

## OBITUARY NOTICE.

SINCE the publication of the last volume of Transactions, the Society has had the misfortune to lose several of its most valuable members. Our two vice-presidents, Dr. BENJAMIN S. BARTON, and Gen. JONATHAN WILLIAMS, died within a short time of each other. The former by his extensive Botanical knowledge, and his various Philosophical and Philological writings, widely spread among foreigners the literary reputation of this country. The talents of the latter, though not unnoticed abroad, were best known to his fellow-citizens, to whom his virtues had peculiarly endeared him.

In the death of Dr. BENJAMIN RUSH, humanity has suffered a loss, as well as this Society, and our country. The memory of this eminent physician will be preserved as long as science and genius are held in honour among us.

ROBERT FULTON and ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON have also left us for a better world. Who can calculate the benefits that will result to mankind from the successful application of the powers of steam to the navigation of rivers, lakes, and seas, for which we are indebted to the genius of the one, and the patriotic enterprise of the other? Already the most distant parts of our extensive territory are brought into contact, as it were, with each other; and in this happy effort of talent and perseverance, we see an additional bond to the union of these states.

The mournful list is not yet closed. Other eminent men whom we were proud to number among our associates, claim the tribute of our sorrow. The reader has already anticipated the names of those great lawyers and statesmen, THOMAS M'KEAN and ALEXANDER JAMES DALLAS. To them we must add RAMSAY, the Historian of the United States, and DUNBAR, the self-taught Astronomer of the woods, whose communications have so often enriched our volumes, and reflected credit on the Society. We have also to regret the loss of WILSON, the American Ornithologist; the Botanist MÜHLENBERG; LEWIS, the successful explorer of the vast tract of country that lies between us and the Pacific Ocean; BARLOW, who first attempted to tune the American lyre to heroic sounds; KUHN, the pupil of Linneus, who ranked so high among the eminent physicians of this city; and MILLER, of New York, no less famed for his medical knowledge.

Nor must we omit to pay due respect to the memory of our learned and amiable associate DU PONT DE NEMOURS, who at the close of a long life left a country which he honoured, to end his days in the bosom of his American friends and of this Society, for which he always felt and expressed a peculiar predilection. Not the allurements of his native home, nor the distinguished honours lavished upon him by his discerning sovereign, could shake his firm resolve to live and die among us. He has left us his ashes, the memory of his worth, and the care of his honourable fame.

If a strong attachment to our country, evidenced by the most unequivocal acts, has entitled Du Pont de Nemours to be classed among our *American associates*, may we not justly pay the same tribute of respect to the memory of the learned Professor C. D. EBELING, of Hamburg, who made America the almost exclusive subject of his interesting labours? At a great expense, and by means of an extensive and unremitting correspondence with literary characters and others in this country, he procured the largest and most valuable collection, perhaps, that exists in the world, of documents relating to American affairs, and by that means was enabled to compose and publish his Geography of the United States, of which he has left us only seven volumes, containing the description of the states from New Hampshire to Virginia, inclusive. He had provided materials for describing in the same manner the southern and western states, and had in contemplation to revise the whole work when death arrested his labours. His memory justly deserves to be held by us in grateful remembrance.

By this summary notice it is only intended to recal to our minds the memory of the great and good men whose loss we deplore, and to point them out as examples worthy of imitation.

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Since the above was sent to the press, the Society had to lament the loss of their venerable president, Dr. CASPAR WISTAR, who died on Thursday the 22d of January, of a severe attack of typhus fever.

Dr. WISTAR was elected a member of the Society in 1787; was chosen a vice-president in 1795; and, on the 2d of January, 1815, was raised to the presidential chair, in the room of *Thomas Jefferson*, who had declined a re-election.

The Society, desirous of testifying their deep sense of the loss which they have sustained in the death of their late president, and of paying a deserved tribute to his talents and virtues, have resolved, that a Funeral Oration be pronounced in honour of his memory, and have appointed William Tilghman, chief justice of the state and one of their vice-presidents, to perform this melancholy duty.