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Eulogy on General George Washington February 19, 1800, Boston, Massachusetts

On Wednesday, the 19th of February of 1800 at 11:00 A.M., the Academy met pursuant to adjournment at the Senate Chamber of the Old State House and from there went in procession, at 12 o'clock, to the Meeting House on Brattle Street where a Eulogy on General George Washington was pronounced before the Academy by Dr. John Davis, Recording Secretary.

The eulogy was printed in the second volume of the Academy's *Memoirs* (1804).

The illustrious Man, whose loss we now deplore, was among the first of your elected associates. It was a time of multiplied calamities. The military operations of the enemy were to be opposed in five different states of the union. A mind occupied with such immense concerns, could not be expected to apply itself to the immediate objects of your institution. Yet he accepts your invitation; looking forward, doubtless, to the happier days, when the arts of peace should succeed the horrors of war. As the first among the public characters of the age; as the pride and defense of your country, he was entitled to the earliest and most respectful expressions of your attention: but he was your associate by still more appropriate characters, by dispositions and accomplishments, altogether congenial to the nature and end of your institution.

It is among the declared objects of your inquiry, to examine the various soils of the country, to ascertain their natural growths and the different methods of culture: to promote and encourage agriculture, arts, manufactures and commerce: to cultivate the knowledge of the natural history of the country, and to determine the uses, to which its various productions may be applied.

Pursuits of this nature always commanded his attention, and to some of them he was peculiarly attached. They were frequently the topic of his conversation, and the subject of his correspondence, with ingenious and public spirited men, in different parts of the world.

[Yet] . . . he did not lose sight of *Learning* and of the *Arts*. "There is nothing," said he, (in his address to the first congress) "that can better deserve your attentive "patronage, than the promotion of Science and Literature. "Knowledge is in every country, the surest basis of public "happiness. In *one*, in which the measures of government "receive their impression so immediately from the sense of "the community, it is proportionably essential." To the Trustees and Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, in reply to their respectful address, he acknowledges himself gratified *in being considered, by the patrons of literature, as one of their number*; being *fully apprized of the influence which sound learning has on religion and manners, on government, liberty and laws*; and expressing his confidence *that the same unremitting exertions, which under all the blasting storms of war, caused the arts and sciences to flourish in America, would bring them nearer to maturity, when invigorated by the milder rays of*

peace. To the University of Harvard, he communicates *his sincere satisfaction in learning the flourishing state of their literary republic. Unacquainted, he adds, with the expression of sentiments which I do not feel, you will do me justice in believing, confidently, in my disposition to promote the interests of science and true religion*.

It would require little aid from the imagination, to render the significant emblem of your society an apt memorial of your late illustrious associate. Let Minerva with the spear and shield, represent his venerable form. The implements of husbandry, the hill crowned with oaks, and the field of native grain, indicate his favorite employment. The rising city, the instruments of philosophy, the approaching ship, and the sun above the cloud, are lively images of the benign and happy influence of his life, on commerce and the arts, and the advancing greatness of his country. ■

