

SOME

SERIOUS THOUGHTS

ON

The DESIGN of erecting a COLLEGE
in the Province of *NEW-YORK*.

SHEWING

The eminent Advantages of a liberal Education,
more especially with regard to *RELIGION* and *POLITICKS*. Humbly offered to the Publick, for the
Encouragement of so useful an *UNDERTAKING*.

By *HIPPOCRATES MITHRIDATE* Apoth.

*The Price of Wisdom is above Rubies. Job. xxviii. 18. Hec Studii adolescentiam
aunt ten etatem obtulunt. secundas res urant, adversis profectum ac solatium praebent.
Delibant domi, non impediunt foris: Pernoctant nobiscum, Peregrinantur, vultantur. CIC.*

N E W - Y O R K.

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DEDICATION.

up on You by Persons of little Repute and less Honesty, been able to
sift the universal Acknowledgement of the grateful and judicious.
Tho' Slaves and Sweepers use their utmost Industry to derogate from,
they can never sully, Your Character. It is common for Dogs to
bark at the Moon but they cannot deprive it of its Lustre. Their
Schemes are notorious; so is their Malice. But it is impossible for
the most artful attempt to prevail against immutable Truth, and
real Glory. And it is for your Honour, Gentlemen, that those who are
your Enemies, are known to be so to their Country. You are tra-
duc'd, because you cannot be corrupted, and your Innocence will ever
be disgraceful to the Guilty. It is therefore no Wonder to be vilify-
ed by those whose Applause is dishonourable.

W^HAT a celebrated Author said of the Earle of Wharfe
is, without Flattery, Applicable to You. " You have acted in so
" much Consistency with Yourself, and promoted the Interests of
" Your Country in so uniform a Manner, that even those who would
" misrepresent your generous Designs for the publick Good, cannot
" but approve the Steadiness and Intrepidity with which you pursue
" them."

BUT Your glorious Design of rescuing us from Vice and Folly,
by Founding a COLLEGE for teaching the Liberal Sciences,
will, in a peculiar Manner, reflect immortal Honour on your Me-
mories. This is an irrefragable Argument that your Views for the
publick Good are not confin'd to our Bodies or Estates. They extend
to the Cultivation of our nobler Parts, our Minds and intellectual
Faculties. They are boundless and unlimited.

DEDICATION.

F O R M E R *Assemblies have, indeed, concerted Measures for aggrandizing the Province, and enriching the People; but you have formed a Scheme for ennobling our Natures, exalting our Reasons, and rectifying our Judgements. They have endeavour'd to keep us from Want and Poverty; You have studied to deliver us from Vice and Ignorance. If they attempted to make us easy, You are resolv'd to make us Wise and Virtuous. For You, Gentlemen, was reserved the distinguishing Honour of banishing Darkness, Immorality and Barbarism; and of Introducing in their room, Light, Learning, Virtue and Politeness.*

T H A T *You may have the Pleasure of carrying into Execution what you have so nobly begun; that constant Success may attend your Patriot designs, and that you may still preserve that laudable Uanimity, and inflexible Resolution, which have been so eminently remarkable in all your Proceedings, is the sincere Wish of*

G E N T L E M E N

Your most obedient

humble Servants

The A U T H O R.





S O M E

SERIOUS THOUGHTS

O N

The DESIGN of erecting a COLLEGE in the
Province of *NEW-YORK*, &c.

F All our late publick Measures, there is none that pleases me more than the Design of erecting a College in this Province. The want of a liberal Education has long been our Reproach and Misfortune. Our Neighbours have told us in an insulting Tone, that the Art of getting Money, is the highest Improvement we can pretend to: That the wisest Man among us without a Fortune, is neglected and despis'd; and the greatest Blockhead with one, careld and honour'd: That, for this Reason, a poor Man of the most shining Accomplishments, can never emerge out of his Obscurity; while every wealthy Duncel is loaded with Honour, and beat down all before him. It were easy to shew the Falshood of these Accusations; and to make it probable that they proceed from their Envy at the flourishing Circumstances of this City. But that Learning hath not been encourag'd as it ought, admits of no Controversy. It was therefore worthy the Wisdom of our Legislature, amidst their Care for the Preservation of our Bodies and Estates, to extend their concern to the Improvement of our Minds, or at least to those of our Posterity. And as it is un-

natural for a Man not to wish well to his Descendants, the
 thoughts of leaving behind one a wise and virtuous Progeny,
 must afford every considerate Person a very sensible Satisfaction.
 For my own Part I am extremely pleas'd to think, that the next
 Age will produce Persons, who, by surpassing us in Knowledge
 and Learning, will be more useful to their Country; and sustain
 the important Posts in the Government with greater Honour
 and Applause: Instead of following the Example of their Ance-
 tors in amassing superfluous Riches, and leaving their Minds
 rude and uncultivated; I am wonderfully delighted to con-
 sider them devoting the vigour of their Youth to the Study of the
 Sciences, and enriching their Minds with the inestimable Treas-
 ures of Knowledge. While I am thus surveying the future
 Generation, methinks I behold a glorious multitude of States-
 men and Heroes, Philosophers and Orators rising before me,
 and blessing the Founders of that memorable Accademy to which
 they owe their Attainments in Knowledge, and their Usefulness
 to the Publick. I fancy them congratulating themselves that
 they were born in happier Times, and in a more enlighten'd Age,
 when the barbarous Ignorance that overspread the Land in the
 Days of their Fathers is dispers'd by the chearful Beams of Sci-
 ence: When a polite Education is accounted an Ornament to a
 Character; and Refinement and Elegance of Manners inspire
 Veneration and Esteem: When the embroider'd Fop, and the
 stuffed Dunce are the Objects of Dislike and Aversion; and Men
 of true Judgment, and serious Reflection, tho' cloath'd in Rags,
 honour'd and rever'd. I cannot, therefore, help recommending
 it to those in affluent Circumstances to employ part of their A-
 bundance in Promoting so useful an Undertaking: An Undertak-
 ing, which, if liberally encourag'd, will be an unspeakable Bless-
 ing to the later Posterity. For the Improvement of our Reason
 is the Glory of our Nature, and the distinguishing Mark of our
 Pre-

Prerogative above the animal Creation. It is this that constitutes the Difference between the polite Nations of Europe, and the rude Savages of Africa: Between the learn'd Divine, and the idolatrous Barbarian. Let therefore those who regard the Happiness of their Offspring leave them this invaluable Jewel, by contributing to a Design of improving their reasoning Faculties, and seasoning their tender Minds with the Principles of Morality and Religion. Money thus bestow'd, will undoubtedly yield them a more substantial Satisfaction, and transmit their Names with greater Honour to Posterity, than the lavishing it on empty Trifles, or the affecting a vain and useless Prodigality. But in order the better to prevail on them to encourage so important an Affair; I shall endeavour to point out a few of the numberless Advantages that will naturally result from a publick Seminary of Learning.

WITH respect to our Morals, no one is ignorant that the liberal Sciences are vastly subservient to the cause of Religion, and to demolish Enthusiasm and Superstition wherever they prevail. By rectifying our Judgements, and removing our Prejudices, they assist us to discern Virtue in its native Beauty and Lustre; and to strip Vice of those false Disguises, and artificial Ornaments, that conceal its natural Deformity and Horror. They not only make a moral Conduct lovely and rational, but absolutely essential to a finish'd Character; and capable of superadding Grace and Dignity to the most honourable and exalted. They convince us that Religion is inseparably connected with private and social Happiness, and of the utmost Consequence to the general Good of the World; and that Vice, on the contrary, is an Enemy to Society, and tends to the Dissolution and Ruin of publick Communities.

It is an excellent observation of my Lord *Bacon* " that a little " Philosophy disposes Men's Minds to Atheism, " whereas an extensive Knowledge naturally inspires them with a profound Veneration and Reverence for that adorable Being, whose infinite Wisdom and Benignity they find so gloriously display'd in the regular Frame and Constitution of the Universe. Hence it is that your shallow Wits are usually Profane and Sceptical, while Men of more retin'd and exalted Speculation, are generally remark'd for the most devout Adorers of the Deity.

A well-regulated Accademy will therefore cause a surprizing Alteration in the Behaviour of our young Gentry. A Beau will not be oblig'd to confess himself guilty of a thousand Immoralities he never committed, in order to recommend himself to his Companions : He may then profess some religious Principles without becoming the Scorn of the Company ; and prevent his being call'd a queer Fellow without being profane & licentious. Nay he will be able to convince the World, that he believes in a God without introducing his Name as a bye-word on the most impertinent Occasions ; and that a Man may have Wit and Humour without declaring himself either a Deist or a Libertine.

AS for that retin'd Politeness of solliciting People to drink Bumpers ---- it will vanish at the Dawn of Learning as the Stars before the rising Sun. The least Improvement of the Mind, will dictate a thousand Arguments to convince a Stranger that he is welcome, without attempting to deprive him of his Reason, or prejudice his Health. This will be reckon'd a barbarous Civility, a savage Kindness, and the most inexplicable Paradox in Nature. Drunkenness itself will meet with no Quarter : It will be esteem'd an indelible Stain in a Man's Character : A worse than brutal Practice, and the Source of innumerable Vices : A blemish that will render the Criminal unworthy of any Post in the Government ; and detestable to all the polite and sensible part of

the City. No one will therefore have the Front to value himself upon his drunken Frolics ; nor dare, as at present, glory in his Debauchery. But Religion will be in the highest Repute ; and Learning an incontest'd Mark of genteel Distinction.

AND as the Fair Sex (with Reverence be it spoken) make it their Study to render themselves agreeable to the Men ; they will naturally adorn themselves with those Qualifications which they find in greatest Esteem among us ; and which will soonest crown their ardent Wishes, by delivering them from the woful Condition of old Maids, and unespous'd Virgins. So that if the Men are distinguished for Learning and Virtue ; the Women will not be so impolitick as to neglect imitating their Example. For all their present Stratagems proving ineffectual to captivate a Man of solid Judgment and true Piety ; and their most formidable Artillery not doing the usual Execution ; they will be as emulous to excel each other in the Endowments of the Mind, as they are at present in the Decoration of their Bodies. A polite Author will give them more delight, than that vain profusion of Ornaments which hath so long constituted their Happiness ; and *the sensible Woman* will be a more envied Character than the *great Beauty*. Instead of whispering private Scandal, they will expatiate on literary Subjects ; and in the room of idle Tattle, and sing-song Conversation, a Vein of good Sense delivered in elegant Language will run thro' their enchanting Discourse. I cannot therefore help pleasing myself with the Thoughts of seeing our young Ladies, when thus reduc'd to a necessity of encreasing their Weapons, as great Proficients in the *Belles Lettres*, as they now are in the *My Series* of the Toilet ; and as eminent for Piety, as they are at present for Beauty. And being thus doubly equipp'd, they will at once, dazzle the Eye, and subdue the Soul. It will not be in the Power of Man to stand before them : For inward Greatness,

and Sanctity of Manners join'd to a beauteous Form, and blooming Face, will render them quite irresistible.

INFAMOUS, confessedly infamous will be the practice of breaking Windows, and wresting off Knockers. - - - The Persons guilty of this nocturnal Quixotism will be rank'd among Thieves and Robbers, with this aggravation of *their Crime*, that they injure their Neighbours for Sport and Diversion, while their more generous Bretheren do it for their maintainance and livelyhood.

BUT what prodigious Advantages may we not expect from a liberal Education, with regard to *Politicks* ?

Our Officers will be Peace, and our Exactors Righteousness. The Province will abound with sagacious Politicians, for whose Genius no conception or design is too vast: With upright Patriots, zealous for publick Liberty, and the welfare of their Country; and declared Enemies to Tyranny, Adulation, and Servility: With Lovers of human-kind; Men of Virtue who adore Liberty and Truth, and abhor Falshood and Iniquity; who despise little Arts, and expose bad ones.

OUR publick Stations will be fill'd with Men of superior Sense, and invincible Resolution; with those glorious Fathers of their Country, whose Bosoms glow with patriot Virtue, and are impenetrable to the most alluring Offers that are inconsistent with the publick Weal: With those sublime and incorruptible Geniuses, who look upon Liberty as one of the choicest blessings that Heaven bestows upon Mortals; and without which, the human Species is worse than the *Beasts that perish*; with those generous Souls who think it their indispensable Duty with the hazard of their Lives and Fortunes, to promote the general Welfare; and who consider the loss of Freedom as a kind of Damnation in Politicks; while those infamous Tools of Power (if such there dare to be) that are the pests of Society, and the curse of a People, will be cover'd with Shame and Confusion.

THE Province will produce accomplish'd Historians to record the Conduct of our future Governours. For want of this Advantage, the disinterested Labours, and popular Measures of our former Rulers have either been unskillfully represented, or wholly buried in Oblivion. How many passages of their Lives, that ought to have been remember'd to their Honour, have been unfortunately lost, for want of an able Pen to transmit them to Posterity ! How many illustrious Transactions have been devour'd by Time, which might have shone with a transcendant lustre in Memoirs or Annals ! And how many noble Deeds have been obliterated from our Memories, which, had they been judiciously recorded, would have been worthy the Imitation of their Successors, and have erected eternal Monuments to their Praise ! But this Misfortune will be happily remedied when the Province produces Men of sufficient Talents and Impartiality to do Justice to the Gentlemen that may hereafter be intrusted with the Administration of this Government. What a pompous Figure will our *Treaties* make in Story ! How will our costly and magnificent *Presents* to the *Indians* astonish Posterity ! The incredible Number of the *Six Nations* ! The indefatigable Pains to preserve them in the *British* Interest ! The *private Presents* given them ! The innumerable multitude that assists us against the Enemy ! The Terror they strike into the French ! These and a thousand other surprizing Facts and Transactions will then be represented in their true Light and Splendor.

AND here I cannot but lament our present want of an impartial Historiographer to give the World a faithful Account of his -----'s laudable Conduct during the late Exp---n against C---n---y. Sure I am that his unparallel'd Vigilance for our Safety abstracted from all private Views, or the Prospect of enriching himself, might be handed down to Posterity with immortal Praise and Renown. But this by the bye.

OUR Poets too will be furnished with inexhaustible Topicks for celebrating the gubernatorial Perfections. --- And I doubt not but some of our future Commanders, when sung by a tuneful Bard, will make as great a Figure in Heroicks, as an *Ulysses* or a *Nestor*. Their every Virtue will be immortaliz'd in Verse. And is it not an Honour to a Province to have the Wisdom and Integrity of its Ruler, resounded thro' the World? Nay I cannot help thinking that the Publick will be favour'd with an epic Poem, perhaps little inferior to *Homer* or *Vergil*, under the Title of *the Treaty with the Six Nations*. And why may not a future Corporation be suppos'd to write *New-Year Odes* in Honour to his then Excellency? We have already seen that an *Address* in Metre sounds most harmoniously.

IT will be next to impossible, in an Age of good Sense and Learning, either for Knaves or Fools to nestle themselves into an elevated Situation; or if they should, the united Breath of a discerning People, will soon puff them to the D - - -

ADD to this, that a Man tho' never so well dispos'd that way, will dread to flatter, as he will to rob; and be, as certainly detested for the one, as hang'd for the other. Should therefore a reverend Body of Clergy-men think fit to Address a future Governor for enlarging the Sphere of their secular Business; and gravely tell the World of his great Regard for the established Church, and Zeal for the protestant Interest; when he never troubles his head about *Religion*, nor cares for any *Interest* but his own; neither their venerable Bands, nor flowing Gowns will screen them from Contempt and Infamy. The best that will be said of them in an Age of Learning and impartial thinking is, that they publickly counterfact what they publickly teach, and assert what every Man in the Province knows to be a Falsehood.

AGAIN, should a Corporation presume to tell a future Governor, in an elaborate Address, that the People are in a starving Condition,

Condition, when the Generality of them live in Plenty and many are given up to riot and Extravagance ; they will be stigmatiz'd for the most abject Flatterers in the Creation, and the Author of such a detestable Piece of Court-Rhetorick will as certainly be immortaliz'd for a Scoundrel, as he deserves it.

I Should here be apt to expatiate on the happy Effects that so publick an Encouragement of Learning will naturally have on our future Governors, was it not that my Grand Mother has frequently forwarned me against ever meddling with Edge Tools. I will therefore submit to a little Self-denial, and rather follow the wholesome Example of that prudent *Scotchman*, who, whenever he had Occasion to mention Satan, always call'd him the *Laird of Hell, geud Maister De'el*, or some such Appellation of Civility to the no small Offence of the *Sober Party*, who demanded how he presumed to shew such regard to that Enemy of Mankind.
Said Troth, says he, *I due nae ken how seun I may fa' into his 'utches ; and wud by nae means provock him.*

F I N I S

