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### HIGHLAND MESSENGER.

#### Motives to an education.

#### A LECTURE

Delivered before the Asheville Lyceum,  
BY E. ROWLEY, JR.

The question was once asked upon the death of one distinguished for his literary acquirements, "is the deceased now the better for his learning?" or, has a life of labor and toil, been spent in acquiring knowledge, now to be lost to him, at the termination of his earthly existence?"

However the question might then have been regarded, it is one which often agitates the mind of the student, while climbing the rugged steps of science. How often is he inclined to say, in view of the obstacles before him, "he considers how precious is his life," "It is folly for me to forego my happiness, to acquire that which is so difficult to attain, if so soon lost, while by less exertion, I can obtain wealth, which will far more contribute to my immediate happiness and enjoyment. Many have reasoned thus, but for which they would have been stars, to guide, instead of spots to obscure the paths of science. To our better understanding the remarks now to be offered, we will first collect the motives practically suggested for the acquirement of an education, after which, we will consider the true motives thereto, with their practical results.

And first, what are the motives usually proposed to study, as gathered from the practice of both christians and infidels—I say christians and infidels, for however much their practice may diverge in other respects, here unfortunately, it too nearly coincides. No higher motive too often actuates the student in acquiring knowledge, than the rank or condition incident thereto. Such an one views an education only as it is, or will be the means of advancing his ambitious desire of station, power or wealth or perhaps, to gratify a pride of being regarded as profoundly learned, or for the accomplishment of some other purpose, equally trivial, when compared with the true substantial object of education.

Thus the student seems to regard an education, as the means to something else, and rarely as the end of his studies. To be a little more intelligible, he feeds his mind, in order that his mind may in the end, forever after, contribute to feed the body.—Thus the immortal is made to serve the mortal part. The mind, which must exist while eternity endures, is made the slave of a body, which a few years must consign to its kindred dust. Am I deceived? Or is not this the practical tendency of almost all education at the present day. For instance, the youth attends school, to attain knowledge sufficient for active business. To this end his study is directed, and when he has acquired sufficient knowledge, or his mind is stored with a sufficient number of rules in Arithmetic, to fit him for his business, it is done, it is enough, his mind has been improved, to be hereafter exercised in gaining the means of supporting his body.

Another pursues a more liberal course, to fit himself perhaps, for one of the learned professions. His anxiety is not so much to strengthen his mind, or to derive gratification from the knowledge acquired, as to enter the duties of his profession. During all the training he receives, through the whole course of his study, very likely, no higher motives may have actuated him, than to gain the knowledge requisite for his profession, for the purpose of employing it, in gaining a support, perhaps to amass wealth.

Then education is sought, not for itself, nor for the gratification it can afford, but because it will contribute to something else. For this reason, it is that one educated is regarded with wonder, if not actually entering some profession, although preferring to be employed otherwise, perhaps in farther intellectual improvement. Thus, by perhaps a majority, no knowledge is considered of much importance, only as it fits for some profession, or employment, and the opinion is quite prevalent that no study should be pursued, or only so far, as it is itself practically useful. Hence the study of the dead languages has been thought useless, because say they, there can be no benefit of understanding a language not now spoken. Mathematics by them, would be also discarded except so far as is necessary for business transactions. The simple rules of some simple Arithmetic, are sufficient in their opinion, for almost any one to understand, being carefully in each, to investigate no farther than will be of immediate practical benefit. Accordingly they would numerate never to exceed. Thousands, because in all probability numbering their dollars, or to hundreds of thousands numbering their cents. Fractions too, it has been argued in a similar manner, need never be studied, for it appears penurious, say they, to stand for the fractional part of a cent, but of all rules, simple interest, as the most useful, may be pursued so as, in

any case to know the "How," without any regard even here, to the "Why."

Whether the utilitarian goes thus far or not, it is certain this is the effect of his doctrines upon his younger adherents. Suppose the Utilitarian doctrine that no knowledge is worthy of attention, except it be reducible to some practicable result, to have always prevailed, and barbarism would now be our condition, and the profoundest ignorance of what is now considered useful, our rightful inheritance. The error to which I have been alluding, is the motive usually presented for acquiring knowledge, to wit: the uses, to which it may be applied.

In accordance with this view, the principal advantage to be derived from the science of Astronomy, so fitted to enlarge the mind, and call forth its powers, is to be found in the assistance it affords to Geography, Navigation, &c., not considering the far greater benefit resulting to the mind, from its exercise in the investigation required of the facts it reveals. So Natural Philosophy, would be esteemed principally for the assistance it rendered to the mechanical arts—and Chemistry and Botany, for their use in Medicine, not regarding the higher motive to their attainment, found in the benefit to the mind from the exercise required, and the gratification a knowledge of these sciences would confer. To draw the chief motive to the attainment of knowledge, from the uses to which it may be applied, is only more absurd than to desire health because it will be a means to some end, as wealth or power. The health of the body, says Aristotle, "is not sought merely because such a state is useful to enable us to transact the business of life, (although this is one, yet a very secondary benefit attending it,) but for its own sake, and because it is essential to the perfection of human nature, as an end in itself, and not as a means to something else." For a still stronger reason, the highest part of education is degraded by being viewed as a means to some end, and not for its own intrinsic excellence.

As health to the body, so is theoretical science to the soul. Wherefore he concludes to be always seeking the useful or practical, and proposing it to the minds of youth, as the only aim of knowledge, must be considered as leading to base and grovelling views, as utterly hostile to greatness of soul, and the true nature of all education. To carry this still farther, suppose the question was asked, why do you desire knowledge? Because knowledge is power, says one. It will entitle me to respect, says a second.—It will make it easier for me to obtain a support, to amass wealth, or it is desirable for the rank it will confer, says yet a third.—Again, suppose it were inquired, why do you desire health? Because it will enable me to be more active and to discharge the duties of my station. Then knowledge and health are desired as a means to something else, and not for themselves. But why should health be desired, one perhaps may inquire? Health, says Aristotle, should be desired for its own sake, by as much as health is to be preferred to sickness, not because it will enable us to do this, or that, this is secondary, but because it is itself desirable, and as without it, life is rendered miserable. So knowledge should be desired, not because it will enable us to do this, or that, but for itself, and should ever be regarded as related to the mind, as health to the body. A mind in ignorance, and a body in sickness are analogous. The body in sickness is weak, so is the mind in ignorance. In this condition, the body is at the mercy of all upon whom it is dependant, so the mind in ignorance must receive its assistance, its every impulse, from those in this respect, more fortunate. Having thus far considered the motives which do, let us now prepare to consider the motives which should actuate us in acquiring knowledge, or rather, what is sometimes falsely considered synonymous "education."

The error we have hitherto found to be in considering education as a means, and not an end—in consequently viewing no study suitable, only as it is or will be practically useful. Arguing thus, Chrysippus taught that the vital principle, or what he styled the soul of swine, was only intended as a substitute for salt, for preserving the animal's body, for the performance of its destined utilities. Hardly less fallacious is the idea, that the mind should be educated for the support of the body—for there is only this difference, that in the first case, the vital principle is the cause of preservation to the body of the swine, while in the other, the mind is educated to contribute to support the human body. But we are to consider the true, substantial motive to true education. I say true education, in contradistinction from induction, because the latter term is applicable, the other, at the present day, not. Education from its etymology, signifies a leading from or out, referring to the exercise of the mental powers in deducting truth, but our education (so termed) is rather induction, signifying a leading in, because truths are now rarely received, than deducted. No one acquainted with the learning of the present day, but must perceive that what is called education, consists in an accumulation of facts, thrust into the mind by a kind of "intellectual machinery," rather than educating or leading out the powers of the mind, in investigating truth. True education, of which we now speak, is only promoted, when the powers or faculties of the mind, are brought into active exercise—when the assertion that a "thing is," induces the question "why it is?" The mere learning a given number of facts, and the having studied such and such sciences, do not necessarily constitute one educated, never only as the acquiring these facts, and the studying these sciences, have brought the mind to think. When this is done, when all the powers of the mind are brought out into exercise in any individual, and never till then, is that individual truly educated. What advantage to the mind to know that, that power which holds the celestial bodies in their orbits, is essentially "the attraction of gravitation, or that that power which unites their constituent particles, is called cohesive attraction? None unless the mind is induced thereby to think thereupon, till it conceives it operating, and mentally, at least, experiments upon the principles involved. Again, what advantage to the mind to know the facts which history records, unless they become subjects of thought? For instance, we read of the brilliant career and unhappy end of Alexander—but the facts are only profitable, after they become subjects of thought. The chief benefit is, doubtless, to be received then. It teaches us a lesson, it shows us the folly of inordinate ambition—the end of those who make power their idol. Again, what advantage to know that at such a time, Lycurgus lived and gave laws to Sparta, unless his acts are considered, and we trace the effect of particular laws and institutions upon a people? What benefit results from knowing that a Socrates once lived and suffered death, except the doctrines for which he suffered, become the subject of our thoughts? Or, what benefit to know that Greece gave birth to the Philosophers—Aristotle, Plato and Zeno without their Philosophy becomes the subject of our contemplation?

We therefore conclude that there never is, nor can be any true education, only as the powers of the mind are brought into operation, and consequently, that it is more or less perfect, accordingly as they are, or are not thus exercised. As the body increases its strength by exercise, so does the mind, and conversely, as the body is weakened by inaction, so is the mind. Could the mind be the passive recipient of every fact in history, every law in philosophy, in fine, all that ever was learned, still, because not exerting itself in their acquisition, it would be still uneducated, for the thinking powers would remain unimproved. As, to build an edifice, although the materials are provided, still it can never advance, much less be completed, till the workman applies his tools; so though the facts of science are at hand, the intellectual edifice must be stayed until the intellectual powers be exercised. What is acquired by induction, or what is passively received, are only the materials to be used in acquiring a true education.—They are to become subjects of thought, and thereby new truths elicited, before education can be materially advanced. It was thus, that the pioneers in the cause of science, were possessed of minds so rigorous, so far surpassing the educated of the present day, because they received nothing as true, till it was demonstrated. They received what they professed to know by education, not by induction, by deducting truths by investigation, not by passive reception. Having now a definite idea of education, we are prepared to assign motives to its attainment.

And first, an education should be desired for its primary and secondary advantages in this life, and its unending benefit in the life to come. The secondary advantages of an education, to wit: its practical uses, have been already alluded to, because affording too often the chief motive to its attainment. Its primary advantage here, must result from the gratification it affords. That there is enjoyment to be derived from knowledge properly acquired, second to none, but that our holy religion can confer, no one can consistently question. Who can doubt but the enjoyment of the philosophers of antiquity far exceeded that of the then existing monarchs and conquerors. Certain it is that Æsop in his poverty, esteemed himself happier than Croesus with his wealth and power, and surely Socrates, though condemned to death for his then peculiar doctrines, would not have exchanged his happiness, for that of his richest, nay proudest persecutors. How certainly would Aristotle, the Prince of Philosophers, have spurned the Crown of even Philip, if offered in competition with the pleasure derived from his favorite Philosophy. The pleasure which Archimedes derived from his Mathematical studies, the expectation of immediate death could not annihilate—nor destroy. His only request when demanded for almost immediate execution, was only the favor of a few hours, in which to enjoy the happiness of completing a Geometrical demonstration. Witness the joy evinced when a hecatomb or 100 oxen were sacrificed because some were so elated with the demonstration or discovery of a principle in Geometry, and then say if there be not happiness in acquiring knowledge. The dungeons of the Inquisition were unable to intimidate Galileo, far too insufficient to prevent him from enjoying the delight of communicating, much less from pursuing his theory of the heavenly bodies.

It appears then, that such acquiring knowledge, is a means of intense pleasure to its possessor. It has been, it is, and ever will be. The happiness of Sir Isaac Newton, at every new discovery of the laws which regulate the material world, was doubtless, inconceivably greater, than that which wealth, power or any other similar circumstance could afford. So too, our own Franklin experienced a delight, known only to those, who, like him, are accustomed to look through nature, up to nature's God.—To these, a host of others might be added,

to confirm the assertion, "that the primary advantage of, and therefore the strongest inducement to, securing an education, must be found in the high gratification it affords. Living witnesses might be adduced to substantiate this same position—yes, cannot you now present, to some extent, vouch for its truth?

The motive to any particular conduct is proportional, not only to the advantages proposed, but also to the certainty of their attainment. If an uncertain advantage be proposed to the attainment of an education, then the motives thereto, must be proportionally weak, but if the advantage be certain, the motive must be proportionally strong. If we propose any other motive to an education, than its own intrinsic excellence, and the gratification it can impart, we substitute an inferior, and doubtful advantage, for one elevated and certain.—Says a certain writer, "they alone are secure against disappointment, in the expectation of the adventitious advantages of an education, whose motives are elevated above them, and who seek knowledge never for the honor or power they may confer, but for its own sake. If then we seek knowledge for its adventitious advantages, such as power, wealth or honor, being not sure to follow, we are liable in the end, to disappointment, with all its attendant evils."—This is strikingly true of those who have exerted themselves to acquire political honor—but why, let me ask, the prevailing lust for political office, which has seized upon the whole community, and caused the educated man to forsake the path of learning? It is from a prevalent, but mistaken notion, that political honors are the highest that can be obtained. We might safely appeal not merely to human reason, but to human nature itself, for a refutation of that sentiment.

Let us cast our eye backward through the lonely track of time:—What names are those that shine with brightest effulgence through the dark vista of ages? The imperishable glory that still hovers over the ruins of ancient republics, arose not from the genius of their statesmen nor the splendor of their military achievements. Even Cicero himself is known equally as a man of letters and a statesman or politician.—And who were the worthies of Greece? When the traveller wanders among the ruins of her consecrated temples, and the perishing trophies of her former renown, whence arise those emotions which agitate his mind, and those visions of glory that fire his imagination? The names that now come back with thrilling interest to his recollection, are not those of her politicians, with corruption in their hearts, and loud professions of patriotism upon their lips, nor of her warriors, whose laurels were "Blood roused, and watered by the widow's tears." They are the names of those who acquired renown by their devotion to the cause of literature and science—yes, it is to her poets, her philosophers and historians, that Greece owes her immortality. We may look into the annals of any age or nation, and we shall find its brightest ornaments among its men of letters. During a rapid period of England's history, when her statesmen were engaged in schemes of political ambition, which have the beneficial nor abiding influence, her Shakespeare erected a structure, around whose adamantine base waves of time may sweep and sweep forever. Her statesmen live only in the perishable annals of a certain faction, "While still immortal swells a Newton's page, And Shakespeare's laurels greener grow with age." There is therefore this broad distinction between civil and literary honors. The harps of Milton and Locke will never be unstrung—the fame of Newton is written in sublimed beams on the tablet of nature, as boundless and lasting as the heavens he explored; but the influence of the politician the moment he has passed that dividing point which separates the vanities of the present, from the immortal honors of the upper world, will be felt no longer. And if his career has been marked by intrigue and corruption posterity will stamp the mark of disgrace upon his name, and hang the badge of infamy over his grave.

But to return, after this digression, which a prevailing error seemed to require, we will consider a motive to attain knowledge important indeed, but not often effectual. I do this, because it may be argued that, "A desire to do good, or to be useful" should afford the chief motive to an education. But will it be argued that the chief motive to religion is, or should be derived from the ability it imparts to be useful? Nay, did it derive its highest motive from this source, like education, it would soon disappear, and immortality cover the earth. Very rare are the instances of individuals seeking knowledge, or drinking deep from the wells of science, merely from a desire of being useful; if so, upon such, angels, if conversant with our actions and motives, must look and smile. But till man is by nature differently constituted, a motive more congenial to his selfishness must be substituted, to ensure true, substantial education. As religion increases our ability to be useful, so does education; but this in either case is an adventitious advantage and a secondary and doubtful advantage should never be substituted in place of one primary and certain. As the reward of piety is certain, so should be that of knowledge. As religion should be sought, because it will render its possessor happy, for a similar reason should knowledge; and further, as the reward of the one is unending, so should that attending the other. But stop, says one—the benefit of an education is

confined to this life. If so, perhaps the Utilitarian argues wisely, who considers knowledge a kind of productive capital, convertible into gold, silver, and other things equally valuable.

Very much akin to such a one, is that professed christian (of whom there are but too many) whose idea of heaven is confined by the gold, silver, and precious stones, used to describe its glory. From the Bible we learn, that to one was given five talents, to another two, to another one, to every one according to his abilities.

Here the talents were given, according to the ability of each for improving them, and consequently it is not to be inferred, that the talents or blessings to be conferred at the resurrection of the just, will be proportioned to their capacity for enjoying them? In other words, will there be more given them to enjoy, than they are capable of enjoying? Says that learned commentator, Dr. Adam Clarke, the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for his followers, are various degrees of glory suited to their capacities and attainments.

Again, similar, though strange views are expressed by Thomas Dick. Says he, suppose a negro slave just converted to christianity and a profound christian philosopher to enter the eternal world at the same time, is it reasonable to believe there would be no difference in the amplitude of their intellectual views and enjoyments? Can we suppose for an instant that an ignorant profane who has been brought to the knowledge of the truth but a few hours before his entrance into the world of spirits, shall at the moment of his arrival in the world of bliss, acquire those enlarged conceptions of divine truth, which an Owen, a Watts, or a Dodridge attained at the same stage of their existence? Or that a Hottentot who had been brought to the knowledge of christianity, only during the last month of his life, shall enter into heaven with the expansive views of a Newton or a Boyle. Such a supposition he concludes (and justly too) would involve a reflection on the wisdom of the divine administration, and would lead us to conclude that all the labor bestowed by the illustrious individuals now alluded to in order to improve in the knowledge of divine subjects, was quite unnecessary and even approaching to egregious trifling.

Roson is related to mind as conscience to morals. By as much then as one's mind is influenced by his moral character, so is one's reason influenced by his conscience. There appears to be a similar connexion between education and religion.

The one adds to and heightens the enjoyment of the other, and it is not improbable that as much of the enjoyment of the truly righteous here consists in studying and admiring the works of Him who is essentially the fountain of knowledge, so it will be hereafter. When possessed both by the same individual, while religion checks pride and a too great esteem of oneself, so education checks a blind adherence to particular doctrines, delusive in themselves, and pernicious in their consequences. It is a strange idea indeed that religion discountenances education, especially since one elevates and refines the other, when the doctrines of the first, have and ever will be maintained by the resources of the latter. When too, the brightest ornaments in the literary world, have ever been the most zealous and able supporters of the christian's faith.

Then we conclude that the motive to an education is second to none but our holy religion, and that this motive finds its principal strength and chief advantage in the gratification it can confer in this life, and its unending benefit in the life to come.—Let this motive actuate us, and our knowledge will be increased, our intellectual powers will be expanded, and other things being right, be prepared to say, as many have, "Farewell to knowledge, first of earthly things,"

Until  
"I go to drink it, where the fountain springs  
Clear from its source, pellucid and refined—  
The dregs of muddy earth are left behind."

The bill to abolish imprisonment for debt in Missouri, has been passed by both Houses of the Legislature, and received the Governor's signature.

The Legislature of Arkansas recently gave to one of its members leave of absence to go home and kill his hogs.

"Hello, Ned, what's the matter?"  
"Matter enough—John Jones called me a liar, and I am looking for him to cure him."

"But, Ned, Jones is much the larger man of the two, and it may prove a somewhat dangerous operation."  
"True enough; I don't think I can cure Jones, but, dare him, I'll stone his dog."

There are at the present time 400 steam boats employed in navigating the Mississippi river.

In England there are 1861 miles of railroad, at a cost of £58,149,169.

"Uncle Jo," said an observing little boy, our folks always put up the window when the room is filled with smoke, and the wind always blows in so as to prevent the smoke from going that way; now where does the smoke go?" "It goes into the people's eyes," was uncle Jo's philosophic answer.

### LIFE OF HENRY CLAY.

The remark has been made by some writer, and it is certainly a very just one, that there is no part of history more agreeable in itself, nor more improving to the mind, than the lives of those who have distinguished themselves from the great mass of mankind, and attracted public attention. When such a person is presented to our view, when we hear his name sounded by every lip, coupled with eulogy or anathemas, we feel a strong and laudable anxiety to become acquainted with the man.—we wish to bring him down to our fireside, and minutely scan his person and his character; and, as the curious traveller traces the noble and majestic stream from its broad expanse to its minutest rill, to discover its fountain and source, so do we delight to trace such men from their full and matured manhood up to their fountain-heads; and, having familiarized ourselves with their early boyhood, with what interest and sympathy do we watch their labors and struggles to overcome the obstacles in their onward course, as, with a noble courage and indomitable energy, they open their path to fame and distinction.

It is given to but few men so to interweave their own actions and principles with the transactions of their country, to exercise such a controlling influence upon public measures, as to make their own a part of the history of their country. Fortunate, indeed, is the nation, if her master spirits are actuated by that noble ambition which seeks to promote her happiness and prosperity; which strives to perpetuate freedom and the blessings which flow from a government of laws administered with wisdom and integrity; and which has its highest reward in the contemplation of a people united, prosperous, and contented; and in the verdict of "well done, good and faithful servant."

Excepting Mr. Adams, who has been longer upon the stage of life, no man of the present age has taken a more active and prominent part in the public affairs of this country, than HENRY CLAY. For more than thirty years he has stood before the nation as an orator, unrivalled; as a statesman, of extraordinary sagacity, forecast, and energy; as a man, of eminent talents, generous, high-souled sentiments, the strictest honour and integrity, and the chivalrous friend of universal freedom. His name has become familiar to the lips of the American people "as household words," his policy identified with their prosperity, and his fame the property of the nation.

Hanover county, Virginia, has the honour of being the place of his nativity, where he was born on the 12th April, 1777. By the death of his father, a Baptist clergyman, in 1781, he was left an orphan-boy; poverty his only inheritance, Providence his protector and guide. He was, however, blessed with a mother who combined a sound understanding to kind and amiable feelings. "I knew her well," said a distinguished gentleman, now in the Senate of the United States; "I knew her well, when a boy, and used to love to go to her house; she was an excellent woman; so kind, so indulgent, and always took such a motherly interest in the lads of her acquaintance; nothing she had was too good for us, and there was no stint in her measurement."—Much as we admire Henry Clay the Orator, Henry Clay the Statesman, Henry Clay the distinguished and commanding Speaker of the House of Representatives, Henry Clay the Minister Plenipotentiary, Henry Clay the Secretary of State, Henry Clay the grave and able Senator, Henry Clay the favourite of the people, yet do we love far more to dwell upon "the orphan-boy" following the plough in the slashes of Hanover, and occasionally treading his way, with a griot of corn, to a distant mill, to provide bread for a widowed mother and younger brothers and sisters.

It is an evidence of the goodness of his heart that, in the privacy of the domestic circle, surrounded by those to whom he can unbosom himself, nothing so delights him as to recur to the scenes, the labours, the incidents, and the enjoyments of his boyhood; anecdotes of which he often relates with infinite honour and zest. This feeling gushes forth in his speech at Hanover, on the 10th of July, 1840, which he then visited for the first time after some forty-three years absence. On that interesting occasion, surrounded by nearly the whole population of the county, who had assembled to welcome one of whom they had heard so much, and was so proud as a native of their county, Mr. Clay said:—"I have come here to the county of my nativity, in the spirit of a pilgrim, to meet, perhaps for the last time, the companions and the descendants of the companions of my youth. Wherever we roam, in whatever climate or land we are cast by the accidents of human life, beyond the mountains or beyond the ocean, in the legislative halls of the capitol, or in the retreats and shades of private life, our hearts turn with an irresistible instinct to the cherished spot which ushered us into existence. And we dwell with delightful associations on the recollection of the streams in which, during our boyish days, we bathed, and the fountains at which we drank; the piney fields, the hills and the valleys where we sported, and the friends who shared these enjoyments with us. Alas! too many of these friends of mine have gone whither we must all shortly go, and the presence here of the small remnant left behind attests both our loss and our early attachment. I would greatly prefer, my friends, to employ the