



DR. MORSE'S
ADDRESS
TO THE
STUDENTS OF
Phillips Academy.

AN
 ADDRESS,
 TO
 THE STUDENTS
 AT
 PHILLIPS ACADEMY,
 IN
 ANDOVER.

DELIVERED JULY 9, 1799.

BEING THE DAY OF THE
 ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION.

BY JEDIDIAH MORSE, D. D.

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PREFACE.

PHILLIPS ACADEMY, in Andover, was founded and handsomely endowed, April 21st, 1778, by the Hon. SAMUEL PHILLIPS, Esq. of Andover, in the County of Essex, in Massachusetts, and his brother, the Hon. JOHN PHILLIPS, L. L. D. of Exeter, in the State of New-Hampshire, both deceased. It was incorporated, October 4, 1780. It is under the direction of a board of thirteen trustees, and the immediate care of a principal, (who is *ex officio*, one of the board) an assistant, and a writing master. They are accommodated with a large and elegant building, erected at the expense of the founders, and their brother, the Hon. WILLIAM PHILLIPS, Esq. of Boston. It is situated on a delightful eminence, near the mansion house of the Hon. SAMUEL PHILLIPS, Esq. its distinguished patron, and son of the deceased founder first above named; is encompassed with a salubrious air, and commands an extensive prospect. The lower story contains a large school room, with ample accommodations for an hundred students, and two other apartments for a library and other purposes. The upper story consists of a spacious hall, sixty-four feet in length, and thirty-three feet in breadth, designed for exhibitions and other public occasions.

THE design of this foundation, according to its Constitution, is, "The promotion of true piety, and virtue, the instruction of youth in the English, Latin and Greek

languages ; together with writing, arithmetic, practical geometry, music and oratory, logic and geography ; and such other liberal arts and sciences or languages, as opportunity and ability may hereafter admit, and the trustees shall direct.”

TOWARDS the close of his life, and also by his last will, the Hon. JOHN PHILLIPS, L. L. D. made a liberal endowment for the assistance “ of poor children of excellent genius and good moral character, preferring the hopefully pious ;” and gave permission to improve part of his legacy, to enable candidates for the ministry, of the description above mentioned, after having acquired the needful previous education, to prolong their studies preparatory for the desk, under the direction of some eminent Calvinistic minister of the gospel.

AN ADDRESS, &c.

YOUNG GENTLEMEN,

IT is with emotions of heart felt satisfaction that I rise, in behalf of the Trustees of this institution, to address you on this joyful anniversary. The evidence you have given us, during your examination, and at this exhibition, of your improvement in the various branches of useful literature taught at this Academy, reflects high honor, both on your instructors and on yourselves.

WHILE we have marked, with great approbation, your laudable progress in the knowledge of the English, Latin, and Greek languages; in arithmetic, geometry, music, geography, and oratory, which are all highly ornamental and useful as handmaids to religion; we cannot refrain from expressing our peculiar satisfaction in your manifest proficiency in the science of *morals*, and especially in

that most important branch, of SELF KNOWLEDGE.*

THE testimony we have received from your instructors, of your diligent attention to your studies ; of your respectful behaviour to your superiors ; of your kind and fraternal conduct towards each other ; of your reverence for the christian sabbath, and regular and devout attendance on its public services, and more private duties ; and of the decency and morality which have generally characterised your whole deportment, entitle you, young gentlemen, to our warmest approbation and applause. If there be any among you who form exceptions to this general character, we hope they are very few, and that they will cease from this time to be *ingloriously* singular. To conduct in the amiable manner just stated, is to fulfil the benevolent and pious designs of the liberal and public spirited gentlemen who originated and endowed this seminary ; to comfort and rejoice the hearts of your fond

* THAT inestimable little tract, entitled, "*Self Knowledge*," &c. by JOHN MASON, A. M. is taught classically in this Academy, with obvious and great advantage in a moral view.

and anxious parents ; to encourage and reward, in the most satisfactory manner in your power, the labours and sollicitude of your kind and faithful instructors ; and to gratify, in a high degree, the feelings of the trustees of this institution.

THE specimens of moral and literary improvement this day exhibited, cannot fail to revive in our bosoms a grateful and affectionate remembrance of the worthy FOUNDERS of this Academy. If we make the fruit of their benevolence and charity, the measure of our gratitude and esteem, how much ought we to respect their characters, and venerate their memories ? And how great reason have we to bless GOD for raising up such rich benefactors to mankind ? Few men deserve better of their country. Few, perhaps, have rendered it more solid and lasting service. None ever bestowed their property in a way calculated to yield more extensive benefit to community. The good effects of their liberality and charity will exist and increase, in an incalculable ratio, for ages to come ; and so long their memory will be precious in the estimation of all the worthy and good. Yes, the name of PHILIPS is embalmed and immortalized, in those

valuable and richly endowed literary establishments* which deservedly bear this name. How many, in the course of the twenty years since the establishment of this seminary, have here been taught the first principles of a learned and good education, and who are now, as patriots and christians, acting worthy and conspicuous parts on “the world’s wide stage,” reflecting honor on this institution, and contributing not a little to elevate our national character? How many youths, of distinguished talents and worth, have already been, and will probably in future be, drawn from indigence and obscurity, or from a very circumscribed sphere of action, to situations of extensive influence and usefulness, by the excellent charitable foundation annexed to this institution? Who can cast up the amount of good which has been, and will yet be, derived to the community from this well bestowed charity? Hundreds of amiable, ingenious, and pious youths, educated on this foundation, and dispersed through our country will be so many public blessings.

* THE Academy at *Exeter*, in New-Hampshire, the richest in funds, and perhaps the most respectable in the United States, was founded and endowed by the Hon. JOHN PHILLIPS, L. L. D.

It is our united and most earnest wish, young gentlemen, that you may all know and feel the value of your present privileges, and the importance of making a proper use of them. You have a *price* put into your hands to obtain wisdom, above most of the youth of your age and standing. May God give you hearts to improve it. Knowing, as you do, the path of duty, honor, and happiness, listen to the persuasive motives constantly exhibited before you to pursue it. You are now laying a foundation on which to erect a superstructure for both worlds. The characters and habits you are now forming, the direction you now take, will be likely to continue through this life, and to determine your future everlasting condition.

It has often been remarked by the wisest observers of human conduct, that “mankind, for the most part, continue in the path in which they first set out.” The first steps they take, when arrived at an age capable of reflection, are frequently decisive of their future course. “The passions of youth may resign to the passions of age, and one set of vices or of virtues, give place to those of a similar kind; but seldom does the formed character undergo an essential change.” Your first steps

then, my young friends, ought to be taken with the greatest care and deliberation, as upon them, in a great measure will depend, not only your present, but your eternal happiness.

To you, young gentlemen of the senior class, who are about to take leave of this seminary, and to enter the *university*, permit us to observe, that the transition you are about to make, will form an important era in your lives. Your sphere of inquiry and pursuit will be more enlarged and more critical. In the present disorganized state of society in general, your temptations will be numerous, and your dangers great. You will have need, therefore, to be strongly fortified against that infidel and insidious philosophy which has produced such extensive havoc and desolation in the principles and morals of mankind. While we would encourage free inquiry, as the only way to arrive at the knowledge of truth, we would by all means, and especially in this seductive and demoralizing age, recommend that your early inquiries be pursued under the direction of an experienced and skilful guide. Your youthful *curiosity*, if indulged without proper direction and restraint, would often

lead you upon enchanted ground, where you will easily be bewildered and lost. It would prompt you to read those books that have been poured into our country by thousands, and circulated with much art and industry among young people, and which are replete with concealed, but deadly poison to your principles and morals. Concerned as we feel for your welfare, we would affectionately urge you individually to solicit some faithful, well principled, and experienced friend, to prescribe for you your course of reading. By doing this, and adhering to the advice you may receive, you will not only avoid ensnaring and corrupting books, which might ruin you for both worlds, but you would also prevent a great waste of time ; acquire more, and more useful knowledge, and this too in a regular and methodical manner, which would enable you easily to digest and arrange it for future use. In this way also you will avail yourselves of the experience of others.

To all the youth of this Academy, permit me to express, in behalf of the trustees, our joint and friendly advice, that, in all your intercourse with the world, you be courteous, civil and obliging ; and, as you have opportu-

nity, ever manifest your readiness to do good. Cultivate a kind, benevolent, amiable and pacific disposition, and let it appear at all times in correspondent gentleness and sweetness of manners. Be open, honest, yet discreet, in all your behaviour, and never deceive nor disappoint those who have reposed confidence in you. Disdain the meanness of proud, haughty and scornful airs ; and never imagine that a proper condescension and accommodation of yourselves to the circumstances and feelings of others, can lessen you in the eyes of the worthy part of mankind. A meek, modest, and obliging deportment will exalt you in the view of every person deserving of your esteem. Form and cherish early habits of industry and attention to business. Observe order and method in your amusements and literary pursuits ; and be regular and punctual in the performance of your social, civil, and religious duties. Avoid idleness and *idlers* as the bane of your happiness and your reputation. Despise every thing that is mean, disgraceful, niggardly, and selfish. Abhor every thing that is profane, scurrilous, obscene or immodest. Religiously preserve purity in your morals and conversation, and a becoming dignity and manliness in your whole deportment ; gene-

rously seeking, in the use of all your talents, to promote public and private good, in the respective stations which providence may hereafter call you to fill in life.

ABOVE all, young gentlemen, and as that which alone gives a value and adds lustre and beauty to every other qualification, seek first of all, and seek earnestly, and as the chief good, what is justly and emphatically styled, THE ONE THING NEEDFUL, the PEARL OF GREAT PRICE, and never give over the pursuit till you obtain it. In this treasure you will possess all things ; destitute of it, though you should be loaded with all the wealth and honor this world can yield, you will be poor indeed. *Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,* and you will never want any of the needful blessings of this life. Ever manifest a sacred regard to heaven born RELIGION, and *never believe a person can deserve your friendship, or be your friend, who despises it either in principle or practice.* A person of this character may, indeed, be your companion, your flatterer, your seducer, but believe me, young gentlemen, *he can never be your FRIEND.* You assuredly can have no good reason to expect that *he* will be faithful to *you*, who is not so to his *conscience* and his *GOD*.

FINALLY, my young friends, *true* RELIGION will crown all your other accomplishments, natural and acquired. It will ennoble and beautify your minds ; sanctify and regulate your affections ; purify and comfort your hearts, qualify you to be really and extensively useful to your fellow creatures by your example and conversation ; and, what is more than all the rest, IT WILL MAKE YOU WISE TO ETERNAL LIFE.

