

Washington, January 26, 1829.

My dear Henry:

I received this morning your letter of the 21st instant, and I assure you I am highly gratified with the standing which you obtained at the late examination. You think that in being assigned the third place in mathematics, injustice was done you: but that is a very respectable standing, and one that may fully satisfy a reasonable ambition. I should be sorry that you should cherish any feeling of dissatisfaction upon the notion that you had experienced injustice. There is no mistake which a man commits, with more ease than that of judging of the degree of his own merit. There is a disposition in the world to flatter a person by inducing him to believe that he has been ill-treated, and then to laugh at him for complaining of the hardship of his case. I do not mean to say that any of your class are persons of that character; but I do most anxiously hope that you will not allow the slightest murmur of complaint to escape from you. Colonel Thayer