

lived twenty-four miles of that city for more than forty years afterwards. . . .During the remainder of his life, which was extended to the extreme age of eighty-five, he devoted himself to the practice of benevolence and the cultivation of the social virtues in a retirement most congenial to his nature, cheered by "all that should accompany old age, as honor, love, obedience, troops of friends", and by a steadfast reliance on the hopes and promises of religion.

Though Col. Dabney took a lively interest in public affairs, and had very decided political opinions, he was never known to seek advancement either at the hands of the people or the government, and scrupulously shunned the intrigues. . . .and the debasing scenes which disgrace our popular elections. He was prompt to obey the call of duty in the crisis of his country's peril, but he never coveted distinction in the halcyon days of peace. He disdained to court public favor either for the gratification of his personal vanity or the promotion of his private interests. The only popularity he valued (to use the language of Lord Mansfield) was "that which follows, and not that which is run after". And this kind of popularity he obtained, if ever man did. . . . Unambitious, possessed of an independent fortune, and without any family of his own (for he never married) he found in the tranquil pursuits of agriculture and the simple pleasures of private life sufficient exercise for his faculties, and an ample fund of happiness.

Prior to the Revolution the means of intellectual cultivation were scanty in this country; and none of our citizens, except those whose abundant resources enabled them to visit the literary institutions of the old world, could aspire to the reputation of finished scholars. In point of education, my uncle, like most of his contemporaries, enjoyed very moderate advantages, but his natural understanding was excellent. He enriched his mind with a large stock of valuable knowledge derived from his own observation, from reading, and from intercourse with intelligent men. His opinions on all subjects indicated sound, practical sense; and, as his moral perceptions were unperverted by any vicious habit, his judgment in matters of conscience was rarely erroneous. Hence he was frequently consulted as an impartial and enlightened adviser, both on questions of right and expediency, not only by his relations, but by his acquaintances generally. His counsels were always freely and kindly given, and uniformly pointed to the path of duty and of honor. Those who acted on his instructions had never any reason to repent of their compliance; for they were equally prudent and sagacious, evincing alike upright principle and a thorough knowledge of human nature.

. . . .He was the most generous and charitable of men. In his personal habits he was economical almost to parsimony; yet this extreme frugality was practiced by him on principle. He saved that he might have wherewithal to give; and I hazard little in affirming that, during his long life, he gave away more money than any man in Virginia of much larger resources. His brothers, sisters, nephews, and nieces were the constant subjects of his liberality; and he annually supplied many of his poor neighbors with the necessaries of life. Yet there was nothing ostentatious in this perennial stream of beneficence. So far from vaunting his good deeds, he was never known to allude to them. . . .His benefactions were not only studiously hidden from the public eye, but were administered with the most refined delicacy, so that they might produce no painful sense of mortification in the objects of this bounty.

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Col. Dabney was a man of unbounded hospitality. His house was the constant resort of a great throng of company, whom he entertained with a dignified politeness and a hearty cordiality peculiar to himself. Every visitor felt himself perfectly at home and yielded without any irksome constraint to the full tide of social enjoyment; yet there was something in the manners of the host which deterred the most rude and thoughtless from the slightest breach of decorum. His mansion was the refuge of the unfortunate and oppressed among his kindred; and those who were driven by such distressing circumstances to seek the shelter of his roof, were always