

REV. W. J. JOHNSON'S LECTURE ON
JOHN HOWARD.

THE last lecture of the season was delivered before the ACADIA ATHENÆUM, on Friday evening April 30th inst., by Rev. Mr. Johnson. The members of the society and the students of the institutions were well represented; and if the rest of our readers had been favored with an opportunity of attending, we should be spared the impossible task of describing in a few lines the merits and the beauties of that highly applauded production.

The Lecturer first defined the true object of all biography. It held up to man struggling against contending fate in the pursuit of some noble purpose, the life of a fellow-man alike tempest-tossed, but alternately triumphant, or upon the sign-posts of enticing avenues it blazoned in fiery characters, as a warning to the weak and to the tempted, the fearful fall and the eternal shame of those who trod therein. For the imitation and encouragement of his audience, he would narrate the life and portray the character of John Howard, "an eighteenth century hero."

The condition of the prisoners, for whose amelioration Howard spent his life, was then described in a few telling words. Rapidly across the mental vision were flung scenes of woe and horror, unequalled even by the Black Hole of Calcutta; and then before this terrible background rose in colossal proportions the figure of the philanthropist—the friend of the felon, the debtor, the murderer.

The *matter* of the lecture was of an unusually interesting and instructive character. Dealing with such a subject, the writer must have labored against a tendency towards monotony; and the skill with which he successfully combated it was evident in the harmonious blending of narrative description and appeal which characterized the lecture. The story of his hero's life was well told. The delineation of character, though not profound, was eminently practical. Seizing upon two or three marked traits, and bringing fresh illustrations of their power from the domain of history, he produced an impression more powerful than could have been produced by any elaborate mental anatomy however ingenious. His appeals for the outcast and fallen, his well-timed attack on modern conventionalism, his plea for truth and unswerving honesty, whatever their effect upon his hearers showed plainly enough the intense moral earnestness of the author. The scintillations of wit, necessarily few from the nature of the subject, were dexterously managed. (We venture to surmise that the Rev. gentleman enjoys in no ordinary manner the proceedings of the Pickwick Club.) When he suggested that the managers of the States' prisons might make our institutional regulations a model for the

complete separation of the sexes the laughter was simply uproarious.

The *style* of the lecture would not be improved by our attempt to describe it. Throughout it was lofty and grand. Some of his descriptions were graphic as any we have read in Scott, while his denunciations of indifference and his plea for earnestness and effort, have not been far surpassed by the stately eloquence of Burke or Sheridan. The sentence in which he described the death of the great philanthropist was inexpressibly beautiful.

While we tender our hearty thanks to Mr. Johnson, we shall show our high appreciation of his lecture, by promising him an invitation for a similar occasion.

+ THE STUDENT'S REWARD.

EVERY pursuit of life has its reward. The man of the world struggling through years of toil and anxiety, secures wealth. The warrior abandoning the enjoyment of a quiet life rushes boldly into the battle field, and with the death knell sounding in his ears lifts high his proud banner, and urges on to victory—His reward is *fame*. The miser poring over his coffers counting his heaps of sordid dust—the votary of pleasure prodigal of life—the philanthropist eliminating the wants and woes of the unfortunate—the adventurers scanning the snow-capped mountains or labouring to penetrate the everlasting ice-built battlements of the north; all have their reward. The christian turning from the absorbing pursuits of the world, glorifies his Maker; and receives from him a crown of everlasting life. The youth leaves his much loved home, sunders the sacred ties that bind his heart to those most dear, and, sacrificing the pleasure of domestic refinement retires to the cloistered halls of learning. We review not his classic pilgrimage, we tell not his midnight dreams nor the complaints of wearied nature, as day by day he rises from obscurity to enter the arena of life, equipped with an intellectual power, which if used aright can move the world. But we raise him at once upon the very pinnacle of intellectual and moral greatness.

The scholar is the wonder and admiration of the world. His supremacy has been acknowledged in all ages, whether as the legislator of a nation a private citizen "a demonstrator of nature's laws," or "a preacher of righteousness." At his feet lie all the treasures of the universe. Penetrating the solid earth he sees inscribed upon rocks, by the finger of Omnipotence the unwritten history of the past; opening the book of nature he finds stamped on every page beauties that delight and elevate his soul; soaring aloft he explores the realms of space, hastens from world to world, from system to system, measuring their orbs and distances, defines with

precision their relations to each other and beholds with unmingled admiration the order and harmony of all.

The scholar holds converse with the great and good of all past time. He drinks deep from the fountains of classic lore; his soul is inspired with the songs and prose of ancient Bards; and he himself touching those sacred chords brings forth no discordant sounds. With the accumulated knowledge of preceding ages, aided by his own powerful perceptions, he enters far into unexplored regions of science and brings to light new and important truths. He penetrates the labyrinths of his own intellect and there feasts upon a thousand secret pleasures. Whether revelling amid the gorgeous palaces of nature, an exile on some secluded island or an inmate of a lonely dungeon, he can derive enjoyment from fountains of his own creation.

The christian scholar stands far above all others. He beholds enstamped upon all the works of creation the impress of the Deity, and sees in the events of time the development of eternal purposes. Standing between the Creator and the creature, he points out of life to fallen humanity. He is a light set upon a hill which cannot be hid. Moral darkness flees before him as midnight before the approaching sun. The law of love is written upon his heart, words of peace linger upon his lips. He engages while here below the approving smile of God and is rewarded at last with a crown bestudded with richest gems and that fadeth not away.

For the Acadia Athenæum.

THE NEW ACADEMY BUILDING.

AN APPEAL.

DEAR EDITORS,—Permit me to appeal to your readers on behalf of the above object. The Committee having the matter in charge are in great need of funds. Up to this point they have pushed forward the work with a view to its completion not later than Sep. 1st, and for this purpose have made themselves personally responsible for a considerable sum of money, hoping and believing that the friends of the enterprise would come to their assistance. But this money will be expended, and more than expended, by the 1st of June, or that, if additional help and a good deal of it does not come in by that time *the work will have to stop*. To prevent this—which would be calamitous indeed—will not every one of your readers send in at once a contribution of one dollar or upwards to this object?

Dear friends we await your reply. Let it be immediate and liberal.

For the Committee

D. M. WELTON.