[Sept. 1818]

Dear Member,

Having been honor'd with the choice of your self—

prizes unsuspected duty into me in obedience to the dictates of our

Constitution. order upon the discharge of an office whose functions

require the exercise of genius in the different arts of governing

It is with much difficulty that I approach the first of highest

elevation in this enlightened society, and assume a state whose

respectability is estimated according to the honor of the body above

which it is elevate and whose dignity should be enhanced

by the character and conduct of those who occupy it. I can

only promise that in my administration of this responsible office

its arduous duties which can meet a reconnoiture only in the

honor it confers shall be conducted according to my best

ability; and can only hope that the inexperience of my age

is not the uncertainty of my youth will amply apoligise

for any errors. — The field from which the materials are to

be selected for composing an address to be delivered from this

chair has often been unfruitfully glanced and much of

the time allotted now to write might have been usefully

dedicated to preparation for the public stage. I must not be

expected that my present communication will be fraught

with much more material calculated to afford entertainment

or instruct instruction. It shall be my object however to set be

fore you the general importance of education. The particular

example of our Colleges and social duties, including in

my remarks some motives calculated to stimulate your affec-

tion to literary pursuits and excite your attention to regular

discipline as students of College and as members of this Society.

When man has attained to a state varying toward maturity

of mind and body he is perhaps not an improper child

the sovereign of the animal world. It is then his wisdom com-

mands obedience from the rest of animals and renders sur-

rounding nature subservient to his purposes. It is then