

WHITE (D.A.)

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An address to the
members of the Merrimack
Humane Soc. + + + + +



AN
ADDRESS,

TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE

Merrimack Humane Society,

AT THEIR

ANNIVERSARY MEETING,

IN NEWBURYPORT,

SEPT. 3, 1805.

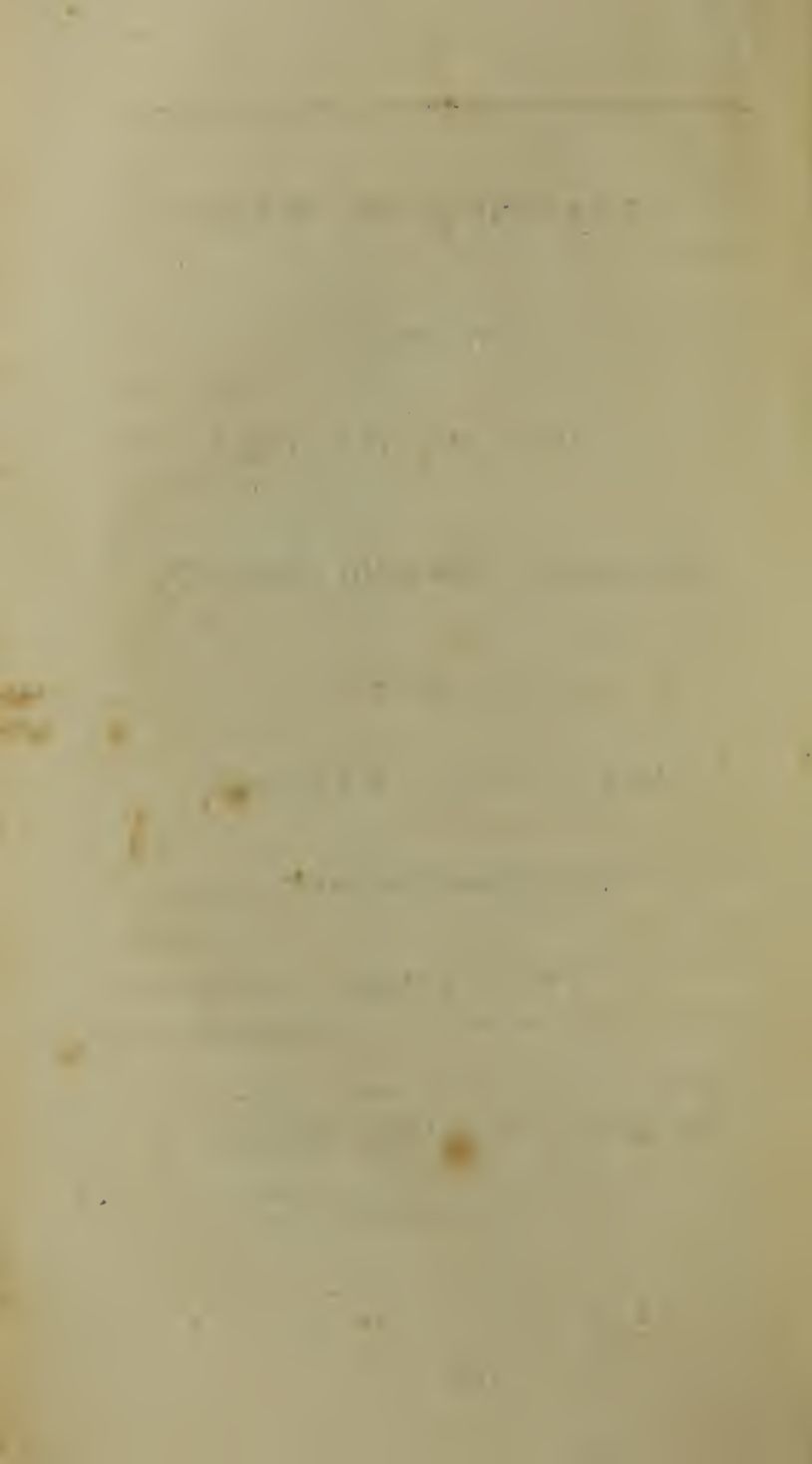
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Washington, D.C.

By Daniel Appleton White.

NEWBURYPORT:

EDMUND M. BLUNT, PRINTER.

....
1805.



At a special meeting of the Trustees of the Merrimack Human Society, Sept. 4, 1805,

Voted, That Micajah Sawyer, William Coombs, and Ebenezer Stocker, Esqrs. be a committee to present the thanks of the Trustees to Daniel A. White, Esq. for the excellent address delivered by him before the Society, at their anniversary meeting, on Tuesday last, and to request a copy for the press.

Attest,

WM. WOART, Rec. Sec.

Sept. 4, 1805.

GENTLEMEN,

A hope that I might be instrumental in making known the principles and design, and thereby increasing the funds of your Institution, induced me to deliver the address, a copy of which you do me the honor to request for publication : The same hope now induces me to wave personal considerations, and cheerfully to submit it to your disposal.

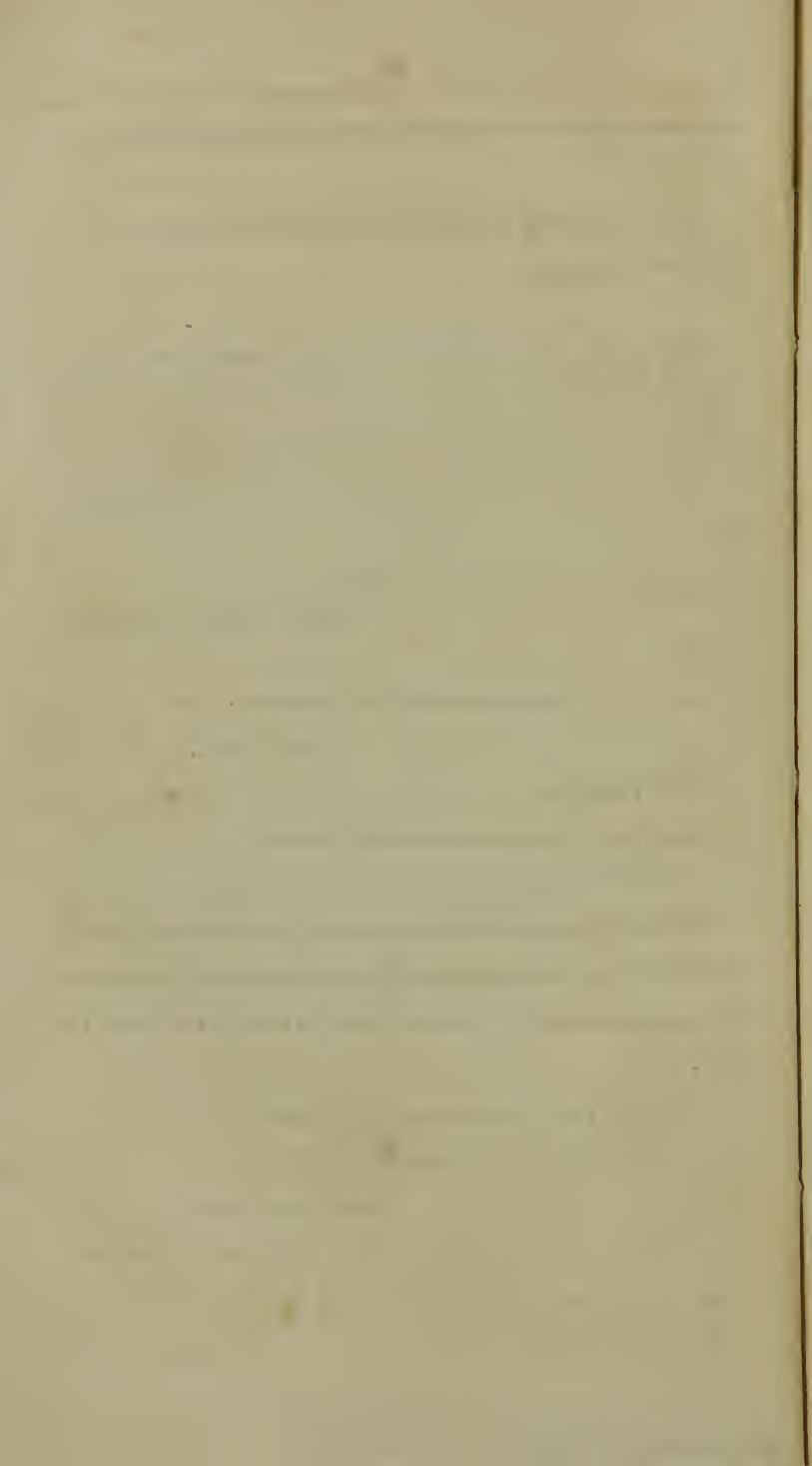
I am, gentlemen, with sentiments of
profound respect,

Your obedient Servant,

DANIEL A. WHITE.

MICAJAH SAWYER,
WILLIAM COOMBS,
EBENEZER STOCKER, ESQUIRES.

WITHDRAWN FOR EXCHANGE
N.L.M.



AN ADDRESS, &c.

MR. PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
MERRIMACK HUMANE SOCIETY.

THE honor of addressing, on any occasion, the distinguished friends of humanity and benevolence must afford no ordinary pleasure ; on so interesting an occasion, as the anniversary of an institution founded in the purest principles, and cherished by the noblest feelings, it excites emotions of high delight. Though unqualified (and I am deeply conscious of it) to do justice to a subject so important and so sublime, as such an institution presents, I shall make no apologies, since it is a subject so delightful.

We are assembled, my much respected brethren, for no common object of interest, ambition, or amusement. No selfish views, no local or political prejudices, no animosities of party or of sect mingle with our feelings, and stimulate our passions : The object, which now engages our attention, is of a nature to elevate and purify our affections, for it is full of charity and mercy ; to unite and enlarge our hearts, for it is the common cause of humanity ; to command uni-

versal approbation and respect, for it has the sanction both of reason and religion. Whatever diversity of opinions, principles, or feelings we may sometimes exhibit, on this day, and on this occasion, our minds and our hearts move in harmony. Sacred be the day to the promotion of pure and humane principles, and to the indulgence of our best affections. May we cordially unite our powers and feelings in aid of the beneficent design of the institution, whose anniversary we celebrate ; and may the God of wisdom and of love so enlighten our minds, and enlarge our hearts, that we may all perform to his acceptance our respective duties !

The design of the Merrimack Humane Society, as expressed in the act of incorporation, "is for the recovery of persons, who meet with such accidents, as produce in them the appearance of death ; and for promoting the cause of humanity by pursuing such means, from time to time, as shall have for their object the preservation of human life, and the alleviation of its miseries :"
A design, as important as human life, as extensive as human miseries, and involving the sublimest principles of human action.

In addressing you, gentlemen, on the subject of your Society, at this early period of its institution, you will excuse me from entering into any physiological enquiries, or scientific discussions, and permit me to take such a view of its principles and design, as may have a tendency to animate our own exertions in promoting its objects, and to recommend the Society to the notice and regard of others.

Recommend the Society? And is it possible, you are ready to ask, that a Society, whose professed and real design is to preserve life, to promote happiness, to relieve sorrow, distress, and misery, needs recommendation? Can any thing more be necessary, than barely to announce the existence of such Society, to engage the warm and generous patronage of every one, who has the feelings of a man and the power to indulge them? Must not the pleasures of ordinary pursuits, and the rewards of ordinary ambition, appear as vanity, and less than vanity, compared with the exquisite satisfaction, which results from the exertion of benevolence so truly godlike, as saving from untimely death a fellow creature, who “was ready to perish,” and diffusing the light of joy and gratitude through the mansions of sorrow and anguish?

Such enquiries, and such sentiments, naturally arise in minds already animated with this benevolence, and experiencing its joys and rewards. But, to induce others to partake in your feelings and views, and to co-operate in your design, you must first engage their attention. Human nature in its affections, as well as faculties, is extremely limited. While ardently pursuing one object, we are prone to disregard others, even of superior importance. Whether devoted to ambition, or enslaved to interest, or seduced by pleasure and luxury, we are alike liable to treat with neglect institutions of charity and public utility. Do we not often find that the best affections and faculties of our nature may be so engrossed with "cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life," as to become inattentive, if not insensible, to the claims of misfortune and misery? Few, it is presumed, ever acquire such hardihood of insensibility, as to view a fellow creature involved in distress and danger, and, like the merciless Levite, "pass by on the other side." The feelings of nature, as well as the sentiments of virtue, must be wholly subdued and degraded in that heart, which, thus assailed, would not, for its own relief, instantly relieve the distressed object. But are there not some, who could not

witness such distress without anguish, and yet regard almost with indifference a society formed to relieve it? Are there not some, who fondly indulge the tender emotions of pity, and delight to moisten with their tears the pages of fictitious distress, who bestow not a thought or an effort on a Society, whose design is to seek out objects of real distress, and mitigate the miseries of real life? Are there not some, whose affluent fortunes enable them to gratify the most benevolent wishes in aiding such Societies, who take not the trouble to examine their claims, or even to become acquainted with their designs? And are there not some, who really possess humane feelings, without thinking to perform beneficent actions? It cannot, then, be unseasonable or improper to recommend your Society.

I am confident, therefore, of your approbation of the plan, which I have adopted, and have only to solicit your candor, as to the execution; for it is impossible to unfold the principles, shew the design, and point to the duties of your Society, without recommending it to every mind that thinks, and to every heart that feels.

Indeed it becomes you, gentlemen, not only on these anniversary occasions, but in your daily

intercourse with your fellow-citizens, to recommend to them the sublime duties and delights of your Society, to inculcate upon them the importance of its design, the excellence, the dignity, the moral beauty of its principles.

What are these principles? They are all included in benevolence and humanity: The animating, actuating soul of your Society, which governs all its views and forms all its plans, is **BENEVOLENCE**; and the mild and humane virtues, tenderness, sympathy, compassion, charity, mercy, liberality, follow in its train.

But what is benevolence, this great, leading, essential principle of the Society?

Here you need no abstruse, metaphysical disquisition to make you acquainted with the nature of this heavenly principle. Could we, indeed, by such disquisition, unfold all its properties and display all its glories, it would still be unintelligible to the understanding, without the interpretation of the heart. Certain modern theorists, who are sometimes called philosophers, have subjected benevolence to the torture of their cold-blooded speculations---to a sort of meta-

physical guillotine---and have presented us with an image, lifeless and disfigured, bearing no trace of the divine original. The understanding of these philosophers surely could find no interpreter in the heart : According to some of them, benevolence exists only in idea, and self-love absorbs all our affections, guides all our thoughts, and governs all our actions. According to others, benevolence is a kind of intellectual quality, seated in the brain, studying abstract notions of the general good, despising the particular objects and petty attachments of social and domestic life ;---a purely philosophical benevolence, which disdains alliance with the heart, is above the weakness of affection, and exhausts so much of its energies in speculation, that it has none left for action.

You, gentlemen, will open the volume of inspiration, and look into your hearts, for the true philosophy of benevolence. There you will find, that it is a real, active, godlike principle, emanating from the exhaustless source of all good, ennobling and warming the heart of man, giving life to his virtues, and purity to his joys. This is the benevolence of your Society ; the genuine benevolence, which supports all charit-

able and humane associations ; which glows in the breasts of the truly great and good of all countries, giving ardor to the patriot, the friend, and the philanthropist ; which dawned in the moral writings and systems of the best antient sages, and beams forth with resplendent glory in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This benevolence, by restraining the selfish and dissocial passions, and elevating our views above sordid pursuits ; by directing the mind to noble objects, and exercising its best powers and feelings, leads to the perfection, and constitutes the distinguishing excellence of our nature.

Such is the great, leading, essential principle of your Society ; and what may we not say in its commendation ? What is there of beauty, of dignity, of real worth in the heart or life of man, which derives not its value and its charm from benevolence ? Is there a single sentiment or affection, in no degree akin to benevolence, which we should not blush to cherish and avow ? Are there any pleasures or amusements, not partaking of benevolence, which it would become us to enjoy ? Do any of the honors or possessions of life, do any endowments or acquisitions of the mind, unadorned by benevolence, add lustre to

the human character? So far from it, they serve but to strengthen the arm of villainy, and make meanness more conspicuous and more disgraceful. Without benevolence, what is wealth, what is power, what is even wisdom or religion? Wealth is insolence, power is oppression, wisdom degenerates into cunning, and religion becomes hypocrisy.

No less essential is the cultivation of this genuine benevolence to social and real happiness, than to true dignity and honor. Very justly was it said by the great LORD BACON, "company is but a croud, and faces but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love.*" Destroy the diffusive influence of benevolence, and what remains to sweeten and adorn the intercourse of human beings? Where is the benignant look, the kind greeting, the prompt and delicate attention and assistance? Where are the thousand nameless kindnesses, which fly from heart to heart, enriching alike the giver and receiver? Where are the sweets of social and friendly converse, the joys of the domestic fireside, "and all the charities of father, son, and brother?" Where shall misery

* Civil and Moral Essays, page 113.

recline its head, or sorrow find a sympathizing tear? The heart of man is cold and relentless; no tenderness endears, no sympathy softens, no misery moves it. Human life is a dreary wilderness, and the poor pilgrim, in his progress through it, finds no escape from the "slough of despond," and the "giant despair!" Thanks to the Father of mercies, this is not our deplorable condition. The cheering, vivifying sun of the moral world, however its rays may fail to reach the Zembla of some souls, cannot be extinguished. In spite of the subtlety of philosophy, or the depravity of avarice, benevolence exists, to enliven and elevate the heart and the mind, to purify the morals and endear the manners of man, to diffuse over the face of society the bloom of beauty and the glow of joy, and to give a vivid richness of coloring to the whole scenery of human life. Prosperity has its charm, and adversity its solace;---nay more, benevolence redoubles the blessings of life, and transmutes its ills into sources of joy.

This is the great triumph, the highest glory of benevolence. Man is beset with many wants, and borne down with many sorrows. Benevolence not only relieves these wants, and soothes these sorrows; it not only enlightens ignorance,

reclaims error, gives eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame ; feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, visits the sick and imprisoned, illumines the gloom of the dungeon, and saves "him that was ready to perish ;" but, in doing these things, it feels in its own, and excites in the bosom of gratitude, sublimest joy. What emotions did the benevolent HOWARD experience, when he appeared as a guardian angel to save the poor wretch whom he found chained to the walls of a deep and damp dungeon, perishing in anguish and misery !* And what were the feelings of this poor wretch, when he had received strength to behold and bless his preserver ! What exquisite sensations of delight did RUMFORD enjoy, when he had raised his host of beggars from the depth of misery, and vice, and contempt, and beheld them in smiling health and virtue, full of happiness, full of gratitude ! And what sentiments of holy joy did they realize, when uniting in aspirations to Heaven for blessings on their benefactor !

Shallow, as well as impious, is that philosophy, which would arraign the wisdom and goodness of our Heavenly Father, for shading with misery

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* Aikin's Life of Howard, p. 62.

the happiness of our present state. Nature's poet has truly said,

“Sweet are the uses of adversity.”

Through the mild and powerful influence of benevolence, all the unavoidable evils of life are calculated to improve our virtue, and exalt our happiness. Look to those men, who possess like HOWARD, the gifts of nature and of fortune, but have taken no lessons in the school of adversity and benevolence. What is their virtue, or their happiness? Do you call him the happy, or the virtuous man, who has no wants to interest the feelings of benevolence; and no benevolence to give him a feeling for the wants of others; who is so firm, as to be unmoved in the midst of miseries, and so impartial and neutral in his emotions, as to regard with the same indifference the unfeeling oppressor and the innocent sufferer; who, if his object be pleasure, pursues the career of sensuality, undisturbed by the cries of distress, or the tears of affliction; and who, if his ruling passion be avarice, is incommoded by no feelings of compassion, by no compunctions of conscience, but plods on, without interruption, in his ways and means of lucre, and, if he can creep through life, and elude the halter, satisfies his ambition? Do

you find any thing in the enjoyments of such men, that approaches to your idea of happiness? Is there any thing in their characters, which bears a semblance to the pure lustre of christian virtue? Pour into their coffers the treasures of the Indies, decorate them in bawbles, and surround them with all the splendor of equipage and pomp ;---they are but more distinguished slaves of avarice or vice, and have never known the reality of happiness, nor felt the consciousness of virtue.

“They live, and are despised ; they die, nor more are named.*”

All cannot be HOWARDS, or RUMFORDS: But all may imitate their sincere, ardent, and active benevolence. All cannot travel into foreign countries, to explore the regions of misery, and meliorate the condition of the wretched: But all may cheerfully contribute to relieve distressed objects, which come to their knowledge, and to cherish and improve the humane institutions of their own country. All cannot perform the glorious services, which HOWARD and RUMFORD have rendered to mankind: But all may possess their excellent spirit, and experience their heartfelt reward. It requires no nice specula-

* Spence.

tions, no extraordinary attainments in the specious philosophy of the age, to comprehend their benevolence : It is a benevolence of the heart, not the head ; and practice, not theory, forms the basis of their glory.

It is honorable to human nature, that the gratitude of mankind has made the exertion of such benevolence a passport to fame. HOWARD has now quitted the scenes of human misery, and the region of human glory ; but the fame of his deeds on earth, as extensive as it is pure, is a rich inheritance to the world. He ranks with the brightest ornaments of our species. His praise is on every tongue, and in every heart. Princes and people, poets, orators, and artists conspire with enthusiasm to celebrate his worth. That ardent and elevated statesman, whose glowing language describes with equal felicity the revolutions of empire, and the mild glories of benevolence, pays to HOWARD the homage of his genius : “ I cannot name this gentleman,” says the peerless BURKE, “ without remarking that his labors and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has visited all Europe ; not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, nor the stateliness of

temples ; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art ; not to collect medals, or collate manuscripts ;---but to dive into the depths of dungeons ; to plunge into the infection of hospitals ; to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain ; to take the gage and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt ; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original ; and it is as full of genius, as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of philanthropy ; a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labor is felt in every country : I hope he will anticipate his final reward, by seeing all its effects fully realized in his own. He will receive, not by retail but in gross, the reward of those who visit the prisoner ; and he has so forestalled and monopolized this branch of charity, that there will be, I trust, little room to merit by such acts of benevolence hereafter.*

How worthless and disgusting is the noisy fame of the tyrants, the destroyers, and the corrup-

* Burke's works, Vol. IV. p. 28.

ters of man, whose names encumber and blacken the pages of history, compared with the pure and perennial glory of a HOWARD !

You will forgive the digression, gentlemen, (if it be a digression) into which the mention of this illustrious philanthropist has led me. Many others might be named, and some our own countrymen, distinguished for humanity and munificence, a delineation of whose virtues would form a beautiful comment on the principles, which we have attempted to illustrate. But I must now solicit your indulgence, while I proceed, with some preliminary observations, to consider, more particularly, the design of your institution.

Much has been effected by the exertions of benevolent and enterprising individuals: But the exertions of individuals are unequal to the accomplishment of designs, which require great diversity of powers, or abundance of resources; which demand the combined energies of wealth, of science, and of labor. The institution of societies, therefore, for the promotion of important objects has received the sanction of the wisest and best men, especially of modern times. It is

in the variety, the excellence, and, above all, the humanity of their public institutions, that the moderns may justly claim a high superiority over the antients. The most polished and powerful nations of antiquity, so renowned for political wisdom and military glory, for advancement in learning and the elegant arts, have left no proofs of superior attention in cherishing the benevolent affections, and cultivating the arts of humanity. We find in their history no mention of institutions for removing the wants, or mitigating the miseries of life ; for soothing the pangs of sickness and disease, or affording refuge and relief to poverty, misfortune and old age. They were strangers to the ardent and diffusive charity of that divine religion, whose influence has since reached even to nations, where its rites are not received ; and softens the hearts of many individuals, whose proud minds reject its doctrines.

The age, in which we live, so loaded with ridicule and reproach for its whimsies in philosophy, and profligacy in principles and manners, has, however, some claims to honorable distinction. Never, perhaps, was the light of science and the spirit of charity more diffused. Never was ingenuity more successful in devising useful plans

for relieving distress, and extending the comforts of life, nor benevolence more active in giving to such plans effect and energy. Never were humane establishments more wisely formed, nor more richly endowed. Never were humane and charitable associations more numerous, more liberally supported, nor more extensively beneficial. Benevolence and humanity were never invested with higher powers, nor adorned with brighter honors.

In acknowledging the justness of this tribute to the age, our eyes are directed to the British nation; and to that nation, as illustriously distinguished, we may look with equal pride and pleasure;---with pride, for there is our parent country;---with pleasure, for her excellent principles and institutions still have a propitious influence on our own country. We cherish her humane principles, we transplant her institutions, we form societies in imitation of her example, and display some portion of that liberal spirit, which has given a lustre to the reputation of British humanity.

Americans, we know, have been stigmatized for their devotion to interest, and want of pub-

lic spirit ; and we must acknowledge, (for we cannot disguise the truth) that there are portions of our country little distinguished for public acts of beneficence, or institutions of charity ; and individuals among us, whose most brilliant virtues are assiduity in hoarding wealth, and vigilance in guarding it. But these virtues are not peculiar to the genius of Americans. A writer of no less authority, than Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE, represents the nations of Europe, in his time, as exposed to similar reproach ; and accounts for their eagerness after gain, from the vast increase of riches among them, by means of the discovery of the East and West-Indies. “ Where few are rich,” he observes, “ few care for it ; where many are so, many desire it ; and most in time begin to think it necessary. When this opinion grows generally in a country, the temples of honor are soon pulled down, and all men’s sacrifices are made to those of fortune.” The desire of riches then degenerates into avarice ; and “ avarice,” adds this excellent author, “ is of all passions the most sordid, the most clogged and covered with dirt and with dross, so that it cannot raise its head beyond the smell of the earth.”* But, if the rapid increase of

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 * Essay on Ant. and Mod. Learning.

riches in our country has increased the number and the ardor of competitors in pursuit of gain, and subjected some to the imputation of this grovelling passion, we may congratulate ourselves that a more enlightened and liberal spirit is now pervading our country, and directing the favored sons of fortune to a disposition of their wealth, no less honorable to themselves, than useful to the public. If we find some individuals, who seem to lose the inclination, in proportion as they acquire the ability to do good ; could we not point to many others, whose souls enlarge with their possessions, and whose happiness is never more exquisite, than when they are extensively diffusing the blessings they enjoy ? Delightful proofs of the increase of this spirit are found in the increasing number and prosperity of the excellent public institutions, which are established and warmly cherished, in various parts of of the United States, and begin already to reflect lustre on the character of our country.

Inspired with this enlightened and liberal spirit, you, gentlemen, have added to the number of these excellent institutions, by forming the Merrimack Humane Society. In doing this, you have followed the example of the disting-

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 wished philanthropists of our age, and done equal honor to your judgment and your feelings. Since the important discoveries of modern science have ascertained, that suspension of the vital functions is not incompatible with life, and that by timely and proper exertions, resuscitation may be effected, the truly benevolent, in all parts of the civilized world, have zealously promoted the institution of Humane Societies.

The first Society of this kind, we are informed, was established in the year 1767, by a few wealthy citizens of Amsterdam; and the astonishing success attending their exertions led to the institution of similar societies, in all the principal cities of Europe.* Our own country was not inattentive to such laudable examples. The city of Philadelphia, and the metropolis of our Commonwealth, so distinguished for the humanity and munificence of their public institutions, car-

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 * The reports of the Society instituted at Amsterdam inform us, that in the space of four years after its institution, one hundred and fifty drowned persons were recovered by use of the means, recommended by the Society. Some of these had been under water an hour and a half.

In nine months after the Humane Society was established at Paris, experiments were made on twenty-eight drowned persons, and twenty-three of them were recovered.

From the reports of the Royal Humane Society in London, established in 1774, it appears, that in the first ten years, seven hundred and ninety-six were restored from apparent death: By far the greater part of these had been drowned; some had lain under water an hour and a half, and one two hours.

Dr. LATHROP'S *Disc. before the Hum. Soci in Boston.*

ly established and liberally patronized Humane Societies.

To some it may appear, at first view, that the Humane Society in Boston supersedes the necessity of one in this place. But, gentlemen, when your situation is considered ; on the one hand a capacious and delightful river, convenient for commerce and inviting to amusement, and, on account of these very advantages, frequently presenting those distressing events, which give occasion for humane societies ; and, on the other hand, an extent of sea coast, which subjects the shipwrecked mariner to those sufferings and miseries, which it is a part of your design to alleviate ; and when it is considered, that you act in concert with other societies, and serve to increase and extend their benefits ; it must be acknowledged, that the institution of your Society was dictated no less by wisdom, than humanity ; and that it deserves the generous patronage of every man, who regards the life and welfare of his fellow beings.*

* In England, notwithstanding the extensive influence of the Royal Humane Society, we find others established at Birmingham, Gloucester, Lancaster, Bristol, Whitehaven, Norwich, Exeter, Kent, Newcastle, and elsewhere.

By the indefatigable exertions of the Royal Humane Society alone, not less than three thousand persons have been restored to life. The benefit of the Society, we are told, is by no means confined to the two cases of drowning and suspension. Its timely succors have roused the lethargy of opium, taken in immoderate and repeated

The design of your institution, gentlemen, has already been expressed in the words of your act of incorporation ;---it is, to recover life, when apparently lost ; to preserve it, when in danger ; to relieve its severest sufferings ; and, we may add, to collect such facts, pursue such enquiries, adopt such improvements, and diffuse such information, as may facilitate the promotion of these objects. After thus repeating your design, and enumerating the objects embraced by it, what more can we say, to raise, in the mind of any man, the importance of your society ? Shall we formally and gravely proceed to demonstrate, that life is valuable---that danger is alarming---that misery is painful ? No, gentlemen, there are neither Stoics nor Pyrrhonists among us ; there are no philosophers now in the world, who maintain that health and sickness, happiness and misery, life and death are all the same. The man, who does not instantly open his heart and his treasures to aid your design, can have no faith in your power to

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doses ; they have rescued the wretched victims of intoxication ; rekindled the life extinguished by the sudden stroke of lightning ; recovered the appoplectic ; restored life to the infant, that had lost it in its birth ; they have proved efficacious in cases of accidental smothering, and of suffocation by noxious damps ; in instances in which the tenderness of the infant body, or the debility of age greatly lessened the probability of success : Insomuch that no species of death seems to be placed beyond the reach of the Society's assistance, where the mischief has gone no farther, than an obstruction of the movements of the animal machine, without any damage of the organs themselves,

effect what you promise ; he must suppose you are a set of impostors, and insist on witnessing with his own eyes your fidelity, and the success of your skill ; nay, he would not then be persuaded, though numbers should “ rise from the dead.” He deceives himself ; his heart, not his understanding, wants conviction. But, he replies, my heart is already open to you ; I give you my sincerest approbation, my warmest wishes, my kindest sympathy, and sometimes even my tears ! This *feeling* patronage is so cheap, as probably to be withheld by few ; and it is so delicious, as to satisfy some even of the nicest and most refined sensibilities. Happily, however, you are not left to the support of such patronage. In a christian, humane assembly, animated with that fervent and active charity, which is not satisfied with saying “ be ye warmed and filled,” you have only to shew your wants, and their treasures open with their hearts.

Your wants gentlemen, are humble, but they are real. You have no stately edifices to erect, no ostentatious establishments to endow, no spacious and splendored scenes of rural elegance and delight to adorn and decorate for the gratification of luxury, pride, and vanity : The object of

your tender and anxious solicitude is not the man of pleasure and fortune, reclining at his ease on his downy couch ;---it is the poor, distressed, shipwrecked sailor, suffering on the bleak and comfortless shore, in the darkness and cold tempests of the night, houseless, friendless, no light to guide, no voice to cheer, no hand to help him ; his companions in distress, whelmed in the ocean ; his dearest friends and connexions, whom his heart in the eagerness of hope and joy had already embraced, anxiously waiting his arrival, but unconscious of his fate ;---it is to afford this distressed, exhausted, perishing wretch a sheltering hut and bed of straw, to save him from the horrors of instant death, that you now solicit the charity of this christian people. And where is the man, who of his abundance will not joyfully contribute, or who of his hard earnings will not bestow something for such an object ? Where is the poor widow, who can withhold her two mites ? Where is the rich Zaccheus, who would not give the half of his goods, that every part of our coast might be furnished with these humble shelters of distress ? All ye, who have sympathy in your hearts, who ever felt for a fellow-creature in distress, indulge now your feelings in providing relief for

him, who could not withhold it from you. The generous sailor's heart and hand are "open as day to melting charity." How does he delight in doing a noble action? In his prosperity, how does he exult to make the unfortunate share in his joys? And shall he, when in the lowest depths of distress, be unregarded by us, in our prosperity? Every principle, and sentiment, and feeling in the heart, which is not dead to the glow of sensibility and virtue, forbid it,

Another of your objects, gentlemen, is to reward extraordinary exertions for preserving the lives of those, who are in imminent danger of perishing. Here let not avarice (so full of excuses) affect to justify the want of liberal feelings, by asserting the impropriety of such rewards. Who doubts the propriety of rewarding uncommon exertions of disinterested virtue in public life? And shall exertions of virtue in humbler life, no less uncommon and disinterested, pass without notice or regard? They, whose occupations make them most conversant with scenes of danger, are generally such persons, as, without any imputation of interested views, feel a high sense of public approbation, and may have families, whose support would depend on

your bounty. If a poor man, in adventuring to save the life of his neighbor or benefactor, should unfortunately lose his own life, and leave a family of helpless orphans ; is it not a most sacred duty to provide for these orphans the support, of which they are deprived through the humanity of their father ? But should he save his neighbor or benefactor, and live to experience in his own breast a reward, infinitely superior to any in your power to bestow, still let him and his family feel, that such heroic exertions of humanity are honorable in the view of men ; give him some precious memorial, to which, in his parental lessons of virtue, he may point the glistening eyes of his children, teach them the way to honorable distinction, and enkindle in their bosoms the noble ardor, which glows in his own.

But why should we dwell on the particular objects of your Society, which claim the liberal aid of wealth ? Your design is co-extensive with human miseries ; and all, who compassionate the distressed, and have more means than opportunities to relieve them, will gratefully accept your offers of service in the cause of humanity, and deposit their bounty in your hands : For who doubts that, in such a cause, you will be

faithful stewards? To the virtuous and tender fair we have nothing to urge. The sensibility of woman ever anticipates persuasion. While we look to her for a model of fervent benevolence, and persevering fortitude in scenes of domestic distress, we are sure of her bountiful patronage to animate us in alleviating calamities, which are beyond the reach of her exertion. For, with equal truth and beauty it is said, "If virtuous sensibility could assume a form and appear in person here, she would only be the loveliest of women: If tenderness has a throne of glory upon earth, it is in the heart of a mother."*

The wisdom and policy of some associations for benevolent purposes have been called in question. Your Society, gentlemen, is exposed to no objections, which may not, with equal plausibility, be alledged against benevolence itself. The charity of some institutions is confined to particular persons, or denominations: That of your society, in humble imitation of the goodness of our heavenly Father, whose tender mercies are over all his works, extends to all descriptions of human beings; to every man, who is nigh unto death, or who suffers the perils of ship-

* Hon. J. Q. Adams' Address to the Char. Fire Soc.

wreck, or who saves a soul alive, of whatever party or nation he may be ; and your reward is the holy and sublime joy of doing good.

Yet do we not sometimes hear a suggestion, that these public societies seem rather for ostentation, than utility ; and that the truly humane may find, within their own knowledge, objects of distress sufficient to engage all their charity ? They, who make this suggestion, ought well to examine the motives, whence it proceeds ; and satisfy themselves, that they are not wanting in active zeal to seek and relieve distressed objects : For, generally, those who refuse their assistance to public societies, are not among the most distinguished for private benefactions. That benevolence, which is so extremely delicate, as, on all occasions, to shrink from human vision, may justly be suspected to have not enough of energy, to operate very powerfully even in secret. There are some acts of benevolence, which to make known is ostentation ; others, from their very nature, must be public : And the same divine authority, which forbids us to do our alms before men, *to be seen of them*, enjoins us to let our light so shine before others, that they may

see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in Heaven. Do you, gentlemen, on this public occasion, feel any other ambition, than to make known the wonderful goodness of our heavenly Father, to glorify his holy name, and to call forth the grateful benevolence of his creatures? Where are your plumes of distinction, your badges of ostentation? I do verily believe, that, at this moment, your hearts are humbled in reverential gratitude to the great Giver and Preserver of life, and partake of that pure, unambitious benevolence, which actuated the meek and lowly Jesus, when he went about doing good, relieving distress and soothing affliction; when he visited the weeping family of Jairus, and restored to him his little daughter; when he journeyed to the city Nain, had compassion on the distressed widow, recalled to life her only son, and delivered him to his mother; when he proceeded to Bethany, sympathized in tears with Mary and Martha, and awakened from death their brother Lazarus. Cherish these sentiments, persevere in your godlike design, and may you never be weary in well doing.

To perform miracles is not the prerogative of man ; but what wonders are we now permitted to behold ! Thousands of our fellow creatures have been rescued, by human exertions, from the dark dominion of the grave, and restored to improved virtue, to increased happiness. The English Humane Societies make it a part of their design to furnish those, whom they are so happy as to recover to life, with the means of religious instruction, to give them devotional books, and to have them assembled at stated periods for divine worship.* In resuscitating the body, they endeavor likewise to reanimate the mind, and inspire it with sentiments of virtue, piety, and gratitude. What a spectacle ! An assembly of human beings, awakened from the dead, with renewed ardor of devotion praising their God, and imploring blessings on their benefactors ! What the emotions of these benefactors ! They not only behold the dearest connexions restored to each other in ecstacy of joy ; but they behold the child more endeared to the parent, and the parent more honored by the child, the brother more beloved, the friend more cherished, and the citizen more valued ; while he, who once was stained with crimes, appears in the

* Dr. J. C. LITTLE.

.....
robes of virtue ; and he, who in gloomy despair had flung away his life, is revived to peace, to piety, and to happiness !

This is no picture of the imagination ; it has been realized, and, adds the amiable Dr. LETTSOM, “the tear of compassion and sympathy, drawn from every eye, by such a sight, is the strongest tribute of public approbation, that can be given to the exertions of the Society.”

You, gentlemen, may live to experience such sublimely tender emotions. With the blessing of the great Author of life, you may be the happy instruments, not only of restoring a fellow-being to the joy of his friends, but of saving him to everlasting life. What a reward for all your labors, for all your cares and anxious solicitude ! We know not how soon your humane exertions may be of infinite importance to some of us, who are now assembled, witnessing the principles, and the wants of your Society. Can we think of withholding the means, necessary to aid your humanity ? Will the hand of charity be closed, while pity, and sympathy, and mercy, and eve-

ry strong and tender affection, plead in our breasts ?

“ We do pray for mercy ;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy.”*

The vain amusements and honors of life, about which we are so solicitous, are fast receding from our view, and the hour is approaching, when no efforts of art, no powers of man, can rescue us from the grave. In that awful moment, when the “ hand of death presses on the human heart,” the recollection of one benevolent act, of one humane exertion, is of more worth than all the pomp, and splendor, and glory of this world : And, when summoned, with the assembled universe, before the tribunal of our final Judge, what is our hope of mercy ? Is it because we have performed great exploits, or displayed great talents ; because we have made great attainments in science, or acquired great possessions of wealth ? Or is it, to borrow the words of the profound and pious BARROW, “ because we have made goodly professions, because we have been orthodox in our opinions, because we have frequented religious exercises, have prayed often and long, have kept many fasts

.....
* Shakspeare.

and heard many sermons ; because we have been staunch in our conversations, because we have been punctual in our dealings, because we have maintained a specious guise of piety, sobriety and justice ?”*---Listen to the benevolent and blessed JESUS.---“Then shall the KING say unto them on his right hand, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : Naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee ? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink ? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in ? Or naked, and clothed thee ? When saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ?

And the king shall answer, and say unto them, verily I say unto you, INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN, YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME !”

.....
* WORKS OF ISAAC BARROW, D. D. Vol. 1. p. 311.

ODES

Written for the Anniversary of the MERRIMACK HUMANE SOCIETY.

GREAT source of life, whose breath at first
Gave motion to our senseless dust,
And shall from death restore ;
By THEE all living creatures move,
Each pulse that beats declares thy love,
Without THEE—beats no more.

O ! What is Man, that he should be
Admitted to co-act with THEE,
(When all the power is thine ;)—
Employ'd to save in deep distress,
Or from th' embrace of Death release,
When such thy great design !

Thanks for the pleasing knowledge giv'n—
What wonders by indulgent Heav'n
Have human efforts crown'd ;
What numbers enter'd with the dead—
(Their breath retir'd—sensation fled—)
Again their lives have found.

Thanks for the means to man disclos'd
To wake his friend—in death repos'd ;
O rapturous delight !
—To change the wife's, the mother's tear
From deepest woe, to joy sincere,
—Joy of unmeasur'd height.

O grant those pure affections, Lord,
Which with the SAVIOR's love accord :
Bless each HUMANE DESIGN :
Prevent men with thy kind support,
Or save them in the last resort ;
And may all lives be thine.

A SHRIEK of terror pierc'd the air,
'Twas the last effort of despair.
A Youth unskill'd amid the wave
Toil'd, panted, struggled—'twas his grave.

Hear a fond mother's frantic cries,
In strains how loud, how wild they rise ;
Where, where's my child ? I'll brave the
stream,
I'll plunge, I'll find and die with him.

See where a father's bosom'd grief
Disowns compassion, mocks relief ;
But one faint hope now cheers the gloom,
Grand Heav'n to innocence a tomb.

The sad, the melancholy prayer,
Is heard above, accepted there.
A pitying Spirit downward fled
And b'nd the stream give up its dead.

O'er the pale ruin Pity sighs,
And anguish bends her streaming eyes :
But Hope presumptuous dares again
Repeat her soothing, suppliant Strain.

'Thou who eanst kill and make alive,
Bid life's extinguish'd spark revive ;
Rekindle reason's glowing flame ;
Reanimate this lifeless frame.

Commission'd from the skies to save
HUMANITY benignant, cries,
Wake from the slumbers of the grave !
GOD is thy help, arise—arise.

TO HUMANITY.

BLEST source of joy, benignant pow'r,
Who lov'st the ills of life to cheer,
To sorrow's cheek the rose restore,
And wipe affliction's streaming tear ;
Thy smiles disperse the gloom of care,
At thine approach flies stern despair.
Pale want and fell disease their rage re-
strain,
And death, dread tyrant shakes his dart
in vain.

Hark ! from the shore what sounds
arise !
Heard you the loud, the piercing cries ?
See, stretch'd o'er yon untimely bier,
The victim of the waves appear.
See, see that little orphan band
With down cast eye and folded hand ;
They grieve, they weep, for help in an-
guish call,
That corse was once their father, hope—
their all,

....

Oh ! hear that agonizing sigh.
 And is no aid nor comfort nigh ?
 From the dark mansion of the grave,
 God of the waters ! thou can'st save.
 Humanity bends o'er his frame,
 Breathes in his lips the vital flame ;
 Faint throbs the heart, he moves, the
 mists decay,
 The languid eye once more beholds the
 day.

Come, let us strike the trembling lyre,
 Let solemn notes melodious roll,
 Let gratitude the song inspire,
 And love and joy inflame the soul.
 When in relentless ocean's power
 We saw, we heard, we breath'd no more ;
 Restor'd to life, to friends, to peace by
 thee,
 We'll sing thy triumph, sweet Humanity.

.....

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	Dols.	Cts.		Dols.	Cts.
1804.					
Oct. 15. Jonas Lesley's bill	6	88	Sept. 1804. Balance of old acc't.	408	81
E. W. Allen's bill, advertising,	2		Sept. 21. Amount coliee. by W.		
Galen H. Fay's bill, do.	1		Woart, from annual members,	124	14
Dec. 24. Postage of a letter			1805—Sept. 19. Amount col-		
from J. Bartlet,		10	lected by W. Woart from an-		
1805. Jan. 3. Paid E.M. Blunt's			nual members and members		
bill printing Dr. Dana's Dis.	40		for life,	349	
May 31. E. Moulton for making			Collection at the anniversary		
and J. Akin for engraving, a			meeting and donation since,	96	92
medal presented Capt. Gage			Advance on specie,	1	10
for his humane exertions in					
saving the lives of 200 per-				979	97
sons from wreck of ship Sarah	31				
Aug. 23. Deliv'd Cor. Sec. to					
present to Mr. Lowell, keeper					
of the lights on P. Island for					
assisting in saving the lives of					
a number of persons from a					
vessel wrecked,		10			
Balance due the Society,	888	99			
		979			97

Mid. Hist.
WE
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MSB 330
1805

