and works all through with his eyes open. Conscious that he builds on no man's foundation, his independence of character grows with his growing years. Having no arrears to bring up, his eye is always turned forward, where his whole business lies. He is not dragged by it, but drives it before him. His life is all sunshine: his ways are pleasantness, and his paths peace. His studies are not tasks, nor his teachers taskmasters, standing over him with the scorpion whips of discipline. But he studies because he likes it—because he finds enjoyment in the pursuit of truth. His teachers are his best friends, his confidential advisers. If he had no higher motive for diligence and honorable conduct, but to please and gratify those who labor for his improvement, this alone would be motive sufficient to secure diligence and success. The body, too, feels the sympathetic power of a buoyant spirit, and re-acts to its elastic vigor. Even a delicate frame sinks not under such treatment; and when he leaves the classic halls of Alma Mater, it is the parting of love. His face turned homeward casts radiance before him, and light and joy thrill through the paternal domicile.

But to return: Once more, my friends, we have caught the

demon whose midnight prowlings disturb all the colleges of the land. What will we do with him? Chain him,—chain him with a great chain and thrust him down to the abyss. But who so mighty as to accomplish so difficult and dangerous a task? Will you bring down a mighty angel from heaven to do it? Yes; the angel of mercy whom God has commissioned from his own throne to keep watch over the slumbering cradle of the smiling boy,—she can bind the demon, and none but she can do it effectually. Her gentle touch can awake the moral sense, and with the silken cords of a well cultivated conscience, can bind the boy to the footstool of her Redeemer's throne, and secure the mandate of omnipotence, "come out of him and enter no more into him," and the foul legion rushes down into the bottomless pit.

Yes, my friends, I am bold to affirm that the evils of college life are all practical; whilst the theory is a very near approximation to perfection: they are all associated with *premature entrance*—want of due preparation by the required moral and intellectual development: *therefore*, the only efficient remedy must be prophylactic—you must guard the door of entrance.

And as to the two branches of this prophylactic remedy,—the moral and the intellectual development,—I am confident in magnifying the former. Let the guardian angels of our future Freshmen do their duty, and college reform is achieved. This movement, thanks to a gracious Heaven from the depths of a full heart, is not a mere ideality, but a living embodiment. These angels are thickening around us; and old Liberty Hall already feels the current of a renovated life coursing her veins and restoring to her the youthful energies of '76. Let it so continue. Let these heaven-trained watchers increase and multiply. Let enlightened conscience take her early seat at the helm of intellectual power, so shall the gallant vessel clear the shoals, rocks and whirlpools of the literary sea, and launch forth upon the broad ocean of life, bearing the literature and science, the philosophy, religion and liberty of our happy country to all the nations of the earth.

And now, young gentlemen of the Senior Class, the end is come. You have reached the goal of your course. Here, your work is done, and the onward movement of time bears you hence. I have few words to add by way of parting advice. If, in four years of almost daily intercourse, I have failed to produce those impressions

which would lead you to the practice of virtue and industry, it were in vain to expect such results from the efforts of a few moments. Whatever may have been my failures in communicating, or your's in receiving the counsels of wisdom, we can only look to the source of all good for forgiveness. Whether other opportunities shall occur to bring up arrears, is known only to Him who sees the end from the beginning, who has marked out the bounds of our habitation, and who, in his own good time and way, will bring all his faithful ones to his own home in peace. Delightful has been our intercourse, but our relations from this hour change, as they must do, if man is to advance in happiness, it is pleasing to know that they do not all change. Some abide forever. Teacher and pupil pass away; but brother and friend continue. Authority dies, but charity ever liveth.

Allow me, whilst proceeding to confer upon you the usual testimonials of scholarship and tokens of honorable distinction, to commend you to the Redeemer of the world and to the word of His grace, and to press upon you the holy privilege and delightful duty of seeking that honor which cometh from God only.