

The first original speech by A. Clark

Permit me on the present occasion to give you what instruction and particularly encouragement that is in my power pertaining to your pursuit of a knowledge of those sciences and arts of which our country boasts and which is gained by the industrious but not by the indolent and I will tell you now that if you ever expect to be any account you must be industrious. Perhaps it will be well enough to explain to you little girls and boys what industry is for it is necessary that you should understand it fully as all your future enjoyment depends on it to be industrious you must pay steady attention to your business whatever it may be if you are studying you must be very diligent and attentive to your studies that is to the particular thing you are studying and to nothing else at that time this is industry and judge for your selves whether you are all industrious or not and if you are not you ought to be. There are some children that do not go to school to learn any thing or at least it looks so for there are some that do not study now to such children I would say bear in mind what you come to school for all children know they are sent to school to learn and they ought to know that it is for their own benefit and they ought to have more respect for themselves for their teacher and for their parents who are the most anxious for their advancement in their studies and for their welfare in general. for any child to spend his time in idleness and indolence and thereby bring disgrace upon himself is something that I cannot imagine how any boy or girl can bear the idea of.

I know that it is very irksome for some little children just commencing to learn their letters to study but this is because it does not understand what it is for but the child that is properly taught the benefits of this as it advances onward industry required we may say as it makes the first step up the hill of science and begins



to look around and understand what he has done that has been such a burden upon its mind it soon becomes reconciled to its studies and rapid advancement still progressing from one object to another he steers his course on the winding path of knowledge boldly stemming the surging wave of discouragement proceeding step by step from one accomplishment to another never willing to leave any thing of importance behind unaccomplished till old age arrives and finds him still in pursuit of knowledge. Old age being attended by weakness his further progress is stopped and it is then that he reflects deeply on the past and seeing his honest upright course through life he looks around and beholds the reward of his industry which is bounteous and he then feels happy for hard has he labored and duly is he recompensed. This is the course and at death he thinks seriously upon the good he has done to his country he perceives that his whole life has been occupied in doing good he dies a happy man for it is true his life is no more but he leaves a name that lives in all the splendor that surrounds the names of all great and good men and he leaves an example too for all who wish to follow the path to virtue and knowledge. This is the picture of the character of the industrious and that of the indolent just the reverse.

The excellence of industry may be fully illustrated by contrasting it with indolence there is no man more unhappy than he who gives himself up to indolence whether rich or poor he is equally as unhappy in one condition as in the other. The steady pursuit of a laudible and lawful object is almost a sure path to eminence while the indulgence of idle ness is a sure path to disgrace shame and ignorance. If we ever expect to be useful to our country heaping to ourselves treasures that cannot perish ~~of~~ must be industrious if we wish to be an honor to our country to our selves & to our God we must be industrious we must not spend a single



moment in idleness for life is short and if it is spent in  
indolence we cannot hope for any reward hereafter for to him  
that doeth much a great deal is rewarded and to him that  
doeth little but little reward is given and to him that doeth  
nothing no reward is given. Thus you see you must ex-  
ercise all your mental power to gain knowledge and there  
is no better time for improvement than while you are young  
and if you set out with a determined and unyielding  
courage to persevere give way to no impediments  
that may chance to be in your winding path up  
the hill of science for bear in mind that your prog-  
ress will not be accompanied by all the ease and com-  
fort that this world affords you will reap the fruits of  
your labor in happiness and pleasure and it will  
not be momentary but it will be everlasting. But  
if you spend your time in idleness you will be trifling  
and good for nothing all your life. The fleeting hours  
will pass by unnoticed and old age will find you un-  
prepared to meet it and you will now see all the folly  
of your days and you will now in old age perhaps com-  
mence that which you ought to have begun in childhood  
but alas it is too late death and the grave are close at  
hand and your last tottering steps will be guided in  
indolence and ignorance thereby rendering death horri-  
ble and fearful yes you will not be prepared to ex-  
claim Oh! death where is thy sting Oh! grave where  
is thy victory.

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