

J. Carson Brewster Esq

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Sir,

The diary of Washington, is indeed an interesting document & will be preserved by me, as you suggest, as a "keepsake". I am duly grateful for your politeness, in transmitting it. The events, to which it relates are of common occurrence, but their presentation is characteristic of Washington. The narrative bears the impress of his mind, true, direct & exact, - concealing nothing, because it is trivial; exaggerating nothing - ~~exaggerating~~ ~~nothing~~ because it is self-illustrating & laudatory.

I was present at his entry into Boston, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 1789 & saw him distinctly as he passed through what is now Washington Street & under the arch at the old State house, which, in his time, was erected <sup>then</sup> over it. I was also of an age & with feelings, adapted duly to appreciate & to be deeply impressed with the interest & excitement inseparable from the scene. I had also several

occasions, on that visit of his, as well as  
 at subsequent periods, to deepen & strengthen  
 my impressions concerning his general aspect  
 and personal bearing. Without pretend-  
 ing that the miniature preceding the  
 diary is a likeness, it certainly very ac-  
 curately coincides, with the general  
 effect of impressions, which time ~~has~~  
 permits to remain, in my memory.  
 Hence this will be deemed heretical  
 as it deviates from the orthodox belief  
 on the subject. The multitude are never  
 satisfied until an adorned warrior  
 looks & has the bearing, as well as acts  
 of a hero. They cannot bear anything  
 concerning an object, they have been  
 led intensely to venerate, which is common  
 place & of common life. Painters and poets  
 and men of poetic fancies, never fail to  
 cater for this propensity of mankind.  
 The painter elevates what is true, until  
 it satisfies the ideal. He enlarges the bony  
 parts of the frame, he moulds the moveable  
 lines of the face, so as to keep, if possible, some-  
 thing of a general likeness, and yet attain  
 the effect he intends to produce. If he

contemplates or hero, both what is firm  
 and what is fleshy are manipulated &  
 combined until they approximate, if  
 they do not attain, the aspect of heroism.  
 This has been marvellously the fate of  
 Washington. I have seen him, in the  
 street, in the parlour, standing & on  
 horseback, in public & at his lady's levee  
 and no man could have left of that  
 obtrusive look, or ostentatious bearing  
 which men customarily associate with  
 the aspect of heroism. Were I to attempt  
 to express the impression made upon  
 me by his presence, I should say it  
 was the look of a soldier superinduced  
 upon the manners & habits of a perfect  
 gentleman. Serious, calm, self possessed  
 respectful to others, neither seeking nor  
 shunning notice, but in look & word bearing  
 the stamp of truth & uprightness. Indeed  
 heroism is the last attribute to be ap-  
 plied to Washington, either in aspect  
 or character, if it be true, as the poet  
 asserts that it is  
 "one strange purpose of their lives to find  
 or make an enemy of all mankind"

His mission was eminently one of love and conciliation. Circumstances and character enabled him to unite discordant & naturally jarring elements, in states without sympathizing interests, the dependants of slaveholding cavaliers with those of puritans, who did their own work & provided themselves, on their free condition. His social relations enabled him to secure the confidence of the former. His tact, judgment & truthfulness secured to him the affections & support of the latter. More than Buonaparte he was "a man <sup>of</sup> destiny"; though neither boasting, nor conscious of it. Rather he was an instrument selected by Heaven, to fulfil its purposes, in arranging & organizing the civilization of a new world. If his spirit had been that of a hero, he would not have been competent to the work, or have effected it.

Orators and Poets like Painters sacrifice truth to artistic effect, but in result their labors are far more

5,  
mischievous, They also magnify  
and enlarge what is true, select for  
their purpose what is striking and  
throw into the shade what is common  
or, in their view not adapted to  
excite the admiration or applause  
of the multitude & hide especially  
whatever they deem repugnant to  
their feelings or prejudices, Thus  
instead of presenting a being of  
truth they create one of fancy,  
forgetting that virtues, above the  
reach of humanity, are neither  
examples, nor encouragements to  
human beings.

The propensity in human nature  
to regard as heroic what they  
are disposed to idolize, is probably  
the cause, why other diaries  
of Washington, which are known  
to exist are kept concealed from  
the public, The influence of a  
man, with the infirmities and  
passions, <sup>common to</sup> ~~with~~ his race, rising by  
early & late continuance of virtue

& never ceasing self-culture & control,  
 is in a manner lost to mankind. If  
 he feared, or had been disposed, to conceal  
 what was in his nature, of weakness or  
 infirmity, he would not have written  
 these diaries, or would have destroyed  
 them. That he wrote them & that they  
 exist are additional evidences of the  
 truthfulness & greatness of his nature.  
 He did not fear to stand before the  
 world, in the simple state of his  
 being; and though thereby the  
 marble of his monument would,  
 to the common eye, lose something of  
 its purity, to the wise & the thought-  
 ful, its stains, indicating the elemen-  
 tary struggles, it had overcome, not  
 only <sup>would</sup> add to its beauty, but increase  
 both the splendor & power of its  
 whiteness.

But my interest in the subject  
 and my feelings have led me to trespass  
 far beyond the limits of a letter  
 and my purpose which was only  
 to express my thanks for your kindness  
 and how truly I am your obliged  
 servant

Boston 10<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> 1843

Josiah Quincy