

**AN EULOGIUM ON THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF HORACE BINNEY**

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An Eulogium on the Life and Character of Horace Binney by William Strong

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WILLIAM STRONG

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AN EULOGIUM

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

HORACE BINNEY,

BY THE

HON. WILLIAM STRONG,

JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES.

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1878.

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IN August, 1875, soon after the death of Horace Binney, the Bar of Philadelphia, the Law Association of Philadelphia, and the American Philosophical Society, united in requesting the Hon. William Strong, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, to deliver an Eulogium upon Mr. Binney's life and character.

AT a meeting of the Joint Committee of the Bar of Philadelphia, the Law Association of Philadelphia, and the American Philosophical Society, held on the 6th of January, 1876, JAMES J. BARCLAY, *Chairman*, WILLIAM M. TILGHMAN, *Secretary*, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

Resolved, That the thanks of the Committee be presented to the Hon. William Strong, for his Address—alike worthy of the subject and the speaker—delivered last evening, on the life and character of the late Horace Binney; and that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication.

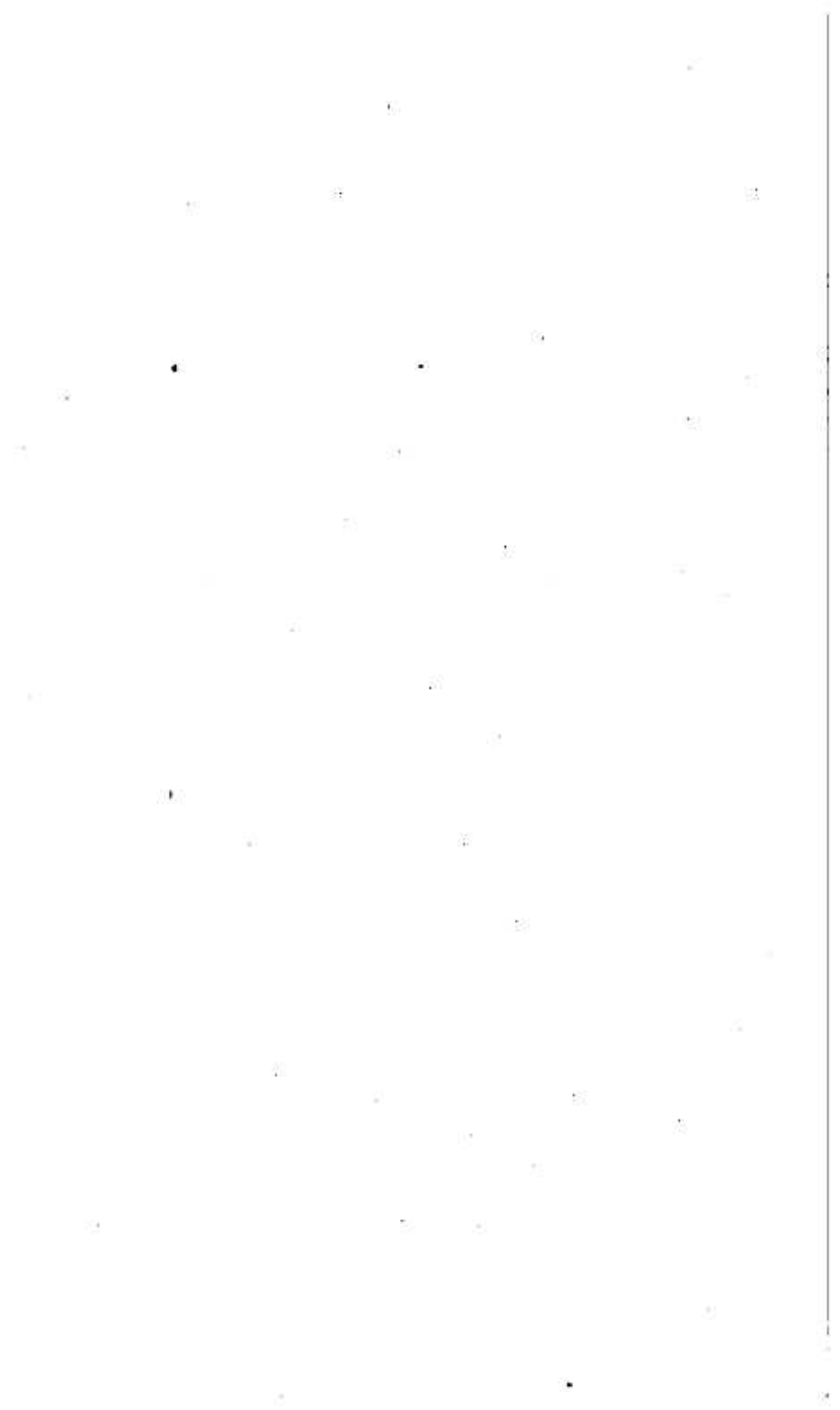
To James J. Barclay, Esq., Chairman, etc.:

DEAR SIR,—I have received the resolution adopted yesterday by the Joint Committee of the Bar of Philadelphia, the Law Association, and the American Philosophical Society, and, as requested, I place the "Address" at the Committee's disposal.

I am very respectfully, etc.,

W. STRONG.

WASHINGTON, JAN. 7, 1876.



DISCOURSE
ILLUSTRATIVE OF
THE LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF
HON. HORACE BINNEY.

Gentlemen of the Bar of Philadelphia, of the Law Association, and of the American Philosophical Society.

Forty years ago, in this Hall, on an occasion much like the present, Mr. Binney commenced his eulogy of Chief Justice Marshall with the following remark, "The Providence of God is shown most beneficently to the world, in raising up, from time to time, and in crowning with length of days, men of pre-eminent goodness and wisdom." The thought thus expressed is worthy of recall to-day. At intervals, all along the line of human history, and especially in enlightened communities, men have appeared, who, by their native endowments, their thorough culture, their ceaseless energy, and their moral worth, have raised themselves to a plane above that of their fellows; men who have been in advance of all their cotemporaries, and to whom the rank of leaders has been universally conceded. Such

leaders have arisen in every department of social life, in the learned professions, among the devotees to fine arts, in the regions of invention, in the explorations of natural science, in mechanical pursuits, in those of commerce, and even in the department of agriculture. Occasionally some noted one has lifted his standard of attainment higher than that of any of his predecessors, and has gone forward beyond their utmost reach. Such men are among the best gifts to the world, of a beneficent God. It is through their agency society makes progress. They lead the onward way. Their lives lend attractive force to that which is truly valuable. They present models for imitation, and their achievements stimulate to a generous rivalry. Their standard, "full high advanced," is ever visible, and it calls, with a noiseless but persuasive voice, to those who are behind to move onward. No one can overestimate the value of such a life to young men in the legal profession, if it be kept ever in view. If they have not mistaken their calling, it must win their admiration, and stir the noblest impulses of their hearts. It is a perpetual reproof of contentment with any attainments less than the highest possible, a rebuke of character and conduct unbecoming the best aims, and it gives courage for the grandest efforts.

Happily the lessons of such a life are beyond the reach of death. They are the rightful property of more than one generation. They ought never to fade into oblivion. To preserve them with gratitude for

the past and with hope for the future, is a duty which the living owe to themselves and to those who shall come after them. And this duty is best performed as a skillful painter preserves in memory the subject of his portrayal. A portrait is not a life, it is true, but it recalls a life. So a delineation of character and achievement, if it be accurate, prolongs the influences the character is fitted to exert. It is therefore in obedience to your desire to perpetuate, so far as may be, the instruction and example of a life more than commonly eminent and useful, that I am to speak to you of Horace Binney.

He was born in Philadelphia on the 4th day of January, A. D., 1780, in a house belonging to Thomas Williams, in what was then known as the Northern Liberties, and in the neighborhood of Front and Coates streets. He was of Scotch and English descent. The earliest paternal ancestor of whom he had knowledge was John Binney, who, in 1680, resided with his wife Mercy, in the town of Hull, Boston Bay, in England, and from whom he was the fifth by descent in right line. The family came to this country about that time and settled in Hull, Massachusetts. The grandfather of Horace was Barnabas Binney, a shipmaster and merchant of Boston, and his father (born in 1751,) named also Barnabas Binney, was a surgeon in the revolutionary army, attached to the Massachusetts line, whence he was transferred to the Pennsylvania line. After his transfer he settled permanently in