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**An Address Delivered at the Inauguration of Rev. Joseph Muenscher and Rev. John R. Cotting as Instructors in the Female Classical Seminary, Brookfield**

Joseph Muenscher

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*P. Cleveland*

*(No. 16.)*

AN

# ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE INAUGURATION OF

REV. JOSEPH MUENSCHER .

AND

REV. JOHN R. COTTING,

AS INSTRUCTORS IN THE

*Female Classical Seminary,*

BROOKFIELD,

MARCH 22, 1827.



BY JOSEPH MUENSCHER,

PRINCIPAL OF SAID SEMINARY.



PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE TRUSTEES.

**BROOKFIELD:**

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1827.

## ADDRESS.



AMONG the numerous arguments that have been adduced in proof of the divinity and unrivalled excellence of the Christian Religion, there is one which, independent of every other consideration, is sufficient to command for it our love and veneration, and to awaken our gratitude to the Father of Mercies for this his unspeakable gift. I refer to the influence it has exerted in purifying and exalting the social, moral, and intellectual character of woman, and in raising her to that elevated rank in society to which the native qualities of her mind and heart preeminently entitle her. All other religions have exerted a pernicious influence in degrading the moral character and social relation of the female sex. The condition of the enslaved sons of Africa is not more deplorable and humiliating than is that of woman in most heathen countries. Where the light of pure Christianity has not shone, where the moral influence of the Gospel is not felt, females are regarded as destitute of all capacity for intellectual improvement, and are deprived of the most powerful and indeed the only incentive to moral culture, from the prevalence of the absurd and pernicious opinion, that the God of nature has not blessed them with an immortal mind. They are consequently looked upon as designed merely to be the domestic slaves of man. All means and opportunities for the cultivation of their mental and moral faculties are denied them, and they are doomed to drag out a miserable existence with little to expect that is desirable in the present life, and nothing to hope for in the life to come. Under the Jewish dispensation the condition of woman was not materially better than it is in pagan lands. And the direct and inevitable tendency

of the principles of infidelity, which from time to time have been broached in Christian countries, is to rob woman of all her glory and to sink her down again to a state of the deepest moral degradation. Christianity, on the contrary, teaches us, that women possess immortal minds which are capable of the highest degree of literary, no less than of moral improvement. It has assigned to them their proper sphere and their appropriate duties in society. It has taught us that woman was created to be the companion, not the slave of man ;—that in the most important respects she is his *equal*, not his inferior. The Beneficent Parent of the Universe has given to woman an immortal soul. The care of the soul—the cultivation of the heart should doubtless occupy her first and principal attention. Personal piety forms a commanding excellence of the female character. “Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain ; but the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.” Nothing will compensate her for the want of those virtues which Christianity enjoins. The more fascinating her native charms, the more brilliant her personal accomplishments, the more exalted her intellectual attainments, if she be destitute of those moral qualities which are at once her ornament and her protection, the more disgusting will she appear and the greater will be her accountability. But let her possess a spotless and unsuspected character ;—“let the fear of God and the love of Jesus Christ controul her domestic virtues ; let the humility, patience, faith, hope, charity and resignation of the Gospel become interwoven with her personal accomplishments, and sweeten and govern her conduct, and how lovely is such a woman !”

God has also endowed woman with intellectual faculties in no degree inferior to those of the other sex. These faculties were not given her to be buried in obscurity, but to be expanded and cultivated, and brought to perfection. She, therefore, who neglects to cultivate the powers of her mind, fails to accomplish, in a very important respect, the end of her being. But this object can be effected only by the diligent prosecution of the same studies which are found necessary to the mental discipline of the other sex. Females are entitled to the same facilities for the acquisition of knowledge, that are so liberally afforded to males ; and the

strongest incitements should be held out to them to rise higher and higher in the scale of intellectual excellence.

That very inadequate conceptions of the importance of Female Education have generally prevailed, is manifest from the very limited number of existing Seminaries in this as well as in other countries, where Females are thoroughly instructed in the higher departments of physical and intellectual science. The venerable fathers of New England discovered their wisdom and their piety not less in the endowment of colleges and in the establishment of free schools, than in the erection of houses consecrated to the worship of Almighty God. They had not to learn that education is the handmaid of religion, and that Seminaries of learning are the nurseries of the Church. Accordingly with a parental solicitude for the highest interest and happiness of their posterity they founded Grammar Schools and Colleges, in which their sons might be trained up to preach the everlasting gospel—to dispense the healing art, or to expound the laws of the land. Their descendants have imbibed their spirit. They have sustained the institutions which their fathers erected. They have established new ones; and through all our land, colleges and public schools stand both as mementoes of the benevolent designs and pious efforts of past ages, and as pledges of a diffusion of the light of science and literature through all future generations. But while making such ample provision for the education of their sons, our pious ancestors seem to have overlooked, or partially to have considered the importance of Female education. And in this respect unhappily they have been too closely followed by their posterity. Whilst our enlightened Legislators have wisely and munificently endowed the institutions which their fathers and their contemporaries established, and whilst our public journals have done all in their power to sustain their character and to increase their influence, no special effort has yet been made for the permanent instruction of females in the higher walks of Literature and Science. Almost the only opportunities which they have hitherto enjoyed for mental improvement have been furnished in temporary boarding-schools. And in most of these the attention of the pupils has been almost exclusively devoted to the ornamental branches of

education to the partial or entire neglect of those studies which are essential to the cultivation and developement of their intellectual powers. Why is the prevalent system of female education so unlike and so far below that of the other sex? What is there in the mental capacity or in the relative condition of females, which should exclude them from those advantages for mental improvement that are so amply provided for men? Are they not social beings, and ought they not to be taught to converse correctly and elegantly? Are they not thinking beings, and should they not be instructed to reason with clearness and accuracy? Are they not susceptible of pleasurable emotions from the study of nature? Why then should they not be initiated into the arcana of physical science, and taught to look through nature up to nature's God? Why should so much toil and labour be expended in embellishing the body, frail and perishable as it is, while the mind—the immortal mind is allowed to remain almost in the state of torpor and inactivity in which it was first created?

A more convincing proof of the narrow and contracted views that are generally entertained with respect to the importance of Female Education, and the extent to which it should be carried, cannot be exhibited, than is afforded in the short space of time which is usually devoted by Females to intellectual pursuits. When a Young Lady has attended an Academy or Seminary only a few months, she fancies that she has obtained all the information which it is necessary for her to possess; she flatters herself that, because she has acquired a smattering of Grammar, of Arithmetic, of Rhetoric and perhaps of History, her education is completed, and she is amply qualified for the discharge of all the social and relative duties of life. While the student is compelled to pore over the midnight lamp for years, in order to prepare his mind for the future acquisition of knowledge, the Female has only to pass a few months within the walls of an Academy, and she is prepared to become an ornament in the circles in which she may move and to sustain all the high and responsible relations in which she may be placed. Are we to conclude that the process of mental discipline and improvement goes on with more rapidity in females than in the other sex? Must we infer that the appropri-

ate duties of females require no mental effort—that for all the purposes for which they were created, it matters not whether they be intelligent or ignorant? Are we not rather forced to the conclusion, that a very low estimate is made of the importance of Female Education, and that very limited and inadequate views are generally held with regard to the practical influence that Females exert in the formation of the human character and in the progressive improvement of the human mind? Allow me briefly to suggest a few considerations which appear to me conclusively to shew the importance of providing for the Female sex the means of a more ample and extensive course of intellectual education, and of requiring of them a more thorough and practical acquaintance with literary and scientific pursuits than has generally been considered either necessary or even desirable.—The thought which first presents itself is the power which knowledge and thorough mental discipline possess to swell the aggregate of individual happiness. Knowledge, it has been often said, is power. But this is not the only recommendation that it possesses. It opens to the mind new and peculiar sources of enjoyment. “Wisdom,” says Solomon, “is a defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is that wisdom giveth life (i. e. *communicates happiness*) to them that have it.” The well cultivated mind always possesses within itself the means of rational and exquisite satisfaction. Extrinsic sources of happiness may be suddenly cut off by adverse and unpropitious circumstances; but a mind thoroughly disciplined in all its faculties and richly furnished with useful, practical knowledge is a never failing well-spring of refined and exalted pleasure. Let her condition in human life be ever so humble and depressed; let her extrinsic enjoyments be ever so few and limited; let her vicissitudes of fortune be ever so numerous and painful, the intellectual woman has within her own bosom a source of happiness, which will remain unaltered, “when the adulations of the world have become cold and reluctant, when the charms of beauty are fled, and the attractions of earthly splendor have passed away.” The Female who possesses a mind matured by diligent and persevering application to study, and stored with useful knowledge, especially if it be joined with a meek and quiet spirit, will always command

respect and admiration. An acquaintance with the ornamental branches of knowledge alone will not secure to her lasting respect. These external accomplishments may, for a few years, draw around her a circle of admirers ; but are not calculated to prove the resources or attraction of advancing life. They will scarcely prove an honorable distinction to her in the period of middle age ; and still less as she advances in life's downward course. The attainments which will afford permanent happiness are *solid* attainments. Wisdom and piety are the only ornaments that can adorn grey hairs. Far be it from me to detract from the value or advantage of external accomplishments, but let those accomplishments be united with substantial improvements. While the fingers are instructed to play with skill, and the voice to sing melodiously, and the limbs to move with grace and elegance, let the mind be taught to think and reason accurately, and clearly, and deeply : and let it be liberally furnished with the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

The Female sex exert a predominating and uncontrollable influence over human society. Although the eloquence of woman is not heard in the pulpit or at the bar, it is heard and felt in the social circle. There her influence is scarce less supreme than in the empire of fashion. It is this influence which affords another consideration in favour of high intellectual attainments in females. Let them possess these, and a corresponding improvement may be expected in the other sex—the conversation in social circles would assume a more rational, instructive and dignified character—female worth would be more deeply felt and readily acknowledged, and a new and powerful impulse would be given to the human mind in its progress towards perfection.

But it is to the rising generation we are to look for the full effects which would result from a systematic and extensive course of Female education. There is no relation in life more important or more responsible than that of a mother. "To her is committed the immortal treasure of the infant mind." To her are entrusted in a great degree the destinies of her children, and through them, of the world. The seeds which she plants in the tender minds of her offspring will one day spring up and produce cor-



responding fruit. The education, the government, the piety, the usefulness, the happiness of the rising generation depend chiefly on the mother. The impressions made by her, whatever may be their character, are usually the last effaced. The admonitions which she gives, sink deep into the hearts of her offspring, and her instructions take strong hold on their memories. To their infant minds "she imparts her manners, her habits, her language, her modes of thinking, her opinions, her prejudices, her virtues, I had almost said, her very soul itself." Of how much consequence it is, then, that she should be qualified, in every respect, to discharge the arduous and responsible duties arising out of this relation. In order to communicate the first lessons of instruction to her tender offspring and to give a right direction to the infant mind, it is not sufficient that the mother be mistress of certain external accomplishments, or acquainted with the arcana of domestic economy. She may, notwithstanding all this be utterly disqualified for the important business of domestic education. She should be thoroughly versed in the philosophy of the human mind and of the human character, in order to impart knowledge to her children in the most pleasing and successful manner. She should be intimately acquainted with natural science—and with the causes and reason of things, even to answer the many curious and interesting inquiries which children of inquisitive minds daily make of their parents, and which from ignorance, perhaps, as much as from any other cause, are permitted to pass unanswered. An accurate knowledge of the principles of Grammar and Rhetoric is likewise of the highest importance to parents. Whence arises the great disparity between different families and individuals in regard to the style of their ordinary conversation? Does it arise from the inequalities of natural talent? It cannot be attributed to this cause, because many persons of inferior talents converse with more correctness and elegance than others who are decidedly their superiors in this respect. Is it occasioned by the difference in their comparative advantages for a public education? It manifestly is not; for many who have enjoyed all the advantages of a public education and have received all the honors of our literary institutions, discover less purity and elegance in their col-

loquial style than many who have had opportunity to avail themselves of no such advantages. Is it in consequence of a familiarity with good society? Purity of language may be and doubtless often is acquired by familiar intercourse with good society, but it is more frequently acquired at an early period of life, in no society but that of the domestic circle. The difference arises, it is believed, more from the education of the nursery than from any other cause. It is owing chiefly to the care and pains taken by intelligent and well-educated mothers. The forms of speech and modes of expression which children imbibe from their parents and others, who have the care of their early education, are usually retained through life, notwithstanding the superior advantages they may at a subsequent period enjoy. Let the mother habituate her children from the very first, to the use of neat, appropriate and elegant expressions, let her be particularly cautious in the selection of her own words, that they may imbibe from her none of those improprieties of speech which are common even in good society, and she will accomplish that for her offspring which, if neglected in early life, they may fail to acquire either in polished circles or within the walls of a learned university. For the vulgarities, the solecisms, the colloquialisms and other grammatical and rhetorical errors which are contracted in early life, entirely by imitation, in consequence of being deeply fixed by habit in the mind, become as it were constitutional infirmities, which, like chronic diseases of the body, it is almost beyond the power and skill of man to cure.

The importance of extensive intellectual acquirements in females will further appear, if we look at them in the character and relation of professed teachers of youth. It is well known that most of our primary schools are taught at least part of the year, by females. There is consequently a great demand for competent female instruction. In the school room the influence exerted by females is scarcely less felt than in the domestic circle. Indeed it often devolves upon them to communicate that instruction to children which their parents, either from ignorance or supineness have failed to give. Is it not of the utmost consequence, then, that those females especially, who expect to engage in the business of instruction, should be amply and thoroughly qualified for

their profession ;—that they should become intimately acquainted with the studies which usually engage the attention of scholars in our primary schools, not merely in order to correct the mistakes which their pupils may make in the course of recitation, or to answer satisfactorily the questions that may be put to them ; but to be able to divest the subjects which come before them, of all mystery and obscurity, and to exhibit the elements of knowledge in a form which will be readily comprehended and easily remembered ? Many of the sciences, the elements of which are taught in our primary schools, are exceedingly abstract. They are likewise expressed in terms which are altogether new and unintelligible to beginners, and which require minute explanation, and repeated and familiar illustration, in order to be understood and remembered. The instructor should be able to afford this illustration and to render the subject as simple and intelligible as it can possibly be made. But it is a prevailing fault in Primary Schools, and indeed in the higher seminaries and colleges, that there is not sufficient instruction given. Too much is left for the scholar to perform and too little aid is afforded by the Teacher. Sufficient pains are not taken to ascertain whether the subject is understood and to explain and simplify it, when it is not understood. The consequence is that much valuable time is lost by the pupils in vainly endeavouring to comprehend what in a few moments might be rendered perfectly intelligible by the Instructor, or in committing to memory what is not understood and which consequently can be of no other benefit than to exercise and strengthen the memory. But it is far from being an easy thing, or a trifling attainment to be able to communicate knowledge so as to adapt it to the capacities of the young. It requires a clear and comprehensive view of the whole subject, which can be obtained only by an extensive and minute acquaintance with it. Hence the importance of a thorough and systematic education in all who intend to engage in the business of instruction. The magnitude of this subject is beginning to be seen and felt among us. It is with no ordinary satisfaction that we hear of the measures in progress for the establishment of a seminary, for the special purpose of qualifying young gentlemen for the office of Teachers in primary schools. And

while we express our cordial good wishes for the success of every effort to elevate the tone of education in the stronger sex, we would be permitted to raise our feeble voice in behalf of Female education. This Seminary was recently established for the purpose of affording to young Ladies those intellectual qualifications which will enable them to discharge with honour and success the various duties that may devolve upon them as instructors of youth, as heads of families and as members of society. Impressed with the importance of adopting a more thorough, practical and extensive system of instruction for young Ladies, than generally prevails in Female Seminaries, the Trustees have done what their limited means would allow to afford in this Institution every facility for the acquisition of knowledge in the higher departments of literature and science, while they have not omitted to provide instruction in the various branches of ornamental education. Thus far their efforts have been crowned with success, and the encouragement which they have received, has exceeded what they had anticipated.

While therefore the pledge is given that no efforts shall be spared on their part, or that of the instructors, to give permanency and stability to the Institution, and to render it instrumental of extensive and lasting benefit to the community, they look with confidence to an enlightened public for the continuance of that patronage and support which have hitherto been afforded.

FEMALE  
CLASSICAL SEMINARY,  
BROOKFIELD.



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## Instructors.

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REV. JOHN RUGGLES COTTING, *Superintendent  
of the department of Natural Science.*

MISS LUCY W. A. GROSVENOR.



*The course of Studies, together with the text-books used in  
the Seminary.*

English Grammar—*Murray, with Exercises.*

Geography—*Woodbridge's Univ. Geog.*

Arithmetic—*Colburn's Intellectual Arith. and Sequel.*

History—*Worcester's Elements, with Hist. Atlas.*

Rhetoric—*Blair's Lectures Abridged.*

Natural Philosophy—*Mrs. Bryan's Conversations.*

Astronomy—*Wilkins' Elements.*

Chemistry and Geology—*Cotting's Introduction.*

Mineralogy—*Emmons' Manual.*

Botany—*Eaton's Manual.*

Logic—*Hedge's Elements.*

Moral Philosophy—*Brown.*

Intellectual Philosophy—*Upham's Elements.*

Algebra—*Colburn's Introduction.*

Geometry—*Playfair's Euclid.*

Natural History—*Smellie's Philosophy.*

Natural Theology—*Paley.*

Political Economy—*Mrs. Bryan's Conversations.*

Linear Drawing—*Francour.*

Latin, French, Music, and Painting.

The Seminary is furnished with Globes, a cabinet of Minerals, Geological Specimens, a complete Chemical and Philosophical Apparatus, and Pianos; and arrangements are making for the establishment of a select Library.

Lectures are delivered on Geography, Rhetoric, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Geology, Mineralogy, Botany, and the Evidences of Christianity. The Young Ladies are required to attend the religious services of the Seminary, to read daily, to write from dictation, and to compose themes.

There are four terms in the year. The Spring term commences the first Tuesday in April, the Summer term the first Tuesday in July, the Fall term the first Tuesday in October, and the Winter term the first Tuesday in January. The vacations are one week and a half each.

At the commencement of the Summer term, the course of studies will be arranged in the following divisions, viz.

*First Division.*—English Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, (with Maps and Globes,) Elements of History, (with Historical Atlas,) Writing from dictation.

*Second Division.*—English Grammar continued, Arithmetic continued, (Colburn's Sequel,) History continued, Projection of Maps, Rhetoric, Composition, Natural Philosophy.

*Third Division.*—Composition, Natural Philosophy continued, Astronomy, Chemistry, Botany, Algebra,\* Logic, Moral Philosophy, Political Economy, Linear Drawing.

*Fourth Division.*—Composition, Chemistry continued, Mineralogy, Geology, Intellectual Philosophy, Natural Theology, Natural History, Geometry.\*

The young Ladies will be expected to attend to the studies of the first division, unless qualified to enter upon those of the second.

\* These studies will be left optional with those Ladies who attend to French, Latin, Music or Painting.

A knowledge of the studies enumerated in the second division will be required previous to entering upon those of the third, and so of the fourth.

Latin, French, Music and Painting may be attended to at any period of the course. All the members of the Seminary will be permitted to attend the lectures.

Those young Ladies who complete the course of studies prescribed above shall receive a certificate or diploma signed by the President of the Board of Trustees, and by the Instructors of the Institution.