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Essay  
On the Study of History,  
by J. H. Mc Pleasie.  
Essay 1<sup>st</sup>

Man being created Lord of all the inferior ranks of animated nature, possessed of reasoning powers, and from the fairest of the works of God, is certainly the most interesting animal of the creation. — The study of this being, his dispositions, and habits, as they appear in all their variety under different regulations of civil laws & religious institutions, presents to the sentimentalist and the Philosopher, a widely extended field for the most delightful and interesting speculation.

What can be more interesting than to trace through ~~through~~ all their grades of exaltation and debasement, the rise and fall of the empires which have at different periods been raised to the pinnacle of arbitrary power, and then come down by the might of their ambition or accumulated misfortune, to a level with the meanest? What can be more delightful and instructing than to contemplate the characters of those individuals who have given their lives to an unceasing and unmitigated course of intense and absorbing thought, in order to arrive at the knowledge of truth? The page of history presents to us the complete characters of the human race, which it is the duty of every one to make himself as thoroughly acquainted as possible; for it is no vain for us to attempt passing through the world with honor to ourselves or advantage to it, without having previously studied the character of our fellow beings. How

## Essay 2.

Of the Washington S. Society of Lafayette College

OR

The influence of benevolent associations upon the  
American People

by

David "Walter.

Read at the annual contest of the Societies

April 1<sup>st</sup> 1835.

by

Henry S. Rodenbough.\*

The government of nations, like the constitutions of individuals, seems to possess within itself the seeds of dissolution. Momentful indeed, but full of interest and instruction are the records of the past. When for a moment we contemplate the history of ancient Greece and Rome, our hearts swell with sensations at once solemn and tender. They were mighty and strong in greatness and flourished in grandeur and glory. But the splendor, which then once shone so conspicuously, has long ceased to dazzle, and their might is prostrate in the dust.

\* Mr. Walter was unwell.

## Composition

read at the annual contest of La Fayette College

March 31<sup>st</sup> 1837.

by  
Charles Elliott

Member of the Washington S. Society.

Subject

The effects of the Reformation on the Progress of Knowledge.

To trace the progress of Knowledge and investigate the causes, which have contributed to its advancement, is a theme full of interest and delight. If we follow its path from the origin of time, down to the present, we see it stream with the laurels & shining with the glory of every enterprise that is noble, exalted, and benevolent. That to ascend through from the root through all the ramifications of the tree of science, would be a task, which would require the labor of years. Historians, after the most unwearyed researches, cannot, accurately, mark its rise and follow its devious windings. Philosophers, after the most profound speculations, will never be able to estimate its results. Poets, with all the aid of their imagination, cannot tune their lyres to strains, to sing of its benign influence, — of the moral & intellectual renovation it has produced, — of the honors it has won! Let us then, in our present purpose, confine ourselves to that part of its progress, which has elapsed since the Reformation; which, though yet short in duration, is more replete with glory,

# Essay.

In behalf of the Washington Society

by,

James S. Lewis.

on

The divine Superintendance manifested in the  
discovery and settlement of America.

Read at the annual Contest April 3<sup>rd</sup> 1839.

The doctrine of a great, intelligent first  
cause, few are supposed to doubt. The belief, that  
he governs the world, and beings he has made, is also  
presumed to be as universal. That he rules them for  
some definite purpose is not less evident; but there may  
be a difference of opinion, as to what this object is,  
yet it is generally conceded to be the greatest good of  
the greatest number. And it is also supposed that  
this can be best obtained by the institution, and  
preservation of his Church on Earth. If the results  
are within his power, then the means; and agents  
necessary for their accomplishment must be subject to

# Egypt: A Poem.

Written in behalf of The Washington Lit. Society,  
by

Thomas Conrad Porter, at 18

and

Read at the Annual Contest, March 25<sup>th</sup> 1846.

by

John Sargukar.

Land of the pyramids, whose Nile's dark tide  
Rolls in its glory, rushes in its pride,  
Of thee I sing. O! Heavenly ether, descend,  
And from the past, the veil of darkness rend;  
Bid Black Obivion fold his raven wing,  
And Truth and Knowledge out of Error spring;  
Guide thro' the many labyrinth, unfold  
What sober History hath kept unold;  
Restore to ancient grandeur and renown  
The fallen splendor of th' Egyptian crown;  
Tell how the Pharaohs sat in princely state,  
Gods upon earth, magnificently great;  
How science flourished 'neath the fostering hand  
Of foreign rulers of a mighty land;  
How temples rose majestic to the skies,  
Where columned marble now in ruin lies.

Essay

By  
James G. Moore

on

The rise and progress of Liberal Principles.

and

Read at the annual Contest March 24<sup>th</sup> 1842

Man is the undisputed lord of the creation. Considered however in his physical capacities alone he is inferior to many of the lower animals. No other animal passes so large a portion of its existence in utter helplessness or falls into such feeble old age. To no other creature has nature done so little to provide against the changes that occur in temperate climates, or the piercing cold of the frigid zones. Destitute alike of speed, and of defence against his more powerful foes - the subject of fear and terror, his dwelling would indeed be in the caves of the earth, and in dens of the rocks, had not his creator endowed him with reason. While the brute is led by instinct, man the last and noblest work of creation is guided by a faculty susceptible of indefinite

T S S

# TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY

A

# POEM

by

A. S. Pitt

ES

Read at the Annual Contest March

22<sup>nd</sup> 1843

In behalf of the Washington L. Society

T S S

C. C. Shaw

Oh time! thy course with trophies bright is spread  
 From ages snatched that sunk beneath thy tread  
 Babylon's proud towers are levelled with the sand  
 And Salem's temple faded 'neath thy hand  
 Fallen is Egypt's labyrinth of yore  
 And Merimnon's harp salutes the mom no more  
 Nor fleets of Carthage span the stormy wave

## WOMAN.

AN

Essay. —

By —

Charles J. A. Chapman.

Read at the Annual Contest  
March 20<sup>th</sup> 1844.

In behalf of the Washington L. Society.

Will it be esteemed the height of impudence for a young collegiate to present to this respected audience an Essay under the title of "Woman"? Were we but Poets, could we but rank ourselves among those who come out here and with lifted hands invoke the favour of their attendant Muse, we would hope to place this magic word upon our front and deal out poetry in mellifluous strains, if not "a feast of reason" at least "a flow of soul."

But no! It pertains to us to move the rusty wheels of prose & oppose the buckler of truth to the attacks of malice or of ridicule upon the devoted head of "Heaven's last, best



## JOAN OF ARC

OR

## THE HEROINE

An Essay

by

Franklin D. Stearns

Read at the annual contest,  
March 19<sup>th</sup> 1846In behalf of the Washington G. Society

Many are the eulogiums that have been pronounced upon the female character. Ever is the young amateur wont to place a Bognetta in the palm of some dulciana; to bind around her brow a wreath of laurel, and ~~to~~ to envelop her whole <sup>person</sup> in mystic embroidery. But is there no encomium for the heroine. Can there be found no garland to deck her. Unto you who worship at the shrine of Beauty do I appeal. Tell me ye Graces that bow in submission at the footstool of Beauty, whether there be nothing lovely in the heroine. Methinks