

An Essay  
ON THE  
BEST SYSTEM  
*Of Liberal Education,*

ADAPTED TO THE GENIUS OF THE GOVERNMENT  
OF THE UNITED STATES.

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COMPREHENDING ALSO,  
AN UNIFORM, GENERAL PLAN FOR INSTITUTING AND  
CONDUCTING PUBLIC SCHOOLS, IN THIS  
COUNTRY, ON PRINCIPLES OF THE  
MOST EXTENSIVE UTILITY.

To which is prefixed, an Address to the LEGISLATURE of  
Maryland on that Subject.

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BY THE *Rev.* SAMUEL KNOX, M. A. *President*  
OF THE *Frederick Academy.*

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— PARVIS QUOQUE REBUS MAGNA JUVARI. —

HOR.

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—BALTIMORE—

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## To the Critics.

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**T**HE Author begs leave to inform the Public that in the writing, as well as the publishing of the subsequent sentiments on an uniform Plan of National Education, nothing but the most solicitous desire to contribute even a mite to the interest or success of what so highly concerns the happiness and credit of the *United States*, could have induced him to submit his observations, on any subject, to the eye of the learned and judicious critic, under the many disadvantages he had to encounter.

WHEN he assures SUCH that, in writing, the unremitting labours of professional attendance prevented him from more than a few minutes attention to the subject at one time:—And that by the same cause he has been prevented from superintending the *Press*, he trusts the ingenuous and liberal will adopt the following sentiment of one, whose taste and accuracy in composition, have been long estimated as the standard of excellence.

—————“Non ego paucis  
“Offendar maculis quas aut incuria fudit,  
“Aut humana parum cavit natura.”

HOR.

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TO the HONOURABLE the LEGISLATORS of the  
STATE of MARYLAND, for the Session of 1793—  
the following Observations, introductory to an  
uniform Plan of National Education, are most  
respectfully submitted by the Author.

GENTLEMEN,

THE thorough conviction of your being,  
to the utmost extent of your inclinations, as well as  
of your delegated trust and power, the zealous pa-  
trons of public improvement, is the only apology  
your addresser conceives necessary for his presump-  
tion in laying before you the following considera-  
tions, on the most interesting of all subjects to the  
happiness of MARYLAND in particular, and that  
great civil community, of which she forms so re-  
spectable a part, in general.

THERE is no individual in society whom you  
may not hear ACKNOWLEDGING the great impor-  
tance of education. Even those who are most ig-  
norant of its advantages are heard to express the  
highest encomiums on its inestimable value to the  
state;—to the interests of human happiness social  
or individual. The learned and unlearned seem  
equally agreed on this subject. No party spirit

breathes its jealous and pestilential influence in opposition to its general encouragement, patronage and support. This is that subject on which, in a peculiar degree, the smiles and approbation of heaven may be expected to co-operate with the exertions of men. Seeing, then, it has obtained, so universal an approbation in the minds of all, is it not, in some respects, paradoxical, that all the members of the same community do not conspire in bringing into effect some well digested plan for organizing and establishing that which seems to be the common object of their wishes; the most desirable attainment for the promotion of public happiness?

SHOULD this interrogatory observation be applied to the STATE, which has chosen you, GENTLEMEN, to be its legislators, it will be found that, though much has been done in behalf of PUBLIC EDUCATION;—and tho' many excellent characters among us have lately given ample testimony of their liberality, philanthropy and patriotism, in contributing to the State-Colleges and other seminaries; yet, as it is still too easy to observe, all that might reasonably be done in *so good a cause* has not yet been effected.

IN every corner or portion of the state, how

many hundreds of our youth are deprived of the means of any instruction suitable to the offspring of free and independent citizens? How much ignorance of literature do we every where meet with, even in those whose fortune and circumstances might have enabled them to have secured the means of proper improvement?

IN a state like this, especially, when considered as a distinguished department of a great, united, republican government, one or two pompous edifices, and expensively endowed seminaries, may give a partial and ostensible dignity to the literary character of our portion of the union; but in truth, without the means of establishing and providing proper subordinate nurseries of students, prepared for entering and attending such dignified seminaries, they may tend to absorb or swallow up the greater proportion of public patronage; but cannot, with any truth or propriety, be considered as the most effectual provision for diffusing the blessings of general knowledge or scientific improvement throughout the STATE.

UNDER such a government as ours, and especially in a country where the inhabitants are so widely scattered over the surface of the soil, it would, certainly, be most suitable to have those means of

*Education*, which are derived from the industry and exertions of the people, disposed of in such a manner as would most effectually and generally promote the improvement and happiness of the people. There is no impartial or candid mind can dissent from this truth. If so, it, consequently, follows that the present mode of promoting the interests of public education in this state, has not been, with sufficient efficacy, dictated by the influence of this consideration.

WERE we to contrast what has yet been done, in this state, with that of our sister STATES throughout the union, it would be found that though MARYLAND has some share of *credit* for her exertions in behalf of public literary improvement ; yet she has, by no means, been as generally liberal, in this respect, as the progressive state of her prosperity ; and the dignified situation she possesses, should *dictate*.

IN Pennsylvania, as your addresser has been credibly informed, no seminary subordinate to her university or college, that has looked up to her for her fostering aid, has been refused. In Virginia an excellent act has been passed, during the last session of her state assembly, for establishing three literary schools in each county ;—and, consequently,

for extending the blessing of education to those of her citizens who are most in want of it.

THIS ought ever to constitute the leading or favourite object of the legislature of a free state.

IN all ages it has been the policy of those governments that existed by the slavish ignorance of the people, to establish one or two sumptuously endowed schools for the sons of fortune and affluence,—the expecting brood of despotical succession, leaving the canaille; the ignorant herd, to live and die, the *profanum vulgus*, the despised, enslaved and stupid multitude.

IN proportion, then, as our government is superior in its nature and constitution; in its principles and practice, to the systems of those which have been instituted for enslaving the minds, as well as the bodies, of their ignorant vassals, so should the most general means of diffusing and promoting knowledge, be adopted, patronised and supported in this and every other portion of the union.

It is not, gentlemen, the object of your addresser on this subject, to censure what has already been done in behalf of education in that state of which you are the legislators. What is, or ought to be, of the highest importance with all who have any re-

gard for the public good is, to endeavour to call forth a proper attention to the present state of literary instruction ; examine wherein it is defective ; and try to point out such means as may have a tendency to render Maryland as respectable, in a literary point of view, as the situation and other dignified circumstances in her local and political existence should direct.

THIS it becomes all to consider as highly essential to the best interests of the community. We ought to be convinced by experience, that no external advantage arising from situation, intercourse, or any other superficial means of improvement, can be substituted for that solid instruction which the human mind can acquire only by the regular discipline of the school ; and the well directed labours of literary study and application. The literary character of our state, it is true, may assume the tinsel outside of a superficial polish ; but that dignity of understanding ; that manliness of sentiment ; that elegance of taste and criticism ; and that scientific illumination, which ought to constitute its most striking features, we may look for in vain without the public patronage of some general, well-digested system of education.

The Question, then, is, are we, or are we not, in possession of such a system? No.—The general complaint of the community; as well as a candid enquiry into the state of our public schools must shew, with incontrovertible evidence, that in this respect, MARYLAND is inferior to several portions of the UNION, whose resources for supporting such seminaries are not superior to what we possess.

SUCH observations cannot be justly considered as derogatory to the credit of the state-college, or any other seminary already instituted in any part of the state. For, allowing that all the advantages, reasonably to be expected from the state-college, were fully realized; on the supposition that, from the respectable attention and zeal of its *trustees*; the abilities of its *professors*, and the excellence of its discipline and regulations; it held out the most flattering encouragement for the improvement of our youth; still it would be highly preposterous, repugnant to its interests as well as obnoxious to the genius of our government and the spirit of the national constitution, to allow it to supersede the necessity of patronising subordinate seminaries, or to absorb all public liberality in support of literary instruction.

It would, thus, be repugnant to its own interest, in as much as it must be on the preparatory nurseries of students, throughout the state, that its advancing prosperity and success must depend,— it would be, thus, repugnant to the genius or spirit of our government, in as much as it could not be considered as affording equal advantages to all who, equally, contributed to its support.

WERE there no more than one or two such seminaries or colleges established in the United States, then might ours attain a dignified consequence, without much dependence on the particular state by which it was endowed. But, since every state in the union has been equally liberal in endowing, or making proper provision for, an institution of the same nature, the support of each, as well as the subjects of its *utility* and improvement, must be derived from that state alone to which it belongs.

HENCE appears the necessity or importance, even with a view to the interest of the STATE-COLLEGE, of proper nurseries, in order to supply it with a competent number and constant succession of students; as well as for promoting and extending the blessings of literary knowledge and improvement, to the general body of the community.

THIS view of the subject is earnestly recommended to the attention of the legislature, and all who have it, in any degree, in their power to become the patrons of scientific instruction.

ON candidly examining into the present state of *education* in Maryland, it is impossible not to observe, and it is done with much regret, that some remnant of a former spirit of religious prejudice and partiality still prevails. It is true that, agreeably to the spirit or genius of our government, every particular religious denomination has a well founded right to erect such particular, private seminaries as they may consider most consonant with the spirit of that particular religious system they profess. It should, however, become a free and enlightened people, as much as possible to separate the pursuits of science and literary knowledge from that narrow restriction and contracted influence of peculiar religious opinions; or ecclesiastical policies, by which they have been, too long, and too generally obstructed. Perhaps there is no circumstance can be brought into view, in the history of scientific improvement, that has more retarded its progress, or tended to enslave the human mind, than that of admitting any combination to exist between the interests of academic instruction; and the, too often, partial inte-

rests of particular religious bodies. This combination every free republican state ought to break. On its dissolution the cause of *genuine Federalism*, as much as the cause of science, ultimately depends. Disregarded in our publicly endowed systems of education it must more or less tend to cherish those civil broils, national prejudices, and religious feuds and jealousies that, hitherto, have stained the historic page of the otherwise most enlightened nations on earth.

LET it, then, be an established principle in all our patriotic exertions in promoting Academical Instruction that, no publicly endowed seminary in this state, shall ever be characterized as the NURSING; or even distinguished by the *appellation* of any particular party of religious professors.

So far would this, however, be from proving inimical to *liberty of conscience* or *religious privilege*, that it would rather be directing them to their own proper and exalted sphere. It would be freeing from the partial restraints of religious system that which ought to be uncircumscribed from all connection with peculiar tenets; or such habits and modes of thinking as have been imbibed without study or premeditation. As one great object of education should be to inculcate *Independence of mind*; and, consequent

ly, an aversion to the embracing of any species of knowledge, moral, physical or religious, without examination, and consequent conviction—So, in order to provide for these valuable attainments, every public seminary ought to be absolutely independent of all that would militate against these important objects. No public literary institution can, then, be suited to the genius of the constitution of this state that would tend either to dissolve, or to establish, any peculiar religious principles which may have been impressed on the minds of youth by their parents, or the religious instructors of that particular society or denomination to which they might belong.

IN nations where peculiar systems of religion are established, it is with consistency that the clergy of those national churches are generally preferred as the guardians, directors and teachers of their national systems of Education. But, under our happy constitution, the very great variety of religious denominations which, in this respect, its diversified citizens profess, must render it exceedingly improper, partial and unjust.

BESIDES, it should be considered that, such a partial principle must be often ruinous in its tendency, by discouraging true merit and genius; as well as in exciting and cherishing such selfish prejudices and

invidious jealousies as public education ought rather to be calculated to eradicate, than encourage or promote.

LET, then, the governor, the legislators, and the enlightened sons of science, whether of the clergy or the laity, of every description or denomination, be the only patrons, directors and guardians of whatever seminaries have been, or hereafter may be, publicly patronised in the state of Maryland. The peculiar propriety of attending to this consideration, especially as it regards a *National University*, has been still farther considered and recommended in the subsequent essay on that part of the subject.

ANOTHER object of equal magnitude and importance to the state, on the subject of education is, the extent of the plan on which it ought to be conducted. With respect to this it may be observed, in the first place, that it is very common to find speculative theories abound where any field for innovation or encouragement presents itself. A safe guide in determining the merit or demerit of all such theories may be to examine them by such systems as have accomplished the greatest proficients in literature that the world hath yet produced. It will be found that ancient or modern times have furnished very few in-

deed, who arrived at the zenith of literary merit in all its various departments, by any other plan than a persevering submission to the well directed discipline, and progressive improvement of academical instruction.\*

THOUGH it be true, that some who were possessed of distinguished parts and genius may have acquired the most comprehensive literary knowledge, even on a very deficient, or empirical plan of education; yet in so important an object to the state as public instruction, that which has been well tried and approved by experience ought not to be rashly abandoned. It is, surely, entitled to a decided preference to mere speculative theory.

A remark, too well founded, with regard to the present taste for education, apparently most prevalent in this state is, that a very superficial and contracted plan seems to be gaining ground. The dictates of interest or avarice on the one hand; and the soft suggestions of ease, indulgence and voluptuousness, on the other, appear to incline many to abridge, as much as possible; that path by which alone youth

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\* *Multa tulit: fecitque puer; sudavit et alsit  
Abstinuit venere et Baccho: qui Pythia cantat  
Tibicen, dedit prius, extimuitque magistrum.*

can be conducted to virtue and science. But is it not to be feared that this abridgement may prevent many from ever enjoying these inestimable acquisitions? Every thing most valuable to the mental or corporeal constitution and happiness of man must be the attainment of long, steady and persevering attention.

To the prevalence of a vitiated taste, in education, opposite to this observation, it is owing, that classical erudition, a few years since so liberally patronised by many in the most polished places in Maryland, begins to be exploded.

In the minds of many who consider themselves capable of judging on this subject, it has been forced to relinquish its solid and invaluable advantages for a smattering in French, and the accomplishments preparatory for the counting-room. With many it begins to be an object of higher importance to have young master initiated in the science of a smart or graceful air; and all the little arcana of social pertness and confidence, than in the beauties of classical elegance; or the having formed a proper taste for literary and scientific accomplishments. In an enlightened and free state the *Graces* and *Muses*

should ever go hand in hand. Wherever the former have been honoured with the preference, there we may trace that superficial and tinge'd national character which, in the eye of the ignorant, may assume a false and temporary splendour; but must ever appear contemptible in presence of that sound and lasting polish which a comprehensive course of well directed education can alone confer.

THE former may be decorated with such meretricious charms as may engage the attention of the superficial, or the dissolute.—The latter commands that respect which is lasting; and the more it is examined will be the more estimated and admired.

THERE is another mistake in education into which, there is reason to apprehend, some even of the most enlightened have fallen. Having before them the bright example of some transcendent genius who, untaught by any habits of literary discipline; unacquainted with the forms or systems of the schools, has, by the dictates of his own vigorous mind, directed chiefly to some favourite study, been enabled to attain to a higher sphere of excellence in some departments of scientific knowledge, than those who had been trained up in the most celebrated nurseries of scholastic education, such have been led to consider

this as derogatory from the merit of Academical Instruction. Calculating on one or two instances of this kind, they have commenced the enthusiastic vindications of a new system or plan of literary education.—Such a plan as would immediately lead the scholar into the knowledge or study of the sciences, without the usual attention either to the classics and ancient languages ; or even to that elementary preparation, on the due attainment of which the thorough acquisition of any science must depend.

SUCH theorists, however, take but a very partial view of the subject. They do not consider the vast difference there is in the natural endowments of the human mind, especially in youth. They do not reflect that the course of education suited to a great or uncommon genius would be extremely improper for youth in general. They forget that some proceed with a rapidity of progress that appears directed by something like inspiration ;—while others are obliged to advance by such slow, and almost imperceptible steps, that their proficiency is scarcely apparent ; and whom it is necessary to lead, as it were by the hand, examining every inch of the course from the simplest principles to the most difficult and abstruse.

FROM these considerations it would certainly appear most proper, in establishing, or extensively patronising, a liberal system of education, that it should be generally adapted to the various natural endowments and genius of those who are to be trained up by its discipline.

WHILE such a system, instead of imposing restraint, should tend to encourage the ardour of extraordinary genius and application, it should, at same time, provide for the most suitable nurture of those of slower growth ; yet equally rising to some maturity in improvement and knowledge.

MUCH, it is true, on every plan of literary instruction, depends on directing genius to the proper object of attainment. But it is certain, that a highly distinguished genius will generally find out that subject which is most adapted to its own powers ; and can scarcely be confined to any other. It will therefore, in general, rise superior to that more restricting discipline which may be absolutely necessary for those of weaker endowments ; and, consequently, proves that a general system of education ought rather to be adapted to those whose parts may be more properly assigned to mediocrity, than to excellence.

SOME are found to have taken up the opinion

that the acquisition of the Greek and Latin languages ; the minutiae of their grammars ; and a well formed taste for the beauties of the ancient classical writers, has a tendency to damp natural genius ; pervert its powers and misapply its attention.\* It is, however, to be apprehended that this opinion arises chiefly from the cause already assigned ; together with the ill-judged modes on which education of that kind has been too generally conducted ;—As also from that variety of obstructions which the student of general literature is frequently obliged to encounter from the want of proper opportunities of improvement ; and not seldom from the negligence or indulgence of parents or guardians.

It may safely be presumed, that no extraordinary genius has ever been injured by the acquisition of any part of knowledge or literature, provided it has been properly conducted or inculcated on the mind. Mis-directed in its object it may have been ; but, amidst the various departments of literary acquisition, and that diversity of subjects it opens on the mind, such mis-direction tends, frequently, to promote the general interests of science. It is thus that each subject of human knowledge becomes, in

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\* See Doctor Rush's eloquent eulogium on David Rittenhouse.

its turn, the favourite object of study and attainment. It may probably prevent an individual from attaining to distinguished eminence in some particular branch or department; yet, admitting a general system of education be adopted, true genius will be found to select, and give a preference to that subject to which it is best adapted, and in which it is most likely to become conspicuous.

SINCE, to a generally enlightened community, it is of importance that every part of human knowledge, whether of the useful or ornamental kind, should be patronised with the fostering hand of liberality and care; it would appear to be the most promising mean to promote this, that the field for intellectual improvement, or the efforts of genius, should be left as wide, and as variegated as possible. It is only on such a foundation that it could be calculated to afford ample scope and suitable discipline to the exceedingly diversified endowments to be found in the mental constitution of the youth of a whole state or nation. To this important consideration on the subject, as well as to the more distinguished walks of science, should the attention be turned in providing, publicly, for the means, but especially, in the direction, of a liberal system of literary education.

IN certain stages or periods of human society, as well as in certain local situations, one method of establishing the means of public instruction may be preferable to another, merely on account of being more peculiarly adapted to that particular period or situation in which the state or community may be then placed.

THE peculiar circumstances, and present situation, of the state of Maryland, with regard to education, as in other respects, whether in a social or local point of view, must be best known to its government and legislature. It may, however, be observed, that in every new country, similarly circumstanced, it should be no more than just policy, when any plan of public patronage, for promoting public improvement, is contemplated; and to which the people are generally called upon to contribute, that the common interest should take the lead.

IN providing the means of public education, if this principle prevail, it ought to excite the state legislature to attend, particularly, to those who are most likely to be deprived of the advantage of such an institution. This view of the subject also strongly corroborates what has been observed in behalf of the propriety of laying the foundation of the system,

in the establishment of proper or suitable introductory seminaries, rather than in converting the greater part of the public support to the temporary advancement of one or two schools, or colleges.

THE highest advantage to be derived by the state from these must be only of a partial nature ; and consequently must fall far short of extending the means of proper literary information to the great body of the citizens. But, as has been already observed, the interest, dignity and importance, as well as the utility or advantage of such seminaries must depend, in a great degree, on well directed subordinate schools or academies. In introducing youth to a competent knowledge of the sciences, it has ever been found necessary to proceed from elementary principles. Perhaps, in the establishment of a proper system of schools for the acquisition of these sciences, a similar method is equally necessary.— Let proper initiating seminaries be first patronised and instituted ; and the necessity of liberally supporting the state-college or university will not only be obviated, but, in some essential respects, provided for and secured.

It is a just subject for public regret that, for these few years past, the cause of education through-

but this state has not progressed equally with its prosperity and rising prospects. In some of the most opulent situations, to whatever cause it may be owing, the institution of well conducted seminaries appears to be less attended to than when they had less means of being liberal. It is true, some laudable attempts have been made by particular religious bodies, which have had a partial success; but even supposing such to be free from the dictates of that deference which all such bodies must ever pay to themselves and whatever is under their direction, it, by no means, can manifest any proof of the liberality of our state in patronising education, that such particular bodies of her citizens have been most zealous and munificent in this respect.

THE tendency of the influential partiality naturally inseparable from such bodies, has already been noticed; and is again brought into view, only to enforce the propriety of assigning the patronage and establishment of public instruction only to the province of the highest civil or legislative authority in the state, as the alone constituted guardian of whatever may promote its general prosperity and improvement.

In the prosecution of the subsequent essay, the different seminaries calculated to provide for the support of education on a liberal and extensive plan, it is presumed, may, with equal propriety, be suited to one state, as to many. The equal distribution of the means of improvement is, certainly, a most desirable object. Primary or township schools; and county academies appear to be best calculated for this purpose,—and were the minds of the community as well convinced of the importance of an uniform established system of national education as they ought to be, it would not be considered an insurmountable expence to introduce and establish such in every county of Maryland.

COULD the public mind be fully impressed with this truth, that their interest, their character, their freedom and their happiness depend on the state of the education of their youth, surely we should witness no patriotic exertions more zealously or generally called forth; or more munificently supported, than a well digested system of *public education*.

WERE such schools and academies instituted in each county in the state agreeably to the plan laid down in the essay, the state-college would soon be placed on the most respectable foundation, at least, with

respect to the number of its students. This state alone would produce as many as might afford full employment to the most respectable body of professors. It might, probably, require the lapse of a few years ere such a system could be fully compleated; yet if the foundation were well laid either in the institution of primary schools or county academies, though its progress on account of the other exigencies of the state would be slow, it might, by proper attention, be progressing to still higher and higher maturity and perfection. Such a foundation most of the neighbouring states have already laid; and shall MARYLAND that has ever been among the foremost in whatever concerned the public happiness, or interest of the union, be among the *last* in the divine work of public instruction? No—It is on the best authority we are warranted in the expectation that this subject is about to receive that respectable attention to which it so justly lays claim—that there is none the government or legislature have more at heart; and that an improved extension of its advantages has been, and now is contemplated.

It has been owing to this information that I have presumed to address your Honourable Body on this occasion; and should consider it as the most satisfactory circumstance in my life, should any obser-

vations drawn from my long professional experience, be well received and have any, even the smallest tendency, to turn your attention to this most important of all subjects to the happiness of any people.

VARIOUS are the considerations which should influence you, gentlemen, to an early and effectual attention to this business.

It has, in every age, been the genuine characteristic of civil liberty, that under its cherishing auspices the most general, if not the most munificent encouragement has been given to the improvement of the human mind. Perhaps, in the possession, and under the happy administration, even of such a government as that of the UNITED STATES, it would be no bad criterion for trying the various sense of their civil rights and political advantages which may be manifested in different local situations of the Union, to ascertain the degree of attention paid to the interests of education. Ignorance, more especially literary ignorance, has ever been the parent, and stupid nurse of civil slavery—and in proportion as this ignorance prevails, or is dissipated, so are men, in every situation, more or less disposed to support the interests of civil liberty, or political happiness. Hence it has happened, and ever will

happen, that despots either in religion or in politics have uniformly sought to maintain their tyrannical systems over the minds of men, by keeping those minds in the gloom of a stupid, uninformed state of ignorance and insensibility.

WHEREVER we have an opportunity of observing any state, legislature or commonwealth; or even, any distinguished characters, unsolicitous about the means of disseminating public instruction; there, we may be assured, the principles of despotism, and ambitious encroachment, have taken root.

IN this place, I cannot resist the suggestion that, from this view of the subject, presents itself to my mind, of the propriety and justice of observing that, throughout the history of that public, and most illustrious living character which America, or the world can now boast, there has been no trait or feature in it that has afforded a more convincing proof of his pure regard for civil liberty; and its lasting or immortal existence among his fellow-citizens, than his uniform patronage and liberal encouragement of public education.

To the mind whose highest, and most exquisite enjoyment is constituted by the prospect of the ameliorating state of the improvement and happiness of

his country and the human race—The laurels of the HERO, or the triumphs of the Warrior are but secondary recommendations amidst those noble and disinterested exertions which a WASHINGTON has proposed, supported and recommended to his country for the establishment of national literature and science.

IN the eye of philosophy—in the eye of all the excellent ones of the earth, these testimonies of a pure, uncorrupted spirit of patriotism and republican virtue will live to breathe their fragrant influence over the memory of that truly *great man*, when the trophies of the field, together with the monument that recorded them, thro' the lapse of ages, shall have lost their lustre; or become the mouldering victims of natural dissolution.

THE illustrious example of such a character is one of the greatest blessings heaven can bestow on any people, more especially in the infantine state of their national government. Is it not then seriously to be regretted that this most amiable part of such an example and such a character should be the least honoured, applauded or imitated by a free and enlightened people? Is it not a too manifest proof that the predominant principle in our public or na-

tional taste; as well as in our civil policy, has not been always directed to its most excellent or praiseworthy object? Does it not afford an undeniable evidence, that there exist other objects more influential in calling forth national munificence and patriotic exertions than the interests of intellectual improvement and the general diffusion of knowledge.

By some it may be considered as indulging too much in Eutopian ideas, to look for such perfection in any state as that which would influence it to consider no possible necessity under which it may be laid, either in peace or war, more powerful or energetic in its operation than the claims on that national munificence which would provide for the liberal and judicious establishment of the *general means* of intellectual improvement.

THERE appears, however, to be no absolute or natural impossibility in providing for such means, so as to prevent such public zeal and spirit being called forth in the cause of virtue, knowledge and happiness. No free country, surely, ought to despair of seeing the existence of such a national spirit; and much less should it be negligent in exciting and calling it forth on all proper occasions. That this is a state which yet exists among us only in the flattering

regions of hope,—That it is a state to which we are not sufficiently ambitious to attain, were there not other proofs every where exhibited, the manner in which the subject of instituting a *National University* passed through the great legislative council of the nation, may abundantly testify.

Is it to the honour of the freest country on earth—of the vindicators of that national independence which never could have originated, much less existed, but from the enlightened independence of the public mind, that the wisdom, philanthropy and patriotism of that man, "*Who Unites all Hearts,*" has never been treated even with the appearance of disrespect, save in his liberal endeavours to cherish into maturity and perfection the all important object of an uniform national education?

BUT to return to what is more particularly applicable to the state of education in Maryland,—Some considerations still remain which may merit the attention of her legislators.

IN the first place,—It might be useful if the legislature would, periodically, at the end of every two years, adopt some method of enquiring into the state of such seminaries as are already instituted—either by some person appointed to inspect them, or

by a returned report from their trustees or visitors, which report should be published for the inspection of the state.

SUCH a measure would be salutary on many accounts. The legislature would thus ascertain in what respects they chiefly required their patronage or aid ; and consequently be prepared for supplying them in what they were deficient ; or encouraging them if liberally founded and conducted.

A proper investigation should also be made into the state of literary education in each district or county, in order to ascertain where it might be most proper to form some institutions, provided no *general system* could be yet adopted over all the state.

It is highly worthy of the most mature deliberation of the legislature whether it would not be better to dispose of whatever pecuniary aids or endowments they are enabled to grant in affixing certain salaries for teachers or professors of approved merit in such situations as required them, than to expend those grants in providing buildings and accommodations. It is presumed that the adjoining inhabitants of the township or county might provide a proper house suited to their circumstances or resources ; and that

it would be found to terminate highly to the interest of education, if the legislature would confer their grants on such teachers, *and such only*, as should be certified to have merited them by persevering usefulness in their profession.

WITHOUT attending to this, considerable sums may be expended by the state in erecting proper buildings for schools and academies, and afterwards these remain as useless piles for want of proper teachers to occupy them. But were certain, fixed salaries to be paid by the legislature, tutors of approved merit would be easily procured; and there are few situations in the state where they would not be able to raise a suitable house for the education of their children, so being they had, afterwards, some public aid and encouragement in procuring and supporting a tutor of abilities and reputation.

It is not to be inferred from what has been here observed, that the legislature should provide an adequate salary or support for the teacher or teachers in each of the county seminaries, or primary schools. It is contemplated, that such a sum only, should be granted by the assembly as, together with a moderate price for the annual tuition of each student, would enable the county or township to pro-

sure and employ instructors of the first reputation. This, the legislature may assure themselves, is an object of the highest moment to the interests of public instruction.— Even superior to the providing of suitable buildings and accommodations, however conveniently situated; or judiciously and liberally designed or executed.

It too often happens that tutors or professors are not only approved by prejudice, interest, or caprice; but also corrupted by placing their emolument on such a foundation, as to render them, in a great measure, independent of their professional industry and exertions. Every institution so circumstanced, with respect to its professors, is defective. But a moderate patronage from the public, so as not to place the teachers independent on professional character would have a happy effect. It would relieve their minds from those anxieties which arise from pecuniary embarrassment; and at the same time, could afford no effectual check to application and diligence.

In order to reduce these observations to some more practicable form, it may be necessary at present to add only the following particulars.

SHOULD the legislature find themselves enabled

to afford general and effectual aid; let, in the first place, some suitable annual salary be offered to each county or district *that may have certified to them*, that they have erected a proper building for a county school or academy, should the assembly think such seminaries sufficient for the present—or if they prefer two or three township schools in each county, a suitable salary for the teachers of those schools. It would, however, be proper that the legislature should require from those to whom they made such grants, that they should provide those buildings, whether for a county academy, or township schools, on a plan to be directed by the committee of the assembly on the subject of education.

WHEN it has been *certified* to the legislature, that such houses or buildings have been completed, agreeably to their act for that purpose,—let a competent number of trustees or visitors be incorporated by act of assembly for each of those academies, or schools. The business of those visitors should be to superintend diligently and regularly the conduct and progress of the institution;—and to be the receivers of the annual salary from the legislature in behalf of such tutors or masters, and such only, as under their particular inspection had

steadily, ably and faithfully discharged the important trust reposed in them.

It should also be provided by the same act, that the master or rector of the county academy be, *ex officio*, a trustee during incumbency,—and it would be found no less necessary, if *practicable*, that the assembly should require some penal responsibility from all such trustees or visitors, when found deficient in so important and sacred a trust, through carelessness or neglect.

To ensure success and prosperity to any general plan, the public mind ought to be prepared for its favourable reception ; otherwise, however correct in theory, difficulties will embarrass its advancement. Heretofore any attempts at such a plan have failed ; owing probably to a wish of having such a system as would diffuse the same advantages to all the counties in the state at the same time, even though few of them had discovered an equally laudable zeal to be among the first in promoting the interest of literature. It must surely be the duty of every enlightened legislature to cherish and call forth the emulation of the public to whatever may promote the happiness of the state. On this principle, then, should the assembly patronise such seminaries as have been already estab-

lished; and commit themselves by a public notification that whenever the inhabitants of any county should erect suitable buildings for a school or academy, on a liberal foundation, the government should lend the public aid to the promotion of its prosperity and support. This could not fail to excite a spirit of emulation among the literary of each county, and the state might soon have the happiness of seeing education generally encouraged without any of those murmurs which are commonly the consequence of compulsory plans.

SHOULD it still be asked, why ought one county to draw money, through the medium of patronage, from the public treasury in preference to another? On this principle it might be justly replied, in order that they, too, should be entitled to all the advantages of the same preference as soon as it had been merited by similar liberality and exertions.

IN the establishment of any system for the public good, it must partake of some share of culpability not to provide, as far as possible, for that which may prove a reparation to the greatest deficiency. To this it is hoped the legislature so soon as they take up this subject, will pay that attention which it merits. For this reason it has been here repeatedly

urged as of the first importance. To such as allow themselves to examine into the present state of education in Maryland, I think there hardly can exist a doubt, but that the great desideratum is, the procuring of a competent number of well qualified instructors. As already observed, there are few, if any, counties in the state incompetent to the expence of erecting suitable buildings, provided they are once properly impressed with the advantage and necessity of such institutions—But a powerful incentive to this impression would certainly be the aid of the legislature in procuring, encouraging and supporting well qualified teachers. The mere fame or reputation of such liberality in our legislature would induce professors of reputation to resort to Maryland as the literary patroness of science, virtue and talents.

SHOULD the legislature prefer offering their support on such voluntary terms to the several counties that should apply for it, it is presumed that proper and seasonable aid afforded to the forward, together with the manifest advantages derived from it, might more effectually operate in exciting such as were tardy in the business, than any pecuniary grant conferred previous to their being fully impressed with the necessity or importance of such an institution;

so as to make, in its behalf, equally liberal exertions with their neighbours.

It might be enjoined on the justices of the several county courts, where any endowed school or seminary was established, to give in charge to the grand jury such parts of that law which imposed a penalty on any person or persons who refused or neglected to pursue the directions of the same; and that highly important trust, for the faithful execution of which they had been incorporated.

THE legislature must be best able to judge whether it be most suitable to the genius of the constitution of the state, and its present circumstances, in every point of view, to dispose of any contemplated aid on the above voluntary terms on the part of the different counties; or to provide for an establishment by an obligatory act upon all.

It appears, that the assembly of the state of Virginia, by their late provisionary act, in behalf of public *education*, have not left it to the option of the counties to erect the proper buildings for carrying their plan into effect. Each county is thereby obligated to have them prepared in a given time.

THOUGH there be every reason to believe that the general body of the citizens of this state, may

be as sensibly impressed with the necessity and importance of some public exertions being made by them in behalf of education, as those of any other part of the Union; yet it is obvious, that obligatory acts are too often necessary, in order to provide against that procrastinating disposition, which frequently retards many from exerting themselves, in behalf even of that which they may have much at heart.

LEGISLATIVE aid, on this plan, whether the county academies, or the primary schools be, first, preferred, would not interfere, or be inconsistent with, the system of public education laid down in the subsequent essay, should it or any similar uniform national institution be, at a more favourable future period, established by the UNITED STATES.

THERE is, indeed, but too little ground for being so sanguine as to expect such a system can completely be adopted before we arrive at a more general, as well as more advanced stage of progressive improvement than we can boast at present. Any <sup>advances</sup> academies, however, towards it, should be considered not only highly conducive to the honour, interest and happiness of this or any particular state

that patronised them; but also to the general welfare and prosperity of the union.

SUCH, Gentlemen, are the few introductory observations I have presumed, with due deference, to lay before your honourable body in particular, and the public in general,—Though consciousness of their great imperfection and deficiency should, perhaps, have dictated the prudence and propriety of leaving a subject of so much importance to greater and more respectable abilities; yet, in a cause like this, I trust even a mite will be well received;—As it is conceived to be the duty of every man who is in possession of even a mite, to pay it into the public stock of information on whatever concerns the advancement of the prosperity or improvement of that community in which he exists.

It has not been attempted, either in this address, or the subsequent essay, to introduce any lengthened declamation on the past, present or future advantages of public education to any community. This, it is true, might have presented a more spacious and flowery field. Had it been the design of the writer to dwell upon such views of the subject it might, it is true, have exhibited scenes that would have entertained those who read from no

other motive than the momentary enjoyment of gratifying their fancy or their taste. Such must be highly disappointed, then, who have expected any such amusement amidst the dry arrangement of didactic systems.

To you, Gentlemen, and the enlightened part of the public, this might justly have been conceived as little superior to a species of insult. To have dwelt on the national advantages of national education, in the present enlightened age of the world, would appear like an eulogium on the benefits of the light of the sun to the solar system. It would only be recalling to your view and memory all the most eloquent and splendid encomiums of the ablest writers, most sublime geniuses, and enlightened philosophers who have diffused the rays of literary illumination over the ancient or modern world.

In the present eventful period in the history of governments and nations; while, on the one hand, powerful combinations have been formed to lay the axe to the root of the tree of *civil liberty*, by its old and hereditary enemies;—and on the other, while some of those revolutionary nations who avowed themselves its champions and advocates, in behalf of themselves and others, appear to be assum-

ing it, only as a cloak for encroachment, plunder and self aggrandizement;—while the free and independent genius of our government has been, alternately, threatened by those convulsive assailants;—Be it the glory of the legislators of Maryland, and united Columbia, to be equally employed in defending her against the menacing shafts of foreign despotism or wild ambition;—and in patronising whatever internal regulations or discipline may be conducive to the improvement, prosperity, happiness and security of all her citizens,

UNDER the direction and all-powerful protection of that BEING, who is the ineffable source of all knowledge, excellence and happiness, attainable by man, in the present progressive stage of his improvement, that all your deliberations, in that exemplary sphere to which they have been raised, may tend to promote all that can render your country highly dignified amidst the most free, happy and enlightened nations of the earth, is, Gentlemen, the sincere and fervent prayer of your most devoted, most obedient, and very humble

Servant,

**SAMUEL KNOX.**

*Frederick-town, }  
Nov. 30th 1798. }*

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## *ADVERTISEMENT.*

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**T**HE American Philosophical Society offered last year, among other premiums, one of an hundred dollars "for the best System of liberal Education and literary instruction, adapted to the genius of the Government of the United States; comprehending also a plan for instituting and conducting public schools in this country, on principles of the most extensive utility"—They reserved to themselves, however, the right of giving, in all cases, such part only of any premium proposed, as the performance should be adjudged to deserve; or of withholding the whole, if it should appear to have no merit above what may have been before published on the subject. But candidates were assured that the Society would always judge liberally of their several claims.



VARIOUS communications having, in consequence, been received, the Society, at a stated meeting, held on the 15th of December, 1797, proceeded to the adjudication of the premium. Although none of the Systems of Education then under review appeared to them so well adapted to the present state of Society in this country, as could be wished; yet considering the superior merit of two of the performances, the one entitled, "An Essay on Education;" the other, "Remarks on Education: Illustrating the close connection between Virtue and wisdom: To which is annexed, a system of liberal Education;" the Society adjudged to each of the authors a premium of 50 dollars, and ordered the Essays to be published. On opening the sealed letters accompanying these performances, it appeared that the former was written by the REV. SAMUEL KNOX, of *Bladensburg, Maryland*; and the latter by SAMUEL H. SMITH of *Philadelphia*.

*Extract from the minutes.*

JONATHAN WILLIAMS,

*One of the Secretaries.*

*Philadelphia, December 15th, 1797.*



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To the attention of the AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, the enlightened, impartial and patriotic patrons of literature and science, the following essay is most respectfully submitted—founding its chief claim to their notice, not on any section or part of it, separately considered, but on the whole as an entire, general, uniform, national plan—accommodated not only to future improvement in the sciences, but also preserving what hath already been so liberally done in behalf of public education by the UNITED STATES of AMERICA.

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# *Essay on Education.*

## Section First.

————— Fuerit argumentum, quod in pueris elucet spes plurimorum: quæ cum emoritur ætate, manifestum est non naturam defecisse, sed curam.—————

Quint. Inst.

**E**DUCATION is the training up of the human mind by the acquisition of sciences calculated to extend its knowledge and promote its improvement. According to the attention paid to it, and the plan on which it is conducted, it becomes more or less useful to society, but seldom fails to improve and elevate the powers of the mind above their natural state:

THOUGH we have been eminently endowed by the great Author of our existence with a structure of body and soul superior to all other animals; yet experience evidently manifests that, without the aid

of education, communicated by some means or other, mankind, instead of improving their mental faculties, too soon degenerate to a state of deplorable ignorance; and evidently below that degree of dignity assigned them in the scale of existence, amidst the works of God.

FOR a confirmation of this truth, were any necessary, we have only to observe the uninstructed conduct of human life where gross ignorance and barbarism prevail. As the diamond in the mine contracts an incrustation of dross; so doth the mind of man, when unenlightened by instruction, or arts of refinement. It would require considerable progress in education, to be able even to describe the difference between the mind of an Esquimaux Indian and the late Benjamin Franklin's; or between that of an Hottentot and Sir Isaac Newton's.

IT may not require, however, much explanation to delineate its advantages to mankind in general; the most ignorant are in some degree sensible of these, and are often heard to regret the want of means of education or improvement.

THE nature of our constitution of mind appears to be such, that our progress in knowledge or science depends, in a great measure, on our ex-

erions for that purpose. Our improvement commences when the first principles of education are impressed upon the mind ; and the progressive proficiency we make affords the most refined happiness we can possibly enjoy in our present state. The necessary application and industry which a proper course of education requires are no diminution of this happiness, more especially when we consider that the degree of our knowledge and literary acquisitions so much depends on diligence and exertion.

FROM considering the various faculties of the human mind, it would appear that its great author had formed it for a progressive course of improvement. Even in the infantine state curiosity prompts, and that earnestly, to inquiry and knowledge.— The external senses are so many inlets to the treasures of the mind ; and are in every respect suited, to its most ardent researches, its most industrious application.

THE several faculties of the mind, apprehension, perception, reason, judgment and memory, are all invigorated and improved by exercise. Indeed it is only by habits of application and exertion that their strength or value can be rendered

eminently conspicuous or serviceable. Such education or discipline as may be most conducive to this effect should be most highly esteemed and diligently cultivated. To neglect the cultivation of these powers, is to neglect what constitutes man's highest dignity; and to enlarge or impower them is to promote not only his best interests, but also his highest happiness as a rational and intelligent being. •

ON the subject of literary improvement the enlargement of the powers of the mind is often too little regarded as an object of importance. The acquisition of a few useful or ornamental arts and sciences is considered as indispensable; while at the same time little account is made, by many, of the high advantage the mind receives, from enlarging the stock of its ideas; from acquiring habits of attention, and being constantly exercised in invention, reasoning, memory and reflection.

IT is then the design of a liberal course of education to call forth all the latent powers of the human mind, to give exertion to natural genius, to direct the powers of taste and criticism, and to refine and polish, as well as to exercise, strengthen and direct, the whole œconomy of the mental system.

BUT the various operations of the mind, however well arranged, combined and directed, would lose the most important part of their efficacy or utility, but for the organs and powers of expression, by which they are communicated; and by which they, reciprocally, receive and convey additional augmentations of knowledge through various channels of information.

HENCE the importance of studying language, not only as it is the great bond of human society, but more especially as the vehicle of instruction and mutual communication.

HAD there never been more than one uniform language among men, it might possibly have much facilitated the means of acquiring knowledge; yet it may be doubted whether in that case the stock of human knowledge would have been as extensive as it is at present. It is true that were the attention confined to one language, it would acquire a more compleat knowledge of it than of one derived from a plurality of languages; but it may be readily conceived that the copiousness of any modern language has been owing to a diversity of languages and consequently the more comprehensive, copious and enriched any language hath become, so much the

better is its acquisition calculated to enlarge our stock of ideas, and our knowledge of various kinds.

As an introduction to the arts and sciences the most approved literary discipline hath prescribed, with great propriety, an early attention to the grammatical and critical knowledge of those languages to which the vernacular is most indebted, and in which also the most renowned philosophers, historians, poets and men of letters, have written and recorded the fruits of their studies,

AN attention to the proper acquisition even of any one language is of itself no inconsiderable course of progressive improvement in knowledge, and during the years of childhood is, certainly, the best system of literary instruction, whether we view it with respect to the enlargement of the mental powers, or the attainment of such knowledge as is suited to the tender age, that could possibly be cultivated.

DURING the childhood of life the faculties of the mind have not attained sufficient vigour or maturity for the acquisition of the higher departments of literature, or a close investigation of the more abstruse sciences. During this period, therefore, the study of speech or language is not only the best suit-

ed to this state; but is also most proper as a preparation for scientific improvement.

THE study and thorough knowledge of the native language ought to be the leading consideration; and to those whose views or professions are not to be dependent on the highest degree of literary erudition, that language well acquired may serve every necessary purpose.

BUT without a proper knowledge of the learned languages, from which so considerable a share of ours is derived, it is impossible it can be acquired in the highest degree of perfection. The mere comparing or contrasting of two languages together must afford considerable improvement to the mind. But the chief advantage, perhaps, which it derives therefrom, consists in the exercise of its various powers in translating from one language to another, and consequently in selecting and applying the most proper and suitable words and phrases for expressing the meaning or spirit of the author. Taste, memory and reflection are all employed in this exercise, which from its nature cannot fail, if properly directed, to acquire the most general and extensive knowledge of the language.

IT is a hackneyed argument by many against a

classical education, that all the authors in the dead languages, of any eminence, have been translated into English, and consequently that the scholar's time has been ill applied in translating what has been already done to his hand. Such, however must neither have attended to these considerations, nor duly weighed the advantages which the tender mind receives by such exercises, as well with regard to things as words, and that too at an age not well adapted to more arduous literary studies.

INDEED in the very pronunciation and phraseology of our language the ingenious mind, prone to literary acquisitions and researches, could not be satisfied without some knowledge of the original languages. Let a youth, never introduced to any knowledge of Latin, be asked, why his collection of books is styled a *library*? and the answer, it is presumed, will amply justify this observation,

CONSIDERATIONS, however, of much higher importance may manifest the impropriety of excluding the study of the Latin and Greek languages from a system of liberal and polite education. It is only from the study of these and other languages that the improvement of our own language can be promoted by attending to the principles of universal

grammar; and the consequent enlargement of the mind from such literary views.

IN painting and statuary, it has been considered an advantage of the highest consequence with all those who have a view to excellence to have studied the most exquisite models of the ancient schools. In the structure and various compositions in our language, must it not also be equally advantageous and important to have laid before us the most finished productions of antiquity, whether of rhetoricians, and orators, or philosophers, historians and poets? From this view then it is not merely language that is to be taken into account; but also the various information the mind receives; and the refinement of our powers of taste and criticism in every various species of composition.

A mind exercised and improved by such learning must be much better qualified and prepared for the study of the arts and sciences than that whose powers have never been called forth by habits of exertion, or strengthened by assiduity and application. As most of the sciences and especially their elements were originally written in the Greek or Roman languages, it must certainly tend to assist and enlighten

the mind of the learner to be acquainted radically with the technical terms of that art ; or the principles of that science which is the subject of his study.

COULD the indulgence of parents permit them to confine the attention of youth at an age sufficiently early, there could not be so much objection made as there commonly is against the acquisition of the Greek and Latin classics.

IN many parts of this country, owing either to want of proper seminaries of instruction ; to the mistaken fond indulgence of parents ; or to both, youth have the greatest part of their education to acquire when it ought to be nearly compleated. Under such circumstances little solid improvement of any kind can be gained. A few useful gleanings may be collected from the fields of science ; but the great and important purposes of a liberal and extensive course of education must, in a great measure, be defeated. Indeed nothing can be more hostile in any country to the interests of the education of youth than the pampered treatment and imprudent fondness of luxurious and indulgent parents. A public, patriotic or general sense of the importance of education may lead to the establishment of proper seminaries, and suggest plans or systems of instruc-

tion; but unless these laudable institutions be seconded by the wise and well directed authority of parents and guardians, much of their real and general advantage must be lost to the community.

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## Section Second.

ON THE QUESTION, WHETHER PUBLIC BE PREFERABLE TO PRIVATE EDUCATION.

——Mens in secretis aut languescit; aut contra tumescit iuani persuasione——

Quint. Inst.

**C**ONVINCED of the great advantage and importance of education, in proportion as any nation or society, of which we have any knowledge from historical records, improved in the arts of civilization and refinement, so have they been forward in encouraging and patronising seminaries of learning and systems of literary instruction. The enlightened part of the ancient world were no less sensible of the great advantages of public education, than those of the same description in the modern. And though they sometimes encouraged private tuition; yet we find from the reputation of the famous academy at Athens, that public education was most approved.

Many are the illustrious characters of antiquity that bear witness to the truth of this observation. Most of those, indeed, who, at any period of the world, have made a figure in literature, acquired their knowledge under the direction of some academical institution. The justly celebrated Cicero, was so conscious of the advantage to be acquired at Athens, that he sent his son there to compleat his studies; though it is probable, that, at that time, Rome was not deficient in the means of private literary instruction.

IN modern times, also, we find few of those who have distinguished themselves in the higher walks of science, but have been educated on some similar plan. Indeed, the superior advantages of academical education are sufficiently obvious. As they bid fairest for being furnished with tutors or professors of the most general approved merit; and in whose abilities and character the greatest confidence may be reposed; they, thus, prevent the student from being exposed to the pedantic caprice of any tutor, whom chance, favour or necessity may have thrown in his way.

IN such institutions, also, the means and apparatus for acquiring a competent knowledge of the arts and sciences, may be supposed to be more liberal and

extensive, than could be expected, or indeed obtained in a domestic or private situation.

EDUCATION would diffuse its happy influence to a very contracted extent, indeed, were there no public schools or universities established by national or public encouragement.

INDEPENDENT of these important considerations, *emulation*, which hath so powerful an influence on the human mind, especially in the season of youth, would lose its effects in promoting improvement, and the love of excellence, on any other plan than that of the academical. Indeed this consideration alone ought to be sufficiently decisive in its favour.

LOVE of excellence predominates in every uncorrupted youthful breast; and where this principle is under the conduct of impartial and skilful directors, it is observed to have the happiest effects in promoting that intensity of application and persevering industry, which the more abstruse and arduous departments of science necessarily require.

GRANTING that something resembling emulation may be excited even on a private plan of education, yet it is manifest that the great variety of

abilities and genius which the university or academy exhibits must afford a much greater field for competition ; as well as such public and flattering prospects of reward as are the principal incitements to a laudable emulation and love of excellence.

It is commonly observed, and perhaps, with some share of justice, that the man of the world has, in many respects, the advantage of the mere scholar ; and that though a long and close attention to books and study may render him master of arts and sciences ; yet he may still remain ignorant of many accomplishments, without which it is scarce possible to pass through the world with safety, satisfaction or advantage. This is obviously the effect of the scholar's having his mind or ideas habitually applied to the same objects ; and it is undeniable that this consequence of a close application to literary acquisition may be much more effectually checked or prevented by a course of public, than private education. That diversity of character and variety of manners and conduct, together with other observations, which the former affords, tends, in a high degree, to wear off that studious and awkward air which is apt to be rather confirmed than diminished by the latter.

ANOTHER argument in favour of an academical education is, that such as are tutored in private are apt to form too high an opinion of their own attainments or abilities. Owing to the want of an opportunity of observing the abilities or exertions of others, it is easy to conceive that such may most probably be the consequence of that mode of instruction. It is but just to observe that to this cause we may assign that arrogance, pedantry, dogmatism and conceit that too often disgrace the scholar, who, without rivalry or competition, hath been accustomed to listen only to his own praise.

THE academic school has, also, the peculiar means of affording youth an opportunity of forming such friendships and connections as often in a literary and interested view contribute eminently to their future prosperity and happiness. In that season, the youthful breast glowing with every generous, friendly and benevolent feeling is generally most attached to those who discover the same amiable qualities and disposition. Hence friendships have been formed and cemented, which no circumstance or accident, during their future lives, could intirely dissolve. The story of the two Westminster scholars, in the civil war between Charles the first of England and the parliament is well known.

IT is true that many object to public plans of education, because that from their situation in populous towns, and the various complexion of the many students who attend, opportunities are thereby given for corruption, by scenes of vice and examples of debauchery.

IT may with equal truth, however, be replied to this that, there are few domestic situations so private as not to admit of ground for the same objections. The first of these, as far as situation is concerned might be easily remedied—But it requires no very elaborate proof to manifest that the most dangerous temptations to vice more effectually succeed in the private and retired shades of bad example, and domestic indulgence, than in the social scene, bustling croud or public assembly.

ANOTHER objection to an academical plan of education, has been suggested, on account of the division that must necessarily take place in the attention of the tutors or professors, from the great number of students that may be under their care. But it has been already shewn that in faithful and skilful hands this may rather tend to forward their proficiency than otherwise. The partial abuse of any system by one or more individuals ought cer-

tainly to bring no discredit to the plan or institution; neither ought it, in justice, to furnish any argument against its merit, or even excellence.

THE celebrated Locke himself not excepted, we find very few who have attempted to offer any plausible objections to a public education; or in preference to a private any argument in its favour, who were not themselves indebted to some academical institution even for being qualified to reason upon the subject. The good effects of the one they had experienced, of which Locke, in particular, affords an illustrious testimony; those they would ascribe to the other could be but little better than mere theory, or fanciful speculation. Upon the whole, it appears that there are many and various arguments in favour of an academical, as preferable to a private education; and that any objections that can be offered against the former, are almost all, in an equal degree, applicable to the latter. One conclusive argument, however, in favour of public education, arises from its becoming an object of national patronage and encouragement, on some uniform and approved plan or institution. It is from this view that education might be made to assume a still higher degree of importance in its influence on hu-

man happiness, in those advantages which it holds out to individuals or the nation in general. It is hence too that the best means would be furnished for distinguishing literary genius and merit; and consequently pointing out to public view such talents as are best fitted to fill the various stations and offices which the different exigencies of the state, and the many departments of society require.

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### Section Third.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

“KALLISTON ESTI KIEMA PAIDEIA BROTOIS.”

**W**HEN we take into consideration the many great exertions, and laudable institutions which various commonwealths or nations have devised and adopted for the general benefit, in framing and maintaining wholesome laws and government, it would appear, in some degree, unaccountable that little hath yet been done in promoting some general plan of education equally suitable and salutary to the various citizens of the same state or community.

It is true that in the history of some of the most

celebrated commonwealths of antiquity we find some such plans were adopted for the improvement of youth ; but so circumscribed was the state of literature in those times ; and such the circumstances of those commonwealths that their plans of education were rather military schools preparing them for the camp, either for self defence, or for butchering the human species, than seminaries suited to literary acquisition ; the conduct of life ; or the improvement of the human mind. This observation, however, extends no farther than as it applies to institutions of national education ; and is by no means considered as applicable to the schools of the philosophers ; or of many celebrated orators, grammarians and rhetoricians of the ancient world. If some of the states or nations of antiquity had been possessed of the means which we enjoy, since the invention of printing, of diffusing literary knowledge, it is more than probable, from what they have done, that they would have availed themselves of them in a manner superior to what we have yet accomplished.

IN our own times and language, we have been favoured by ingenious men with several excellent treatises on the subject of education. The greater part of these, however, are rather speculative theories, adapted to the conduct of life and manners ;

than applicable to the practical diffusion of literary knowledge. What has lately been done in France excepted, I know of no plan devised by individuals, or attempted by any commonwealth in modern times, that effectually tends to the establishment of any uniform, regular system of national education. Universities or colleges hitherto instituted by the pride or patronage of princes or other individuals; are in general too partial either in their situation or their regulations to extend the necessary advantages of literature to the more remote parts of the community for which they were intended. Immense revenues and donations have, indeed, been applied to the founding of such seminaries, while the poor, and such as most wanted literary instruction, or the means of acquiring it, have been left almost totally neglected. A few, indeed, whom wealth and leisure enabled, might drink deep of the Pierian spring, while the diffusion of its salutary streams through every department of the commonwealth has been either neglected, or considered as of inferior importance.

It must be allowed that these remarks may, in some measure, apply to any plan of public education that can possibly be formed. It is not, perhaps,

possible to establish any system that can render education equally convenient and equally attainable by every individual of a nation in all their various situations and circumstances.

THIS observation must be particularly applicable to the condition of the *United States* of America and the widely dispersed situations of their citizens. In undertakings, however, of the first national importance, difficulties ought not to discourage. It does not appear more impracticable to establish an uniform system of national education, than a system of legislation or civil government; provided such a system could be digested as might justly merit, and meet with general approbation.

THE good effects of such a system are almost self-evident. In the present state of education however ably and successfully conducted in particular local situations, the nation is, in a great measure, incapable of judging its condition or effects. Diversity of modes of education, also, tend, not only to confound and obstruct its operation and improvement; but also give occasion to many other inconveniences and disagreeable consequences that commonly arise in the various departments of civil society; or even the polished enjoyments of social inter-

course. But were an approved system of national education to be established, all these imperfections of its present state, would, in a great measure, be remedied, and at the same time accompanied with many peculiar advantages, hitherto unexperienced in the instruction and improvement of the human mind.

GREAT, surely, must be the difference between two communities, in the one of which, good laws are executed only in some particular situations, while in others they are almost totally neglected; and in the other are universally established with equal and impartial authority. Such, surely, must be the difference between the effects of education when abandoned to the precarious uncertainty of casual, partial or local encouragement; and of that which has been established uniformly and generally by the united wisdom and exertions of a whole nation. In such a state it is elevated to no more than that importance to which it is justly intitled; and it is to be hoped that the close of the eighteenth century will be so enlightened as to see education encouraged and established, as well by this as other nations, in such a manner as to be considered next to the administration of just and wholesome

laws, the first great object of national patronage and attention.

THE history of human society informs us, what have been the effects of nations' uniting their zealous exertions for the accomplishment of any great object to which they were directed. The happiest effects, then, might surely be expected from the united public exertions of this country in the combined cause of public virtue and literary improvement. The patronage or encouragement of the one, has certainly a very intimate connection with that of the other, more especially if it be allowed that in the same system may be comprehended the institutes of morals and the principles of civil liberty.

IN a country circumstanced and situated as the United States of America, a considerable local diversity in improvement, whether with respect to morals or literature, must be the consequence of such a wide extent of territory, inhabited by citizens blending together almost all the various manners and customs of every country in Europe. Nothing, then, surely, might be supposed to have a better effect towards harmonizing the whole in these important views than an *uniform system of national education*.

THE late much celebrated Doctor Price, in a discourse delivered before the trustees of the academy at Hackney, on the evidences of a future period of improvement in the state of mankind, earnestly urges an improvement in the state of education. He observes that it is a subject with which the world is not yet sufficiently acquainted; and believes there may remain a secret in it to be discovered which will contribute more than any thing to the amendment of mankind: and adds, that he who would advance one step towards making this discovery would deserve better of the world than all the learned scholars and professors who have hitherto existed.

It requires, then, little demonstration, I think, to prove, that if a justly approved plan of national education constitute not the secret alluded to by the Doctor, it is at least the most important step towards it that hath ever yet been taken. National exertions directed to this important object could not fail to have the happiest effects on society. The rays of knowledge and instruction would then be enabled to dissipate every partial and intervening cloud from our literary hemisphere, and the whole community receive a more equal distribution, as well as a more effectual and salutary display of their enlightening influence.

## Section Fourth.

## THE EXTENT OF A PLAN OF NATIONAL EDUCATION CONSIDERED.

Plurima pars Juvenum solam ostentare speciem, quam solidam præstare Eruditionem, malit.

MORHOF.

**I**N a course or system of national education, there ought to be two, and, I think, but two great leading objects to which it should be adapted, *the improvement of the mind, and the attainment of those arts on which the welfare, prosperity and happiness of society depend.*

EDUCATION ought to comprehend every science or branch of knowledge that is indispensibly necessary to these important objects. To confine it to a system that comprizes only the knowledge of mechanical, commercial or lucrative arts; or even a knowledge of the world, as far as it can be attained by literary accomplishments, would be to view its advantages in a very narrow and illiberal light. The nation that would conceive such a system as sufficiently entitled to its patronage, could neither be considered as enlightened in itself, nor as meriting the refined improvement of a liberal

and cultivated course of education. In proportion, then, as a nation hath formed a just sense of its own dignity and importance; in proportion, also, as it hath formed just conceptions of the importance of virtue and science, founded on the enlightened improvement of the human mind, so must that nation be influenced to patronize or establish such a system of literary instruction as may bid fairest for the acquisition of these important ends.

It is certainly laudable to pay due regard to those sciences that tend to enlarge the sphere of worldly interest and prosperity, and without which the various and complicated business of human life cannot be transacted; this, however, by no means ought to check the exertion of that refined and sublime knowledge on which the improvement of genius, science and taste, rather than worldly circumstances, chiefly depends. Indeed; it might be justly observed that a narrow or illiberal system of education from lucrative views would not ultimately tend to the prosperity or happiness of any nation. Were the human soul taught to cultivate only the sordid dictates of avarice, or the knowledge of lucrative speculations, soon must that community loose a taste for whatever is most excellent in sci-

ence, or best calculated to refine & improve the faculties of the mind. Where such a taste hath become prevalent in any state, it is rather an evidence of its degeneracy than reformation, and is commonly the forerunner of whatever may tend to enervate the patriotism, corrupt the virtue, or contaminate the morals of the community. There is reason to believe that the history even of some modern states, as far as education is concerned, would shew that this observation is not altogether unfounded.

It is remarked, with concern, that in this country, at least in some considerable share of it, such a false taste in education becomes more and more prevalent. The study of the English language, only by those means it affords of itself; a smattering of French, arithmetic and those branches connected with it, are considered by many, as an abundant competence of literary acquisition. And so they may to such as attend to education merely as the handmaid to industry, or what is called *fortune*; but surely cannot by any means prove satisfactory to those who, independent of interested calculations, aim at the highest improvement of the mind, and the acquisition of all knowledge or science to which it is properly competent.

A nation so unfortunately situated as to be forced to scrape a scanty sustenance either from a barren soil, or a too confined territory, might plausibly be disposed to encourage or establish public education only as far as it was subservient to business or industry; but this, surely, could, by no means, be suited to the genius of a country where independence in worldly circumstances, exemption from manual labour, and an abundantly fertile territory afford such leisure and encouragement to literary improvement as are so generally enjoyed by the inhabitants of these states.

IN establishing, then, a system of national education this consideration ought to have its due weight; and that while it should comprehend every species of literary instruction *useful* to human life, the ornamental also ought to receive that patronage to which it is justly entitled. Seminaries of learning are the salutary springs of society, and their streams ought to flow not only to an extent, but also with a copiousness, proportioned to the circumstances and situation of those to whom their course is directed. On the manner in which such a system is established, in a great measure, would depend not only the happiness, but also the dignity and character of the nation; and consequently ought to be founded on the most comprehensive and liberal plan.

THE course of education, instituted in the public seminaries, should be adapted to youth in general, whether they be intended for civil or commercial life, or for the learned professions, that of Theology alone excepted, at least after a certain degree of preparation for that study.

UNDER this view it would comprehend a classical knowledge of the English, French, Latin and Greek languages, Greek and Roman antiquities, ancient and modern Geography, universal Grammar, Belles Letters, Rhetoric and Composition, Chronology and History; the principles of Ethics, Law and Government; the various branches of the Mathematicks and the Sciences founded on them; Astronomy; natural and experimental Philosophy in all their various departments. To which course, also, at proper stages of it, ought to be added the ornamental accomplishments Drawing, Painting, Fencing and Musick.

IN treating of the various seminaries necessary for conducting this course, a more extensive view may be given of it; what is here introduced is to be considered only as shewing how far a plan of national education ought to be liberal and comprehensive.

It is a happy circumstance peculiarly favourable to an uniform plan of public education, that this country hath excluded ecclesiastical from civil policy, and emancipated the human mind from the tyranny of church authority; and church establishments. It is in consequence of this principle of our happy civil constitution, that Theology, as far as the study of it is connected with particular forms of faith, ought to be excluded from a liberal system of national instruction, especially where there exist so many various denominations among the professors of the christian religion. The establishment of education on some national or public plan would not prevent the several religious denominations from instituting, under proper instructors, Theological schools for such as were intended for the ministry, after their academical course had been completed at the public seminaries. One institution of this kind in each state, for each particular denomination, that held it necessary for the ministry to be instructed in *Hebrew*, a critical knowledge of the Scriptures, Ecclesiastical history and Theology, might be considered sufficient. Such studies would be perhaps best conducted under the inspection or charge of some particular clergymen in each denomination properly qualified for that purpose.

INSTEAD of this measure being degrading to the study of Theology, the most sublime of all sciences, it would, on the contrary, if properly managed, exhibit in the most respectable view, and at the same time render it more effectual, and, consequently, more salutary to society. It would prevent that jealousy of partial treatment that would arise if conducted by professors of different religious principles in the public seminaries. It would also afford students of Theology, intended for the ministry, an opportunity of cultivating those habits of sobriety, and principles of private and public virtue, so essential to their character, better than could be attained in the promiscuous colleges of youth impressed with more licentious habits; and under the influence of domestic indulgences, but little suited to the pious examples and virtuous dignity of the sacred function. This observation by no means implies that there ought to be any laxity of discipline with regard to morals in public seminaries, unsuitable even to the ministerial character. It would, however, be an improvement in education as it is conducted in most universities at present, if, as soon as students are prepared by a literary and philosophical course, and designed for the office of the ministry, their theological studies

should be conducted in such a manner, and in such a situation as would best furnish them only with examples and habits of real virtue and practical piety. Not only the professors of Theology, but, if possible, even the place of instruction, should possess such a solemnity of character, as would impress them with a just sense of their having set themselves apart to be the sacred instructors, and pious example of society. Not that it should be considered their duty to acquire any pharisaic solemnity or monkish moroseness in their manners or conduct. No, the time spent at the public seminaries, previous to the study of Theology would, it is presumed, enable them to see the absurdity of such manners; while their change of situation, and removal to the place of sacred instruction, if properly conducted, might tend to inspire them with sentiments suited to the dignity of that profession in which they were about to engage.

UPON the whole, it need only be farther observed on this part of the subject, that whether a plan of national education be directed with a view to qualify youth for any of the learned professions; or transacting the various negotiations or business of society, or merely for mental improvement, it certainly, in all of these whether considered singly

or collectively, ought to be conducted on the most liberal and effectual plan. Whatever is superficial, can never, in that state, become solid, and whatever is not perfectly solid is incapable of receiving that polish which may justly lay any claim to merit or perfection. That system, then, of education which would deserve the patronage of this country ought to be solid and extensive. Instead of circumscribing the powers of genius or improvement it ought to lay open the widest as well as the fairest field for still higher and higher degrees of future progress and exertion. As it would be highly unjustifiable to set bounds to the advancement of human knowledge or science; so would it be equally so to contract or circumscribe the means of acquiring it.

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### Section Fifth.

ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE VARIOUS  
SCHOOLS NECESSARY TO COMPLETE A  
SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

*Quam bene cum republica ageretur si beatis illis gradibus, primum ad Academias et ab illis ad tribunalia et subsellia procederemus.*

MORHOF.

**P**ROVISIONARY laws being obtained for establishing an uniform system of literary instruction,

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under the proper function and authority of the nation, the first important object would appear to be the founding and organization of proper schools or seminaries.

THESE should be arranged and situated in such a manner as most impartially to diffuse their advantages to the greatest possible extent; and also to afford the means of enabling all the attending youth to rise gradually from the first rudiments to the highest departments of knowledge and science.

IN a liberal course of public education, no one stage of it ought to be better provided for than another, in whatever may best contribute to its success. From the elementary or grammar school up to the university, though in various situations and different departments, it should be considered, supported and encouraged as constituting one entire system, no one part of which could be neglected, without injuring materially the whole fabric or institution. Every one knows that if the first principles of science be imperfectly communicated, it is seldom that any solid or lasting improvement can be attained. This, certainly, may be sufficient to point out the importance of having the elementary parts of education as well conducted as the most advanced.

FOR the first stage, then, of a system of public instruction, suited to the United States, let parish schools, in each county of every state, be established at a suitable distance from each other and endowed with a few acres of land and a proper house sufficiently large to accommodate the teacher and the taught.

SECONDLY, let the next stage consist of county schools or academies endowed also, and furnished as the parish schools, but on a much more extensive plan, hereafter to be explained,

THIRDLY, let this stage of instruction consist of state colleges as already instituted and endowed in the several states of the union; but so regulated and organized as to fall in with the general uniform system.

LASTLY, let the literary establishment be completed by the institution of a national university, situated in the best manner with regard to health and convenience; and furnishing at the same time, the best opportunities of information and instruction,

THESE various seminaries properly endowed, furnished, and conducted in such a manner as to complete one uniform course, afterwards more fully to be explained, will be found, it is presumed,

well adapted to the acquisition of the most enlarged proficiency in scientific knowledge. The greatest difficulty in a country so thinly inhabited in many places as this, would be in dividing the counties in each state into parishes or townships, so as to render the situation of the schools convenient to all the inhabitants. Each state in the union being already laid out into counties, less difficulty would arise concerning the situation of the county academies. And with regard to the state colleges and university, it is a favourable circumstance towards carrying this plan into effect, that many of the former have already been founded, and that the idea of the latter also seems to meet with the public approbation.

HITHERTO, however, this country, one or two states excepted, seems to have fallen in with the error of many even of the most enlightened countries in the world; and that is, in providing or endowing most liberally a few seminaries for the completion of education; while the elementary, which most required the fostering hand of public bounty, has been left to support itself as chance or circumstances, sometimes the most adverse, might dictate.

OF the inhabitants of a country so wide and extensive as this, but few, comparatively speaking,

can ever attend colleges or a university; and hence the importance of paying due attention to the parish and county schools, both as nurseries for the college and university; and also the instruction of such as cannot extend their education to a more advanced stage of the system,

IN order to found, lay out and carry into effect, the several seminaries, let a *board of education* be incorporated, under the sanction of the united authority of the states. These gentlemen should be nominated and appointed in every state, either by the united government, or by the respective state assemblies: one or two in each state might be sufficient. Their office should not only be to preside over the general interests of literary instruction, to digest, direct and arrange an uniform system in all its parts, and to correspond in such a manner as to support the general and united interests of education; but more especially, in their individual capacity, to preside with regard to it in those states in which they were resident. Hence they might very properly be styled "Presidents of literary instruction and Members of the board of national education." As they ought to be chosen or appointed either on account of their distinguished literary merit, or other qualifications for the office,

little other inducement to accept of it, than what the honour of being chosen to such an office by an enlightened society ought to hold out, might be necessary. Indeed one member, to serve for some proper stated time, might be sufficient in each state; and therefore the price of his services, even supposing a salary would be required, could add but little to the public expence.

ONE leading department of his office should be to ascertain, by the best possible information, the annual state of all the primary or parish schools, county academies, and also the college, in that state in which he presided, in order to lay it before the board at their stated time of meeting, which might properly take place once a year. His situation and connection or correspondence with the other presidents of the several states, would also enable him to assist in procuring such teachers or professors as might be occasionally wanted in the various schools under his inspection: He ought also to assist and preside at the public examination of the state college.

THE attention, however, of one president would be inadequate to the superintendance of all the seminaries in one state. As more immediate visita-

tion would then be requisite, there ought to be a rector appointed for each county in the state. The duty of those rectors should be, to assist in procuring proper tutors; to visit every school in the respective counties, and, at least twice a year, to make a just report of their state and proficiency, and the number of the students or scholars, to the state president, or whatever other information he might require. The county rector should also attend quarterly the public examination of the primary schools, or at least twice a year, with such other local trustees or visitors as might be thought necessary. On those occasions there ought to be a catalogue of the youth, produced by the master of each school, specifying their time of entrance and proficiency; leaving a vacant column to mark their progress between each successive examination; marking also, such as discovered any extraordinary genius, or even attention.

IN order faithfully to discharge this office, it is obvious it would require a gentleman of the first erudition, who would devote to it the whole of his attention, and consequently should have a liberal salary paid by the county. His ordinary visits to the several schools should be at least once a quarter, and ought not to be stated, but, as it were, accidental. But on occasions of public examinations they ought

to be accompanied with all the ceremony and dignity possible. It would be a favourable circumstance if those rectors would also be the conductors of the county academies. And it does not appear, but that, by the assistance of proper under-masters, they might be also adequate to this charge.

THE different rectors in each county having made a faithful return of the state of the primary or parish schools under their superintendance to the state president, these returns should be carefully preserved by him, either for the inspection of the board of education, the federal government, or the state assemblies, as they might be disposed to call for them.

THE board of education, and consequently the whole community, by the assistance of such rectors, would be thus enabled to see the true state of literary instruction in every part of the union, at least every six months, and whether there existed any obstruction to its prosperity, either through a deficiency of proper teachers or any other cause, they would have the advantage at least, of knowing where the defect lay.

THE greatest apparent obstruction to the establishment of an uniform plan of national education,

consists in the difficulty of procuring proper tutors, well qualified and disposed to carry into effect the system laid down to them by the board. As much as possible, then, to remove this obstruction, the salaries of the various teachers ought to be liberal, and fully equal to what men of their qualifications could make in any other department of business suited to their circumstances. The commodiousness and comfortable state of the houses built for both the primary schools and the county academies, endowed also with a suitable tract of land, would be a very great inducement; and the price of tuition for each scholar, or the fixed salary, whichever of these two modes of payment the board might approve, would thus be rendered more moderate, at least to posterity.

THE constant and uniform communication between the County Rectors; the State Presidents; the Board of Education, and, when necessary, the government, it may reasonably be presumed, would have the best effect in exciting a spirit of emulation amongst the professors and tutors of the various seminaries. To keep up and cherish this laudable spirit, it might be salutary to promote such of the masters of the Primary schools as distinguished them-

selves by diligence and abilities to more lucrative situations in the county academies, as often as vacancies happened by death or otherwise. This however, ought never to be done till a successor to the promoted teacher was first provided.

VARIOUS regulations of this nature would of course fall under the consideration of the learned Board. It may, here, be only observed farther, that in the appointment of professors or tutors, or even county rectors, it ought to be so regulated that none of them should resign their appointment, with less than six months notice given to the state president by the masters of the county academies, and by the masters of the primary schools to the county rectors.

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## Section Sixth.

ON THE ADVANTAGE OF INTRODUCING THE SAME UNIFORM SYSTEM OF SCHOOL-BOOKS INTO A PLAN OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.

—Nam et Græci licenter multa, et Horatium in quibusdam nolim Interpretari.

QUINTIL.

ONE great inconvenience attending even the present mode of education consists in the scanty supply of

the best editions of the various school-books, that is to be met with in many parts of the United States. The great diversity, also, especially of the elementary books in education, serves much to distract and retard its success. Every teacher has his favourite system, and consequently the books best adapted to it are only those which he recommends. But in the present state of literary instruction, as there are few tutors who complete the scholar even on their own system, he is often not only under the disagreeable and injurious necessity of studying over again what he has learned, on a different mode; but also perplexed with the diversified editions or translations of the same author.

To remedy and indeed entirely remove these obstructions, in establishing a course of public education suited to the various citizens and local situations of the United States, there ought to be a Printer in each State, for the express purpose of supplying the various seminaries, in their respective states, with such school-books and other literary publications, as should be recommended or directed by the Board of education. Throughout the United States, the same uniform system of the most approved school-books would be thus established, and consequently, all the difficulties, hitherto in this respect experienced, entirely removed.

THIS might justly be conceived as one of the greatest advantages arising from the adoption of a system of public instruction ; not only in its tendency to facilitate its progress, but also in rendering it more agreeable to the learner, as well as in diffusing, more generally, the various benefits of an uniform plan.

NOTHING would come under the direction of the Literary Board of greater importance than the selection of the best school-books for each department of science. It would constitute from time to time a considerable share of their office to examine the merits of such as might be publickly recommended to their acceptance.

THROUGHOUT all the primary schools, county academies, and even state colleges the same uniform system of books should be taught ; and it would be requisite that the several Printers should be obligated to follow the instruction of the Literary Board with regard to the type, paper, binding and even outward uniform appearance of all the school-books for supplying the publick seminaries of the United States.

It might not, probably, be found necessary to extend these regulations to the National University, at least in their strictest terms.

THE president and professors of that distinguished feminary would constitute a faculty to which might very properly be referred the discretionary power of adhering to this, and perhaps some other regulations, necessary for the other seminaries—only as far as might be suited to the nature of that more dignified institution.

INDEED it would be necessary for the faculty of that University to have a Printer under their own immediate direction, under such restrictions, however, as not to interfere with or counteract such as concerned the other seminaries.

BUT, as much good might result, especially in exciting a spirit of emulation, from the general uniformity, not only of education, but also of the means of acquiring it throughout the United States, there is no measure which could possibly tend more to this effect than a constant and well chosen supply of the most proper books in all the various departments of instruction.

SCHOOL-BOOKS are at present, in general, very inaccurately printed, and often in such a manner, both with regard to type and paper, as much to obstruct the proficiency of the learner. Besides, many of them, particularly the Latin classics are not fit, in

their present state, to be put into the hands of youth, without wounding that delicacy and purity of sentiment, which education ought rather to cherish than violate.

EVERY person acquainted with the difficulties or obstructions which attend the present mode of education must have observed, how often youth are retarded in their studies for want of having the proper authors to put into their hands, as soon as they have finished the preceding. In public seminaries, where the youth are classed according to their proficiency, an irregular or deficient supply of the same books is often very embarrassing to the tutors and discouraging to the taught. To remove this obstruction, the state Printer should be obligated to keep a constant supply, adequate to the demand of every seminary in the state; and the prices being fixed, the master of each school should keep a sufficient number of copies of every author his pupils might require, agreeably to the system and regulations recommended and prescribed by the Board of Education. In the farther prosecution of this Essay notice shall be taken of some of the most proper and suitable books for each stage of the literary course, agreeably to the view of it here laid down—What has been observed is to be considered as chiefly regarding the

advantages of introducing an uniform system throughout the United States.

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## Section Seventh.

### ON THE ESTABLISHMENT AND CONDUCT OF THE PARISH OR PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

His igitur rudimentis puer in prima imbutus schola, deinde bonis avibus ad **ALTIORES DISCIPLINAS** conferat sese.

ERASMUS

**I**N order to conduct Education on the best plan, it is necessary that the community be so convinced of its importance, as cheerfully to furnish every accommodation. On the supposition, then, that the preceding plan be practicable, the houses for the parish schools in each county should be sufficiently spacious for the use of the teacher's family and also to accommodate one hundred scholars. To suit these two purposes, it should be built on such a plan as to have the school room separate from the part assigned to the master's use. Much also would depend on having the rooms properly provided with desks, seats and places for keeping their books &c. secure. The best method for seating a room for this purpose is, to have it laid out into small single pews, somewhat similar to those common in churches;

one rising a little higher than another, so that the lowest be next to the open area where the teacher sits, and the highest, the most remote ; but so as that the pupils would all sit with their faces to the teacher, having before them a desk suited either for the purpose of reading on, or writing.— One of these pews might accommodate a distinct class, and being numbered, each class would, without confusion, regularly place themselves in their own pew.

IN a room large enough to contain one hundred scholars, there ought to be three orders of such pews, with large areas or double pews for the teachers' seats. One of these might be properly placed at each end of the room, and another in the centre upon the one side, having the single pews for the pupils made, as already shewn, to face their respective teachers.

EVERY such Primary school should be supplied with a teacher for every thirty, or at most, thirty-five pupils ; and if it were found necessary that they should consist of both sexes, the pews would be found useful in helping to preserve that delicacy and reserve which they should be early taught to preserve towards each other. Where, however, it can be done, it will constantly be found eligible to have girls educated separately under a mistress.

IN such schools as are here alluded to, it would constitute a very essential improvement, if the teacher's wife could assist in the charge and education of such girls as attended, and particular encouragement ought to be held out to such teachers of the Primary schools as could be so qualified. Indeed it should be almost indispensable that the head-master of every school be a married man. His assistant or assistants should be chosen by himself; but as the prices of instruction would be fixed to him, so ought also the salary to be nominated which he should pay the assistants, in order that such as were properly qualified might offer.

IN the Primary schools the course of instruction should be confined to a proper knowledge of the English language; writing, arithmetick and practical mathematics, compleated by some approved compend of history and geography.

FROM these seminaries should be excluded not only Latin, but also the French language, excepting for those whose education was not to be extended to a higher stage of the course, from the consideration that the next stage of public instruction, namely the County Academies, would accommodate all.

who were designed for a more comprehensive system of education.

To assign to each stage, its own particular parts, would also tend to support a due encouragement to the whole, while at the same time it rendered the attention less divided.

IN the Primary school the first rudiments should be taught with care. First, it should be provided with some large alphabets, printed on small sheets, each letter at least one inch in length. One of these sheets put on a piece of pasteboard, and properly placed, is the easiest mode of teaching the letters to young children in a publick school. Having procured a frame and a stand similar to a fire-skreen, let the alphabet be placed, with all the children in the letters arranged before it. If the first in order miss the letter, ask the second, and so on to the last—by which means their attention is kept up; and an emulation excited, which, if properly managed, has the happiest effects. After the letters and points are thus acquired, let spelling tables on a large scale be fixed up and managed in the same manner; and after them easy lessons of reading, the type being gradually diminished, till brought to the largest common size.

INITIATING books for children should abound with easy reading lessons, and both paper and print calculated to entice and facilitate their progress. It is common with many teachers to employ their pupils much at spelling tables; but it will be found that children will make much more progress by first teaching them to read, and after having read their lesson to spell words out of it suited to their capacity, than by confining their attention to long dry lists or arrangements of words and syllables, however skilfully digested.

For this reason, though Webster's Institutes be excellent of its kind, yet it would be best put into children's hands after they had made tolerable proficiency in reading, on the plan which has been here mentioned. The first lessons should consist of monosyllables, and as they became proficient in these, introduced to such as are still more and more difficult. By adhering to this plan, and carefully classing such as are of equal proficiency, causing them, for emulation's sake, to check each other throughout the various classes, the teacher may instruct a class of six or even ten with as much facility and more advantage than he could a single scholar. Soon as the pupils can read with tolerable ease and readiness, Webster's Institutes might be properly

introduced; after which they ought to be supplied with a vocabulary or pocket dictionary and at least twice a day get a lesson of spelling, at the same time giving the meaning of the words they spell without the book. If this be done previous to dismissing the school, by the whole pupils under each teacher whose proficiency may admit of it, standing up in order and alternately spelling and giving the meaning of the words, observing to make such as err give up their place to those who are correct, it will be found an agreeable and very profitable exercise.

For the most advanced reading classes proper books should be prepared. There are now extant several good collections in prose and verse taken from the best English authors, but there are none of them, but what might admit of a more judicious arrangement for the use of reading scholars.

THE first part of such collections would be best without any verse pieces, and to consist entirely of fragments from the best historians, and papers from the Rambler, Guardian and Spectator, arranged so as that the easiest should come first, proceeding from the simple through all the various species of style, concluding with some pieces of the most difficult pronunciation.

THE last part of the collection should consist entirely of poetry, both rhyme and blank verse.— The pieces should be so arranged that the scholar might be able to distinguish the different species of poetry and also of versification.

THE first pieces might be all of the pastoral kind; the second elegiac; the third didactic, and the last heroic or epic: The nature of these several species of poetry should be carefully explained by the teachers.

IN the instruction of such classes, when the lesson is given out, it ought to be read over by the teacher in the best manner in his power, not only with regard to the mere pronunciation, but also the management of the voice with gracefulness and propriety. Particular beauties in the style and sentiment should be pointed out, and some account of this required when the class came to read the lesson. It would greatly add to the order and regularity of the school, if the pews were so made and situated, that each class when called upon to give an account of their lessons could stand up in their own pew, without travelling thro' the room to get to their teacher.

SOON as the pupils were capable of reading with tolerable accuracy, English grammar should

be introduced, and writing ; and after considerable progress in these, arithmetick. In acquiring a proper knowledge of English grammar, let the scholar, after having committed the rules to memory, write exercises, and parse in the same manner as is practised in learning Latin. Ashe's Introduction to Lowth's grammar is well calculated for this purpose ; but as it does not afford a sufficient number of examples for exercises of false grammar, Buchanan's English syntax should be next introduced. After a competent knowledge of English grammar, the pupils should be exercised in copying some approved specimens of letters ; and occasionally write some of their own composition. They ought also to copy deeds, bills, bonds, wills and indentures, or any other species of writing, the knowledge of which would be useful to them in life.

IN teaching arithmetick and some of the practical branches of the mathematicks, the master of the primary school would find it of great advantage to make his pupils carefully commit to memory the rules in the various branches, from some well chosen system for that purpose, and rehearse these rules once a week. He ought to be provided with a frame on the plan mentioned in teaching children the letters, and having classed the arithmetical scho-

lars, let each class alternately stand up before the frame, after having committed to memory their rule. Let the teacher, having a blackened board fixed upon the frame, give them examples written with chalk, and having asked the first to do the example, should he be found incapable, proceed to the next, and so on, till each pupil in the class, work an example in this manner. After which, when prepared for more difficult examples on the rule, the question may be wrought out at full length by the teacher in their presence, and afterwards rubbed off the board, and the class set down to work it in the usual manner, giving particular commendations to the one who does it soonest and with the greatest accuracy.

THERE is every reason to believe that this method would much facilitate the acquisition of arithmetick, and at the same time be less irksome to the teacher than that commonly practised.

IT is too much the custom with many teachers to keep their pupils puzzling over a question, perhaps for half a day, without giving them any assistance. But, tho' it be proper, as they advance, in the knowledge of any science, to habituate them to call forth their own exertions; yet this requires

to be managed in such a manner as not to discourage, or check the ardour of their pursuit. To cherish and keep up this ardour constitutes no small share of the merit of a good teacher.

By the use of the frame or black board by the teacher, and of the slate, occasionally, by the scholars, they will be enabled to keep their books, into which they copy their work, in the fairest and neatest manner, and it would be well, as much as possible, to excite an emulation among them in this respect.

As the minds of youth must flag by long attention to any one species of study at one time, it would be best to introduce, at this stage of their proficiency, a knowledge of history and geography.—Some well digested compend of ancient history should be studied first, and well impressed upon the mind by examination. After which Guthrie's general geography and Morse's geography of this country, if judiciously taught by maps and globes, might not only instruct them in a proper knowledge of geography; but also as much of modern history as is necessary to be acquired at school.

LESSONS of this nature introduced by way of relaxation from severer studies, at proper intervals

each day, would be found of the highest importance. In these the teacher ought to assist them in forming a proper judgment of what they read ; particularly in geography ; in contrasting the various forms of government, manners and customs ; the causes of the arts and sciences flourishing under one system, and being lost under another ; as also how to estimate whatever is most conducive to the improvement and happiness of man.

WHAT has been here observed, tho' it be in many respects deficient, yet, may suffice to afford an idea of the manner in which the literary course of the primary schools may be conducted. If other, or better, regulations be found necessary, they will properly come under the consideration and direction of the Board of Education.

WITH regard to impressing youth early with the principles of religion and morality : However important this may be, yet, on account of preserving that liberty of conscience in religious matters which various denominations of christians in these states justly claim, due regard ought to be paid to this in a course of publick instruction.

It would, however, appear to be no infringe-

ment of this liberty in its widest extent for the publick teacher to begin and end the business of the day with a short and suitable prayer and address to the great source of all knowledge and instruction.

It might, also, be highly advantageous to youth, and in no respect interfere with the different religious sentiments of the community, to make use of a well digested, concise moral catechism. In the first part of this catechism should be inculcated natural theology or the proofs of the existence of the Deity from his works. It might on this head even extend so far as to shew the insufficiency of the light of nature in communicating the knowledge of God and consequently the necessity of a more express revelation.

THE second part might properly consist of the first principles of Ethics ; the nature and consequence of virtue and vice ; and also, a concise view of œconomicks and the relative duties.

THE third and last part should inculcate, concisely, the principles of jurisprudence ; the nature of civil government, containing a short historical view of the rise and progress of its various species, and particularly, that of the Federal government of these States.

It may be supposed that this would be rather

too elevated for the capacities of pupils in the primary school ; but it may be replied that this would depend on the manner in which such a collection was executed ; which ought to be in the most concise and, at the same time, most simple and perspicuous style ; and of a length suited to their capacities, whether considered with regard to the particular responses, or the extent of the whole system. It is certainly of the highest importance in a country like this, that even the poorest or most uninstructed of its citizens be early impressed with a knowledge of the benefits of that happy constitution under which they live, and of the enormity of their being corrupted in their right of suffrage—And there is certainly no more plausible way of communicating this knowledge, with any lasting effects, than by having it interwoven with the most early and general principles of education.

IN order to impress on the tender mind a reverence of the Deity ; a sense of His government of the world, and a regard for morals, it might be proper, previous to the commencement of their daily studies, for each pupil who had made proficiency for that purpose, to be constituted alternately, Orator for the day, and to read from the Rostrum a short essay on some subject of that nature. There have been published in three volumes, *Reflections* by a Mr.

Sturmi a German, and lately translated into English, one for every day in the year, which might with great propriety be read in this manner.

IN these Reflections almost every thing interesting in the philosophy of nature is brought into view, adapted to the most common capacity; while at the same time they are calculated to present the most sublime ideas of the Deity, and to excite to the love and study of science.

As these may have yet fallen into but few hands, in order to shew how well they are adapted to the purpose here recommended, let the following serve as a specimen :

—JANUARY II.—

THE blessings granted to us by God in winter, and to which we pay too little attention.

“ IF we were to examine the works of God  
 “ more attentively than we generally do, we should  
 “ find at this season many reasons to rejoice in his  
 “ goodness, and to praise the wonders of his wis-  
 “ dom.—Few, without doubt, are so insensible as  
 “ not to feel emotions of pleasure and gratitude, when  
 “ beauteous nature displays the rich blessings of God  
 “ in spring, summer and autumn; but even hearts,  
 “ the fullest of sensibility, are rarely excited to the

“ sensation of warm gratitude, when they behold the  
 “ trees stripped of their fruit, and the fields without  
 “ verdure ; when the bleak wind whistles round  
 “ their dwelling, when a chilling cold comes to  
 “ freeze the earth and its inhabitants. But is it certain  
 “ that this season is so deprived of the blessings of  
 “ heaven, and of what is sufficient to kindle grati-  
 “ tude and piety in the heart of man ? No, certainly.  
 “ Let us only accustom ourselves to be more atten-  
 “ tive to the works of God, more touched with the  
 “ many proofs of his goodness towards us, and we  
 “ shall find opportunities enough, even in winter,  
 “ to praise our benefactor. Consider how unhappy  
 “ we should be, if, during violent cold, we had  
 “ neither wood for fire, nor cloaths to keep us warm.  
 “ With what goodness the Lord prevents our wants,  
 “ and furnishes us (even in the season the most void  
 “ of resources) with the necessaries and conveniences  
 “ of life. When at this moment, we may be enjoy-  
 “ ing the comfortable warmth of a fire, shall we not  
 “ return thanks to the Lord, who gives us fuel with  
 “ such profusion, that the very poorest can be sup-  
 “ plied with it.

“ If it was given to mortals to know the chain  
 “ of every thing in nature, how great would be our  
 “ admiration at the wisdom and goodness of its au-

“ thor ! But, however incapable we are of forming  
 “ to ourselves an idea of the whole of his works, the  
 “ little we understand of it gives us sufficient reason  
 “ to acknowledge, that the government of God is  
 “ infinitely wise and beneficent. Winter belongs to  
 “ the plan he has formed. If this season did not ex-  
 “ ist, the spring and summer would not have so ma-  
 “ ny charms for us, the fertility of our lands would  
 “ much diminish, commerce would be at an end in  
 “ many provinces, and part of the woods and forests  
 “ would have been created for no purpose. Consi-  
 “ dered in this light, winter is certainly very useful;  
 “ and supposing even that its advantages were not so  
 “ apparent, it would be sufficient for us to reflect,  
 “ that winter is the work of the Creator, as well as  
 “ spring and summer, and that all which comes from  
 “ God must be for the best.”

IN some other of these Reflections the author ac-  
 counts for the change of the seasons, and has omit-  
 ted scarce any thing curious or interesting either in  
 the planetary system, or in the structure of the earth,  
 or in the mineral, vegetable and animal worlds;  
 uniformly concluding with reflections and sentiments  
 of adoration for the great first cause of all things.

THE reading one of these reflections by the

Orator for each day, agreeably to the manner in which they are arranged for the days of the year, might not only be the means of communicating much knowledge ; but also leave the most happy impressions of piety and moral excellence.

ON the subject of the primary schools, and the manner in which they should be conducted, enough may have been suggested for an Essay of this nature. There is, however, still remaining another consideration which would greatly tend to enlarge the extent of their advantages to the publick.

IN each of these schools, at least three promising boys, whose parents could not afford to educate them, should be admitted at the expence of the parish or township to which the school belonged. The condition on which these boys should be received ought to be, that their parents should agree to have them educated for the purpose of becoming teachers ; so being they discovered, on trial, parts suited to that profession. A few of them who most distinguished themselves on publick examination, should be admitted in the county academies, and afterwards to the state colleges and university. This, in the course of a few years, would train up a proper supply of tutors, both masters and assistants for the dif-

ferent seminaries, and at the same time extend the blessings of literary instruction to hundreds who would otherwise be deprived of it. Tutors so educated through the different stages of the literary course, on the same uniform national plan, and under the direction of the same literary board or society, would, in every point of view, be rendered greatly preferable to strangers educated under different institutions.

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## Section Eighth.

### ON THE COUNTY ACADEMIES.

*Scilicet ut possem curvo dignoscere rectum,  
Atque inter Sylvas ACADEMI quaerere verum.*

HOR.

AS these Academies, agreeably to the plan laid down, are to accommodate all the youth in the county, intended for a more comprehensive course than what has been assigned for the Primary schools; it is consequently necessary that in every respect they should be founded and conducted on a more extensive scale.

THE plan of the Academy houses, and the manner in which they should be endowed under the sanction of the respective states, might very properly

be referred to the direction of the Literary board. The houses, however, should be capacious, well designed and accommodated to the purpose. Besides the apartments necessary for at least two masters and their families, there ought to be, at least, two Halls for teaching, two Dining-rooms and two Dormitories, with an assistant's lodging-room to open into each, one for the Juniors and another for the Seniors. Should it be found necessary or practicable that the County Rectors should be the chief professors or masters in the Academies, proper apartments should also be laid out in the building for their accommodation.

THE teaching halls should be pewed after the manner of the primary schools. The one accommodated to the classical, the other to the mathematical students. In the extreme end of each there ought to be an exhibition room, elevated a few steps above the hall, and separated from it in front by a curtain, similarly to a theatre. This room would be useful in common for the chief masters to teach in, affording a commanding view over the hall. It would also serve for a suitable library, and on occasions of public examinations would suit as a stage or rostrum, from which the youth would deliver their

elocutionary exercises to the audience accommodated in the hall.

WITHOUT entering more minutely into the plan of a suitable academy-house, it may only be observed farther, in general terms, that it should be sufficiently capacious to contain all the youth in the county, whose parents or guardians inclined to give them a classical and thorough mathematical education. They should be built on a scale sufficiently large to contain at least two hundred, or two hundred and fifty students. For, though it might be some years ere they should have occasion for accommodations for such a number; yet, as the population of the counties and the credit of the system increased, it is probable the number of students would increase in proportion.

BESIDES the county rectors, who, it is supposed, might preside in these seminaries, there ought also to be two principal masters, with one or two assistants according to the number of pupils.

IN this country, owing chiefly to the precarious supply of schools and the scattered situations of the inhabitants, the childhood of life is too often passed ere parents think seriously of the education of their children. They are in too many places, on these accounts,

sent to school only when the greatest part of the education, intended for them, ought to have been acquired. This is an error which, as far as possible, the establishment of an uniform system ought to correct. The time allotted to the primary schools should elapse at the twelfth year of their age; at least of all such as were intended for being admiffible into the county academies; such as were not, should be continued till the age of fourteen. At the age of eight, even in rural or scattered situations, it would be fufficiently late to enter the primary school, and the space of four years would be a competent term to compleat the course assigned to that feminary. Such as had the advantage of a more contiguous situation might be prepared for the academy at a still earlier age.

AGREEABLY to the plan here recommended, no pupil should be admitted into the county academy who had not been educated at the primary school; or if by the parents indulged with a private tutor, without having taken and compleated the same course as taught in those schools, and prescribed by the literary board. This should be ascertained by a strict and impartial examination on the pupil's being offered for entrance.

WERE this uniformly and generally adhered to throughout all the county academies; and were it also insisted on that no student should be admitted above twelve, or at most, fourteen years of age, it might surely have a powerful effect in exciting parents to turn their attention to the education of their offspring as soon as they were capable of receiving instruction. It would also have the effect, as has been elsewhere observed, of keeping separate the interests of the primary school and academy, and consequently tend more effectually to promote and support the success of both.

THE pupils on admittance to the academy would be properly prepared for commencing the classical course in Latin and Greek, and, after some knowledge of the former of these languages, in French and Mathematicks. A correct edition of the Grammar taught in this country, under the denomination of the university Latin grammar, is as eligible, upon the whole, as any extant. The youth who commence Latin, should be classed according to their proficiency; and as soon as any class had made such proficiency in grammar as to be able to decline nouns on the various declensions, and decline verbs through the different moods and tenses, they ought to be set to reading and translating

Corderius. This, however, should be chiefly with a view to exemplify what part of grammar they had acquired; still continuing to advance daily in grammar till they had completed it in all its parts, profody excepted. During this time they would have read Corderius, Æsop's fables and Erasmus's dialogues. Notwithstanding all that has been said by some writers on classical education against the use of translations, it would certainly much facilitate the progress of youth to read these three introductory little books with literal translations. If these be judiciously taught, the use of them should be afterwards laid aside, at which time they would be prepared for reading Cornelius Nepos. In the reading of this excellent little book of biography, the teacher ought to explain to them the nature and advantages of that species of writing. Having by this time finished their grammar, as far as profody; once or twice a day the class should read Clark's or Mair's introduction to making Latin; beginning with the easiest lessons, reading the Latin as it should be rendered, each in the class alternately, the second in order observing to correct the first; the third the second, and so on throughout the whole class; the teacher not forgetting to applaud such as excelled.

AFTER the book, or the easiest portion of ex-

amples in each rule had been read through in this manner, they might then begin to write it over in exercises, at least one each day. When the author had been finished a second time in this manner, they might next write such exercises as would require them to chuse the Latin words themselves, and thereby be enabled to form a judgment when their choice of words and composition were classical or otherwise. To compleat the course of writing exercises let them, after these already mentioned, have some select sentences or passages, from the prose author they are reading, to translate into English, and afterwards translated into Latin without any opportunity of consulting the author, and then let their Latin be contrasted by the teacher with that of their author. Some familiar Latin letters, ancient and modern, translated in this manner would be found highly useful.

IT is only on account of observing at once all that is necessary on the subject of writing Latin exercises, that the full course has been here brought into view. The first and second species of these exercises would only be suited to the class reading Nepos's biography. After this little author, Cæsar's commentaries on his wars in Gaul and with his country might be next read with advantage; not

only on account of the simplicity of the style, but also that the teacher might enable them to mark with reprobation all the persevering ambition of that bold, and, too successful enslaver of his country.

IT would not be too much to assign this progress of the class to the first year's attendance in the academy. This however would greatly depend on a proper division of their time and the order and number of the hours of instruction. For this purpose each academy ought to have a bell and the hours as punctually as the clock observed both by the teacher and the taught.

THERE ought to be two hours study before breakfast, three between breakfast and dinner, and three in the afternoon. These hours should be employed in such a manner as best tended to expedite the general plan.

AFTER the first year, the classical students intended for the university, should devote one lesson of each day to Greek. In order, however, to prevent this from embarrassing them or the teachers, one half of them should study Greek in the forenoon, and the other in the afternoon; by which means, the different tutors would be enabled to keep their respective pupils equally divided and employed.

WHEN the proficiency above stated had been made, the Latin scholars, not intended for the university, might begin French, and spend their morning hours in the study of that language, and the remainder of the day equally between their Latin and Mathematics; observing to accommodate the hours as above mentioned.

IN acquiring a proper knowledge of Latin; they ought to read the books already mentioned, Sallust and a considerable part of Livy, with a little of Tacitus. It is a very absurd practice to set boys to reading Latin poetry, till once they are able to translate any prose author with considerable facility.

IN this stage of their course they ought to read, occasionally, Rollin's Ancient history and Goldsmith's abridgment of the History of the Grecian and Roman republics. A certain portion of these ought to be assigned them for reading in their private chambers, and at an appointed hour strictly examined on what they had previously perused. In the classical library of every academy there ought to be at least one copy of Potter's Antiquities of Greece, Kennet's Roman Antiquities and Tooke's Pantheon, to which the students should be occasionally referred for a fuller explanation of ma-

ny of the rites, ceremonies, institutions, manners and customs of those distinguished republicks, than might be in the power of the teacher to communicate as often as they occurred in their reading of the various classicks.

AT the termination of the first year of the course in the County Academies, the student being so far master of Latin grammar, as to change his application to it during the morning hours to the acquisition of Greek grammar ; it would be an object highly worthy the attention of the literary board, to select the most deservingly approved grammar of that language. It would, however, be an improvement on every Greek grammar known to the writer of this Essay, if the rules were in English, and rendered as concise as possible. Great ease and advantage have arisen to students of Latin, since the grammar of that language, the examples excepted, have been taught in English, and there appears no reason why it would not in an equal degree facilitate the learning of Greek.

AT the termination of the second year of this course, by the application of the morning hours alone to exercises and grammar, and one half of the day, either forenoon or afternoon session, to the

Latin classics, the student might be qualified to read Latin prose with facility; translate, at least his author for making Latin, with considerable correctness, and also have acquired a competent knowledge of the Latin and Greek grammars.

ON the commencement of the third year, such proficiency being made; those who were designed for the college or university might properly be introduced to the study of French for the morning session. One short lesson in Latin and another in Greek for the one half of the remaining day, and mathematicks continued for the other, agreeably to the plan already suggested.

To such as are in a great measure unacquainted with the education of youth, so many different subjects of study on the same day, may appear too embarrassing. But experience has not left this so long a subject of mere theory. It can be proved that, by a proper division of the day, different subjects of study, instead of embarrassing or retarding the pupil, tend both to expedite the literary course, and at the same time to relieve from that irksomeness which cannot fail to arise from a long attention to one subject. It also has the effect of rendering the students, so educated, equally ready in every subject of literature to which they have applied. When

conducted on a different plan, how often do we find youth losing considerably their knowledge of one language, branch or science, ere they have acquired another.

DURING the third year's session at this seminary, the classical students should begin to read Latin and Greek poetry. In order to this the rules of prosody should be carefully committed to memory, and the Greek and Latin authors read on the following plan. On the supposition that a competent skill has been acquired in Greek and Latin prose, let the various kinds or species of poetry and versification be attended to in the same manner as was recommended in reading English in the primary schools. Agreeably to this plan the Bucolicks of Virgil should be read with the Idylls of Theocritus; part of the select odes of Horace with a few from Anacreon and Pindar; the Georgics of Virgil with Hesiod, and the Æneid with the Iliad of Homer.

IN order also to be acquainted with the state of Dramatic poetry among the ancients, one or two of the most celebrated performances in each language might be read; but it does not appear that a long attention to that species of composition would be either proper or improving.

As almost all the Latin poets were close imitators of the Grecian bards, it would certainly tend highly to the advantage of classical literature, since Greek and Latin are generally read together, to combine those of the same species of poetry and verification; and it would appear strange that this method of proceeding has not long ere now been adopted in reputable seminaries.

It would not only enable the pupil to understand both with greater ease, but also qualify him for making a critical estimation of their respective merits, and at the same time afford a more clear and competent knowledge of the state of the various species of poetry and composition in those languages,

In order that the scholar may be enabled to read a few of the ancient poets with a just taste, as well as understanding; his knowledge of the principal figures in Rhetoric, first taught at the primary schools, should be revived, and a criticism on some of the most distinguished passages of each author occasionally prescribed as an exercise.

THE mathematical department of the county academy should be conducted on the same plan, as in the primary school. Those, whose education was not to extend farther than the academy, should

be made thoroughly acquainted with all the practical branches; the use of the globes, geography and as much of astronomy at least as is connected with that science. And those who were intended for the university should be perfectly taught the elementary parts; plain and spheric trigonometry, algebra and conic sections, with their application to the higher mathematicks.

FOR those who had acquired a tolerable knowledge of Euclid's elements; and also of Greek, it might be highly useful to demonstrate a few of the leading propositions of each book in the original.— This would not only more thoroughly impress them on the mind; but if properly directed, from the accuracy of the mathematical language, would serve the important purpose of instructing the Greek scholar in the correct use and application of the various prepositions and particles of that copious language.

As the students in the county academies would have made some progress in the primary school in mathematical studies, it may be rationally inferred that an attention to mathematicks for one half of the day would, during the term of three years in the County Academy, render their proficiency equal to what has been here stated. But as the classical

students designed for the university would have mathematicks to attend also in the State college, they would there have an opportunity of pursuing their improvement in the sciences founded on them still farther, and on this account, at the expiration of the third year, they would have finished their course at the Academy, and be properly prepared for entering the State college. Such as were not designed for that seminary might be continued a year or two longer.

THE classical and mathematical teachers in the County Academies should have the accommodation of the students with Boarding, each to have an equal share. The prices to be fixed by the State President, County Rector, and such other patrons and visitors as might be thought necessary.

THE two head masters should be obligated to keep assistants in proportion to their number of pupils subject to the regulations of the Board of Education.

THE office of the County Rector, who should also preside in the County Academy, would be not only to visit the primary schools, on their publick examinations; as has been already stated; but he should also, except when abroad on that business,

examine once a week, or try the several classes, whether classical or mathematical, in the Academy, on their proficiency, at the same time delivering them a suitable lecture on the importance of what was the object of their study, accompanied by such other admonitions and observations as would tend to their improvement both in literature and conduct.

A Rector's Hall in the Academy, contiguous to his own apartments, would be necessary for this purpose; and it would certainly be a great encouragement to industry if the students found that they had weekly to submit to such a revival of their studies. The Rector might also occasionally deliver them a course of lectures on natural, and afterwards on literary and civil history, on ancient and modern manners, and the conduct of life, which in this stage of their course would contribute greatly to their improvement, not only in their knowledge of books, but of the world.

PUBLIC examination should be held thrice in the year. The first about the beginning of the new year; the second in May, and the third about the middle of August. On the two first, a week's vacation should be allowed, and in August two weeks, that being a season which requires a little indulgence.

PREVIOUS to these examinations, the youth should occasionally be prepared in proper exercises of elocution, and after their classical and mathematical examination during the day, deliver them in the evening, in presence of their parents, guardians or such other company as should chuse to attend on those occasions. Having been exercised in the same manner in the primary school on the easiest lessons in elocution, those for the County Academy should be adapted to their abilities and proficiency, avoiding theatrical licentiousness, and studying only gracefulness, energy and accuracy of pronunciation. The county rector and the two head masters would have to select such pieces as were best suited to the abilities of the several youth, whether natural or acquired. Should one day be found insufficient to go through the business of those examinations, they ought to be continued for two or even three days, affording to every class in the Academy an equal opportunity of exhibiting its progress. As in the primary school, so also in the academy, honorary prizes should be impartially conferred on such as excelled; and for this purpose regular catalogues should be kept by the masters, of all the youth in the Academy, having proper columns opposite their names, specifying the authors they were reading,

or the progress they had made at the end of each examination, marking with an asterism such names as had obtained prizes, or had given proofs of uncommon industry and application. These catalogues should be put up to publick inspection at the next succeeding examination.

THE prizes conferred might either consist of suitable books provided for that purpose, or of a piece of green or blue ribbon to be worn on the breast, having stamped on them the name of the Academy, and having the words "*Merui Laudem*" inscribed on them for the motto. They might also be numbered so as to exhibit different degrees of merit or industry.

IN conferring such prizes in this or any other of the seminaries under the institution, it would be best to pay peculiar attention and respect to diligence and conduct. The youth possessed of the best natural genius, and yet averse to application merits not publick approbation, at least, in the same degree as the proficient by means of extraordinary diligent exertions; tho' then some prizes might be properly conferred on such occasions for sudden and extraordinary efforts of genius, yet the general object of them should be understood by the students

as a reward for that proficiency which arises from habits of perseverance and industry.

THE proficiency of the students who had completed their three years' course at the Academy as here laid down, should consist, in addition to what they had acquired at the primary school, in a tolerable knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, so as to translate with propriety and ease either prose or verse, to be able to write Latin, if not classically, at least grammatically; a like knowledge of the French language; a tolerable acquaintance with ancient and modern history, geography, with such a knowledge of prosody, Greek and Roman antiquities, rhetorick, criticism and composition, as is necessary to read the classicks with propriety and taste.

IN addition to the rudiments of Mathematics previously acquired, they should by this time have also attained a thorough knowledge of Euclid's elements, at least of the first six and the eleventh and twelfth books; Conic sections, Algebra with its application to Geometry, and plain and spheric Trigonometry. Such students as were to be prepared for immediate business, and, as already suggested, not intended for the State college, might receive a less

scientific course of mathematics, so that they could devote more of their studies to the useful or practical branches. It might be necessary that such continue a year longer at the County Academy.

THROUGH the whole of the term allotted to this seminary, it would be proper, occasionally, to give the students a view of what constituted the complete scholar and man of science. It is often found very discouraging to youth that they have laboured for months at some of the most abstruse elements of scientific instruction, without being able to judge of their utility to their future acquisition. This office would with great propriety belong to the Rector, who, in his weekly lectures, as already suggested, should occasionally exhibit that connection which subsists between the several departments of knowledge, and the dependence which the highest or most useful arts have on the elementary branches of science.

SUCH a view, it may be reasonably presumed, would prompt the student to proceed with greater alacrity, while at the same time it would serve to throw light on the darkest and most disagreeable parts of his literary course.

OF the three boys admitted into each of the primary schools, at the expence of the publick, on

compleating their course, each County Academy should receive at least five of such as discovered the best genius and disposition for literary instruction, on the conditions formerly specified. But it would be best to have it entirely unknown to the students in general, or even to these youths themselves, at least in this stage of their progress, what were the terms of their admittance, or that they were on any other foundation than their fellow students. Five of such pupils, admitted into each County Academy in the state, and selected from those who discovered the best abilities and most amiable dispositions throughout the different parish schools, would, as has been already hinted, train up an adequate number of teachers to supply every vacancy in the whole system. Even such as could not be admitted into the County Academies would have acquired as much at the primary schools as would render them highly useful to society and to themselves; and by admitting such as discovered the brightest genius into the State College and National University, an ample field would be offered even the poorest in society, for exertion in literary improvement and the attainment of whatever can tend to call forth the most distinguished merit, equally conducive to their own happiness and that of the community.

## Section Ninth.

ON EXERCISES OF AMUSEMENT DURING THE  
TERMS OF RELAXATION FROM STUDY.

—Sunt etiam nonnulli acuendis puerorum ingeniis non inutiles Lusus.

QUINTIL.

**P**REVIOUS to entering on the subject of the State Colleges, it may be proper to make a few observations on the manner in which the youth should conduct themselves in the hours of relaxation.

DURING these hours they are indeed seldom at a loss for subjects or exercises of entertainment.—Some of these, however, are certainly more eligible than others, and have a greater or less tendency to give the mind a frivolous or effeminate bias on the one hand, or if well chosen, a manly and vigorous resolution on the other. All playful exercises of the latter cast, if moderately indulged, are salutary to youth. Swimming is an almost indispensable qualification, and the situation which affords a safe opportunity of their acquiring it, is in so far entitled to a preference. It is a duty not unworthy the careful tutor to point out to youth from time to time as they advance in years, the proper diversions, exercises and amusements suited to those of their years, and views in life. On every species of gambling

they should be taught to look with not only contempt, but abhorrence, and to view all exercises perverted by that spirit as the seminaries of corruption, as calculated to blast the fairest features of the human mind.

THEIR recreations, however, should be laid under no restraint, until their understandings be convinced that it is salutary; because their amusements cease to be such, if they are not free and voluntary. Exercise and temperance are necessary both for the vigour of body and mind, and to these important ends ought even their recreations to be directed. With such they ought to have sufficient time to satisfy themselves even to fatigue, and such muscular exertions as should tend to promote the growth, hardiness and strength of the body.

ALTHOUGH, in general, it might be most proper to leave youth to the choice of such diversions as were most agreeable to them, especially while at the primary school; yet on their advancing in years, and after having entered the County Academy, it might be suggested to them that even their amusements should discover some marks of their improvement, and progress in knowledge.

At this stage of their proficiency, then, it

would certainly constitute a very essential part of instruction if, during their recreative hours, they should be taught the manual military exercise, with all the marchings and manœuvres in the practice of that art. This extended to every County Academy in the United States, while it occasionally afforded a very agreeable exercise and amusement to the youth, would also train them up to the capacity of being serviceable to their country. The very exercise would inspire them, at that age, with such patriotic sentiments, and accomplish them with such military adroitness, as might be one day of the highest advantage to the nation.

It is only from the idea of the establishment of a general Uniform Plan of Literary Instruction throughout the United States that this mode of directing the amusements of the youth, can lay claim to general approbation. Considered, however, in this view, it would at least be entitled to the attention of the Board of Education who by the direction of government, might extend it to what degree should be thought most salutary, both for the youth as individuals, and the interests of the community.

It perhaps would not be most adviseable to put arms into the hands of the youth for the purpose of

learning the manual exercise. Sham guns with tin barrels and ramrods, so made as to tell, when they exercised, would be cheap and answer the purpose so far, as well as real ones. On occasions of public examinations, there might also be a review of their military manœuvres, which, were no other advantage to be the consequence, would at least teach them habits of moving and walking upright and with graceful ease and dignity. It might not, probably, be difficult to procure a person in the vicinity of each Academy, capable of instructing them in such discipline; it would be most eligible, however, could it be done by some one of the assistant tutors in the seminary.

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## Section Tenth.

### ON THE STATE COLLEGES.

—Et ætas altioribus Jum Disciplinis debita, in Scholæ minore subsideat.

QUINTIL.

AS has been elsewhere observed, it is a favourable circumstance for the establishment of an uniform plan of National Education, that in almost every State of the Union, a College has been instituted on a liberal scale. Such States as have not yet been

able to found such seminaries, it is to be hoped, may also be soon in a condition to follow the excellent example of their brethren.

It does not appear that it could operate contrary to the interests of those colleges to adopt an uniform plan of Education under the direction of a Literary Board. Should some such plan, as has been here partly sketched, be adopted, a competent number of students ought to attend the colleges from their own respective states. But whether it would be best to restrict the youth of each state to their own college, or to allow them to attend wherever they might prefer in a different state, so as to have a change of air and climate, would require the mature deliberation of the Government, and the Board of Education. The privilege however of attending any State College the parents might prefer, could not, consistently with the claims of natural liberty, be denied; and it does not appear that it could militate against the general plan, in as far as concerned the mode of education, as that and also the terms of admittance, both with regard to the proficiency of the pupils and the prices of boarding and tuition, should be perfectly the same throughout the different Colleges.

It ought, however, to be an important object of attention with every State Legislature, to patronize and encourage, by all proper means, the Colleges and Seminaries of their respective States; and were this done, could they be once brought to be as jealous of their Literary as of their National character, it would be seldom, except on account of health, that parents would incline to place their sons at the seminary of a different state.

THOSE Colleges being properly endowed; provided with a principal and professors, and in every respect prepared for the reception of students from the County Academies, they ought to be admitted only on the following considerations :—

FIRST, That they should have previously gone through the course of education prescribed by the Primary school and County academy; or if instructed by private tuition, that their progress should be equal to, and on the same plan with, such as were taught at those seminaries.

SECONDLY, That none, educated either publicly or privately, should be admitted, but such as on publick examination should give satisfaction both in their classical and mathematical proficiency.

THIRDLY, That all students in the State Colleges should at least be intended for a triennial course, which, as nearly as possible, ought to be from the close of the fifteenth till the expiration of the eighteenth year of their age.

THIS course of literary instruction should be suitably and progressively adapted to the time or number of years. During the first year's session the studies of each day should be divided between the Greek, Latin and French languages, and mathematics. But the plan of reading these classics should be, in some respects, different from what was pursued in the Academies. It might be necessary for the professor to read only a small portion of each author, and that rather from a view to criticism on that species of composition, than the acquisition of the language, in which by this time the student ought to be a tolerable proficient. Exercises from this view ought to be frequently prescribed in all these languages, and critical essays on particular passages occasionally required from every student without exception. One half of the hours assigned to study each day should, during this session, be spent in these exercises of classical criticism, and the remaining devoted to the completion of the mathematical course; in such a manner as should be pref-

cribed by the Literary Board. The elementary parts of mathematicks being acquired at the Academy ; during this session the students should be introduced to the most useful practical branches, comprehending mensuration of various kinds, surveying and navigation, gunnery and fortification.

ON one day, in each week, which might probably be most suitable on Saturday, the Principal having all the students assembled in the common, or most spacious Hall of the College, should deliver to them a suitable lecture on morals and conduct, illustrating the effects which education ought to have on them ; demanding also an account, from such of the students as he might chuse, an account of their proficiency thro' the whole week. Though it would be impossible to interrogate the whole in this manner, yet were a few different individuals so catechised each publick hall day, every one would be led to expect that it might possibly fall to his lot, and consequently would be led to make the necessary preparation.

EITHER the Principal or Professor of classical learning or belles lettres should, occasionally on stated days, during this session, deliver a course of lectures on the history of Literature ; the manners and customs of the Greeks and Romans ; and to-

wards the end of the session, on taste, criticism and composition.

A Lecture of an hour's length would be sufficient every second day; the students should take notes, and, on the day on which there was no lecture, that hour should be spent by the professor in examining them on the subject of the last lecture.

THE mathematical professor, in like manner, should have, each week, some hours allotted for recapitulation. It is essentially necessary, in order to impress literary, and especially mathematical subjects, on the minds of youth with lasting advantage, that their memories be frequently exercised in the repetition of what they have already attained.

In order that the students in the State Colleges should have time to mix a little in society, see their friends and know something of the world as well as books, the vacation between each session should be extended to a longer duration than in the primary school, or county academy. They might from these views properly open the first of September and close the last of June each session, allowing also a short vacation of two weeks always at the beginning of the new year.

IN the second session of this course, the students in their morning hours should compleat their course of classical reading and criticism during the first half of the session, and in the other half be introduced to a concise view of rhetoric, logic and moral philosophy, during the forenoon studies; and continue through the whole of their course in the evening hours the compleat attainment of mathematicks, and particularly in this session geography by the use of the globes; the laws of motion, the mechanical powers, and principles of astronomy. During this session also, on the same plan as in the preceeding, lectures both by the Principal and Professors adapted to the several subjects of study would become still more necessary; would afford the students some kind of relaxation from the intensity of close and retired application, and tend also to animate them to proceed with greater alacrity and emulation.

As Rhetoric to a certain degree had been introduced at an earlier stage of the literary course it would now require only a brief attention. Logic would only be necessary in as far as it explained the several powers and operations of the human mind; and for this purpose along with a compend of logic should be read Lock's admirable Essay on the human understanding; and Bacon's *Novum Organum*.

It might be sufficient to give the student a view of the ancient modes of Socratic and scholastic reasoning ; but his time ought to be considered as too precious to be spent in acquiring a knowledge of all the logical laws or forms of the syllogism. *A thorough knowledge of Euclid's Elements* is preferable to the best system of LOGIC that ever was taught.

MORAL Philosophy, under the several views of Natural Theology, Economics and Jurisprudence, would afford much entertainment and instruction ; but it does not appear that in a seminary of literary education, any farther attention to it is necessary than what should inculcate a scientific view of it in all its parts. The study of the various most approved systems of moral philosophy may be more properly assigned to the shades of domestic reading and retirement. From this consideration it is presumed that in the last five months of this session the student may have acquired a competent view of logic and moral philosophy, during the morning hours of each day.

THROUGHOUT every part of this course, and on every leading or most important subject, the students should be required to write and produce Essays, which at proper seasons should be partly read

and criticised by the principal and professors, as well with regard to the matter as the manner of composition.

As youth in pursuit of literary knowledge cannot be too much exercised in composing Essays, such exercises should be prescribed as prize essays to be determined or adjusted at the close of each session. Such as obtained the prize might be spoken or read before the literary characters of the State, the patrons of the College, and what other audience might be assembled on those occasions.

THE prize essays or dissertations should, in a publick seminary, be as various as the different subjects of study ; so that an ample field for excellence and emulation should be afforded to those of every description of genius and proficiency in classical, critical, mathematical and philosophical reading.

ON the opening of the third and last session of the course of this seminary, the students would be prepared for turning the chief part of their attention to Natural Philosophy. A concise system of it, in all its parts, should be taught experimentally during this session, at least for two hours each day, and a suitable apparatus should be provided for this purpose. Each State College should also have an ob-

fervatory and a proper apparatus for making astronomical observations.

OCCASIONALLY during this session the proper professors should continue lectures on the various branches formerly acquired; and each student designed for the National University should be prepared for taking a 'Batchelor of Arts' degree.

THOUGH Natural Philosophy ought principally to engage the attention during this year, yet the student ought carefully to attend, at the proper hours, on the professor of classical learning and belles lettres, and also on the professor of mathematicks, in order to be perfected in the higher branches especially as they are subservient to the more useful, as well as the more sublime, sciences.

AT the end of the course, such as intended to stand candidates for a diploma or degree should give in their names to the principal, who, after an impartial and strict examination in the classics and various sciences, should confer on them their degrees according to the usual forms. But in order to promote the interests of, and give the greater dignity to, the National University, no degree higher than that of Batchelor of Arts should be conferred at any of the State Colleges.

As youth advance in years, their amusements should proportionably become more manly and dignified; so that while at this seminary, I would have the recreative hours of their first session spent in learning to dance, and in acquiring a polished address in conversation and manners. It would appear that the profession of teaching dancing, might be extended to a much more important degree of dignity as well as advantage, at a seminary of publick instruction, than it commonly is in the domestic scenes of society. This is not to be understood as insinuating that the Dancing master should be more respected than any other teacher or professor. This is already what the flippant airs and forward address of the greater part of these gentry too generally secure them from such as are disposed to be more captivated with external appearances than inward merit. But what is here designed to be inculcated is, that it would be a great acquisition to a place of publick instruction, could such tutors be procured, as would teach dancing, a polished address in conversation, and also the proper attitudes, gestures and actions in elocution.

ON the second session at this seminary, the students' hours of amusement, which from the course here laid down could not be many, might be properly spent

in learning music, and on the third session, music and fencing. Were proper masters in teaching these several ornamental accomplishments constantly procured and patronised, it is presumed that the student would, at the expiration of this course, be properly qualified either for pursuing his literary course to the very highest stage of improvement at the National University; or to commence his intercourse with the world as a scholar; a man of business, or a gentleman.

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## Section Eleventh.

### ON THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

Quid enim Munus REIPUBLICÆ majus meliusve afferre possumus quam si docemus atque erudimus JUVENTUTEM?

CICERO.

**T**HERE appears to be no object on which a great, extensive, and enlightened, Commonwealth could with more propriety and justice exhibit, even to some degree of excess, its munificence, than in founding, endowing and supporting a suitable seat of national improvement in literature and erudition. Objects of publick prosperity in manufactures, commerce and inland navigation have every claim to publick and private patronage and encourage-

ment ; but even these are surely of no more than secondary importance, when compared with what is essential, in elevating, enlightening, and dignifying, the human mind. As far as the mental powers of man and the means necessary to strengthen, encrease and enervate, those powers, are superior to mere bodily endowments and the means of pampering these ; so far ought institutions for mental improvement to be encouraged, as superior to every other consideration or subject of publick advantage.

To found, however, a National University on any other plan, than as the consummation of some such system as the preceding, would be in a great measure to circumscribe its advantages to the community.

SUCH a University could with propriety be only calculated for instruction in the higher departments of literature, and vain would be the effects of sending youth to such a seminary without due preparation.

IT is owing to this neglect, that so many of the Universities in Europe have been so ineffectual and fruitless in their general operation, as they have hitherto proved. Such as attend after a proper preparatory course, have reaped all that advantage from

them they have expected; while such as were admitted when destitute of due qualifications, have passed through the systems of instruction, and remained nearly as ignorant as when they commenced.

BUT a National University, placed at the head of the foregoing plan, and connected with every branch or seminary of the general system, would tend, not only to finish or consummate the whole literary course, but also to confer upon it that national dignity and importance, which such a combination of public patronage and interest would justly expect and merit. It would thus constitute the fountain head of science, that centre to which all the literary genius of the commonwealth would tend; and from which, when matured by its instructive influence, would diffuse the rays of knowledge and science to the remotest situations of the United government.

CONSIDERED in this point of view, and the different seminaries connected with it, it would resemble that great source and centre of light to the Natural world which, together with the primary and secondary bodies enlightened and preserved by its influence, form that wonderful; that harmonious system, which justly excites our adoration of him, who is the great source of all knowledge,

THE local situation of the National University ought to be central, and well chosen with regard to healthiness and convenience. It might be of advantage in some respects to it, to be contiguous to the seat of government, in order that the youth, having an opportunity of occasionally seeing the Grand Council of the nation, should be animated by that patriotism which they in their turn might on a future day be called upon to exercise for their country.

THEIR contiguity also to the collected wisdom and respectability of the legislative body might, when considering themselves as almost situated under their inspection, be the means of exciting them to that laudable emulation which is so conducive to literary improvement.

BUT tho' it might be most eligible that the situation of such a seminary be contiguous to the seat of government, it does not appear that it ought to be within the confines of a great or populous city. In these in general, there abound too many scenes of seduction, too many examples of profligacy, and too many opportunities of vicious corruption. A few miles distance from such a city and also from the seat of government might occasionally afford all the advantages *both* offered, without subjecting

the youth to any danger of acquiring disrespect for the one, or being seduced by the temptations of the other.

**THE** University buildings, in magnitude and style of architecture, ought to be suitable in every respect to the important purposes for which they were designed, and also to the character and dignity of the nation. The suitable plan and extent of these buildings, would properly come under the direction of the general government and Board of Education. It may not, however, be inconsistent with the design of this Essay to throw out a few hints even with regard to these accommodations.

**THE** following are the principal buildings that should be comprised under the general plan: Proper apartments for the President and Vice President of the University, and contiguous to these a great room or hall for the faculty of professors to assemble in, on the business of the University; in which also the students should be matriculated and the several degrees conferred after the proper examination by the faculty.

**THERE** ought to be also a very large and spacious Publick Hall, sufficiently capacious to contain, on proper occasions, all the students of the

University; the faculty of professors, and also any respectable assemblage of spectators or audience that might occasionally be introduced.

A commodious, well designed and fitted-out class-room, for the professor of each particular Art or Science, would be necessary, furnished with suitable pews, properly arranged and numbered; and also with a respectable desk or pulpit for the professor, together with such presses or other receptacles for books, and such other apparatus as would be necessary for him during the hours of instruction.

CONVENIENT houses or apartments should also be provided for all the various professors in the arts and sciences, and it might be most eligible, that each of their class-rooms should be contiguous to, or adjoining, their private apartments. A steward's house would also be necessary, in which department of the buildings it would be requisite to have a competent number of kitchens and spacious dining-rooms, and over these, lodging rooms for the students. Under the direction of the steward, but subject to the authority and government of the faculty, the students should be accommodated with boarding and lodgings. Under the Steward there ought also to be a Chamberlain, whose office it should be, by the aid of his servants, to keep all

the Halle, class-rooms and lodging-rooms clean, in good order and supplied in the winter with fire, candles, or whatever else should be necessary.

THE buildings should also comprehend a house for a Publick Library, a Museum, and also proper apartments for those who taught the ornamental arts, especially a Hall for Painting, another for Musick, and a third for Statuary. It might also, in a seminary of this kind, be useful to introduce some of the most ingenious of the mechanical arts. A Printer of the very first abilities and reputation could not be dispensed with, who should be furnished with proper accommodations for carrying on that business, and who should keep a book-shop well supplied with such books and stationary as would be necessary for the students attending the University.

THE front or elevation of the University buildings would from this view be properly designed for accommodating the president and vice president; the large hall or room for the faculty to meet in on the business of the University, and also for the great Publick or Common Hall, for accommodating occasionally the whole University.

THE several Professors' houses, with their respective class-rooms should, in the manner of wings, extend re-re-wards, so as that; being at right angles with the front-building, on each end, they together with it would form three sides of a square of buildings. They should however be set at a distance so remote, that the inner area formed by them, should be sufficiently capacious for the following plan of buildings:

AT the breadth of one hundred feet from each range of that square in the area, another should be built for the accommodation of the steward and chamberlain, the necessary kitchens, dining rooms and lodging rooms for the students.

WITHIN this square, at a proper distance should be a third, which would necessarily be diminished in its dimensions, for the accommodation of the teachers of the ornamental arts, with their respective Halls, and also for the Printing-office and book-shop. On the most central part of the buildings a magnificent steeple should be erected with a proper bell. On the top should be a cupola or dome fit for an Observatory, and sufficiently large to admit of an Astronomical apparatus in the first style of improvement.

THE smoke, however, arising from the surrounding buildings might be found an obstruction to this part of the plan. In this case the steeple might terminate with a spire, and an observatory would have to be erected somewhere contiguous to the University.

ON the fourth side of the external square allotted to the various professors of the sciences, being opposite to the front, might be erected buildings for the Library, Museum, &c. Exactly in the middle of each side of each of these three squares of building should be a publick or common entrance, arched over so as not to intercept the range, and on each an iron gate to be shut precisely at a certain fixed hour at night. That on the front should be ornamented in a magnificent style, having on the upper part of the gate on each side, in *basso relievo*, the Arms of the United States.

THE reason that the various professors' houses have, on this sketch of a plan, been assigned to the outside square is, that they would find themselves, with respect to gardens and other conveniences, most advantageously and comfortably situated in that manner; and would also thus form an inclosure round the youth lodged in the inner squares of the buildings, so that when proper order and regulati-

ons were maintained, there should be no egress or ingress after a fixed hour at night, without the knowledge of some of the professors. The censor general ought also to visit each room, at a certain hour and report the absent.

IN the rear of the building should be an ample enclosure for walks and place of recreation for the students. Here also should be a Botanical garden, containing a house for the gardener, and a summerhouse hall for the purpose of lecturing upon that science. A building for a chemical laboratory and lecturing hall should be also erected in this enclosure, as being better secured against accidents than if connected with the University buildings.

IN some celebrated Universities, it is allowed the Professors to board a few students each, generally the sons of persons of distinction who can afford to pay an extraordinary price for that privilege. Such students, building upon their intimacy and interest with the professors, commonly assume to themselves a supercilious conduct to their fellow students, and consequently excite, and too often justly, a spirit of jealousy, especially in every general competition for literary prizes or distinction.

IN order effectually to remove every jealousy of this nature, all students at the National University

city of the United States should be, with respect to public accommodations, on a footing of impartial equality, and the several professors prohibited from boarding or lodging any in their families. Any professor detected in acts of partiality from pecuniary or corrupt motives, or indeed on any consideration, should be immediately divested of his office, and accusations of this nature should be attended to by the Board of Education.

THE faculty of the National University should be an incorporated body, invested with proper authority to make laws and regulations respecting the government of the University and for preserving peace and order through all its departments. It would, however, seem advisable that this learned body, as well as the professors in all the other seminaries, should be amenable to the Board of Education.

A Principal of the highest literary character and well disposed to the office of instruction ; and also a Vice Principal or chancellor of the same description, should be placed at the head of this University, supported by such salaries as were suited to the dignity of their office.

THERE ought to be a Professor of classical learning or belles lettres and composition ; a professor

of Latin and Roman antiquities ; a professor of Greek and Grecian antiquities ; a professor of Hebrew and Oriental languages ; a professor of rhetoric, logic and moral philosophy ; a professor and assistant professor of natural philosophy ; a professor of mathematicks ; a professor of astronomy ; a professor of history and chronology ; a professor of law and the principles of government, and a professor of elocution and oratory. Besides these, the various professors in the medical department, and also the professors of the various ornamental arts, would compose that respectable faculty to whom the important charge of this seminary should be entrusted under the direction of the Literary Board.

ALL these different professors should have fixed salaries, so that their support should not depend on the precarious attendance of many or few students in the respective sciences or arts which they professed.

THE principal of the University should have proper and regular accounts kept of the money received from all the different students for their boarding and instruction, which should be added annually to the funds raised for supporting the institution. These and all other regulations of the same nature under the sanction of government should fall to the direction of the Board of Education.

If the admission only of properly prepared students into the state colleges has with propriety been recommended on this plan, still more strictly ought this to be attended to in the National University.

In order to maintain the interest of the state colleges, as well as the University, no student should be admitted into the latter, but such as brought a diploma or degree from the former, so being they were citizens of the United States; and if foreigners, without a proficiency, on strict examination, in classical and mathematical learning, equal to those who had gone through their course at the state colleges.

ON the entrance of every student, on the conditions above stated, it should be the business of the Principal or Vice Principal to receive, from their parents, guardians or themselves, some information of their professional views in life; and agreeably to such information to direct the course of their studies at the University. The useful sciences should occupy the most serious hours of study, and the ornamental be attended for the purpose of relaxation.

IT would probably be found necessary that an exception should be made with regard to the above

terms of admittance, in favour of the medical students. Their literary proficiency and other preparatory knowledge ought, with great propriety, to be prescribed and required of them on entering the University, but it does not appear necessary or indispensable that they should have passed through such a comprehensive and scientific course of both mathematical and classical learning as has been assigned to students of another description, whose views were not directed to any particular profession, but merely to the highest attainment in literary knowledge.— By this, however, it is by no means to be understood, that the medical students should be in any degree deficient in useful or polite literature; it only suggests that most of them having to attend some practising physician previous to entering the University, it would not appear reasonable to require it as a condition of their entrance that they, should produce a degree from the State College.

THE literary or scientific improvement of all the students, whatever were their views, would much depend upon a proper division of their hours of study; and it ought to be the peculiar province of the vice-principal to direct them in this respect.

ON every Saturday there ought to be a general meeting of the faculty and all the students in the

public hall, and a catalogue of the names of all the students called by the censor general for the week. This office the students, agreeably to the alphabetical order of their names, should discharge alternately weekly, the censor at the time of calling the catalogue noting carefully such as were absent.

EACH professor should also keep the same order in his class, having a weekly censor who should call the catalogue and note the absent. These catalogues should be laid before the Principal and faculty every Saturday, and the delinquents in absenting themselves without a proper apology laid under a suitable penalty.

IT would appear to be most eligible that none of the faculty of the National University, whether Principals or Professors, should be clergymen of any denomination; or if they were, that they should suspend every clerical function during their being members of that body, and devote themselves solely to their office.

ON every Saturday, after the examination of the catalogue with regard to conduct through the week, three of the students, who had been in their turn nominated orators for the day, should deliver

alternately, from the rostrum, an oration, not exceeding twenty minutes in length each, on some literary or philosophical subject of their own choosing.— The manuscripts of these orations should be kept by the faculty, at least till the end of the session; and prizes conferred on such as excelled. After the orations they may be dismissed by the Principal with an exhortation to good behaviour, and with prayer.

ON the Sabbaths there ought to be divine service in the Publick hall, and as, agreeably to this plan, none of the professors should act as clergymen, two University chaplains should be annually chosen to officiate alternately. To prevent any idea of religious partiality, these chaplains ought to be of different denominations of protestants; as is commonly observed in choosing chaplains for the house of congress. It would be most commendable also that they should be young clergymen, without any parochial charge, who might wish, on account of improvement, to reside in the University a session or two, even after being admitted to the ministry. Unprovided, for young clergymen thus chosen alternately by the faculty, especially such as had been educated on this plan, should be preferred; and in thus receiving a suitable salary would be greatly served

thereby as individuals, and it would also be serving the religious interests of the community.

THE whole faculty should, with the utmost solemnity, attend on divine service, in a body; and an elevated and respectable pew should be provided for them in the hall, as well for their accommodation on this, as on other publick occasions.

A few of the youth educated at the public expence, who had taken a degree at the State College, should also be admitted, on the same foundation, to the National University. Their course of study should also be directed by the Principal, agreeably to the plans or conditions already specified.

AT the end of a triennial course at the University, students properly qualified should obtain a master of Arts' degree. No fee whatever should be demanded by the faculty for any degree whatever, more than merely paid the expence of having the diploma made out in a proper manner. From a University of such dignity every cause of suspicion should be removed that any degrees were conferred from any other motive than real merit.

A degree of doctor of physick, or doctor of laws, might be conferred by the faculty; but it does not appear proper that it should confer a degree of

doctor of divinity, more especially, if, as previously observed on the foregoing plan, it should be considered most eligible that Theological students, after their philosophical course, should not be taught in the University of the United States. Clergymen of any denomination ought surely to receive that honorary distinction with more propriety from the higher judicatures of their own body, than from one, many members of which might be probably little acquainted with theological merit or subjects of divinity.

Agreeably to the uniform plan here laid down, students entering the University at the expiration, of the eighteenth year of their age, would have finished their course at the end of the twenty first; and thus at the age of maturity would be prepared for acting their part on the theatre of the world.

If the various stages of proficiency throughout the other seminaries be attended to, it can be considered no objection to this that it is not completed till so late a period. The state college should prepare youth for any profession or business in life; but the great end of the National University should be to accommodate such as wished to indulge their literary genius to the greatest possible extent, and who were in such circumstances as to account no part of their life spent more agreeably or to better advantage, than

in receiving the highest possible improvement in Arts and Sciences.

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## CONCLUSION.

SHOULD the foregoing outlines of a Plan of National Education be suited to the local situation or extent of the United States of America, it is presumed that, under proper patronage and the direction of a *well chosen Literary Board*, it would amply provide for the proper instruction of youth in every possible circumstance of life, and also for any particular business or profession. Much however has been here omitted, that might be found necessary, in filling up the system when reduced to practice.

THE great end and design of Education is the improvement of the human mind in virtuous, useful and ornamental knowledge; and in the progress of a plan of public instruction much would occur from time to time to promote that invaluable purpose, which without great prolixity could not be introduced in an Essay of this nature. Indeed it is only just to allow such an ample field for progressive improvement, in this respect, as it would be illiberal

to have circumscribed it by any fixed or exclusive practical system.

IN this view of the subject, as well as in many others, appears the great importance of *an incorporated Board of Presidents of Education*. Their abilities, literary knowledge, extensive information, and correspondence with the learned world, would enable them occasionally to enrich such a plan as the foregoing with whatever might best tend to promote its success. One great deficiency in education, as conducted in even the most enlightened countries, is the want of such a respectable body of well qualified guardians as should constantly watch over its interests and add dignity to it by their virtue and talents. Publick instruction has been too much and generally committed to the trust and direction of those only who were actual tutors; or if placed under the authority of some dignified patron, has been generally owing rather to the pecuniary endowments of the opulent dunce, than to qualifications entitled to the highest respectability of character on account of literary merit.

LET it then be particularly observed, that by the introduction of such a learned body for the purposes already specified, the foregoing Essay is to

lay, in the first place, some claim to the publick attention, as in that respect superior to any system of instruction known to the writer of this Essay. But, in the second place, the *uniformity* of this plan of publick instruction would, it is presumed, contribute highly to its success, and, at the same time, conduce much both to the improvement and embellishment of society. It might also, in no small degree, be productive of, not only harmony of sentiments, unity of taste and manners, but also, the patriotic principles of genuine Federalism amongst the scattered and variegated citizens of this extensive republick.

EVERY person tolerably acquainted with the present state of Education in this country, and the great obstruction and discouragement students meet with by not being constantly supplied with the necessary books, and also from the various editions of the same authors, must be disposed to allow that it would be necessary to establish or encourage a printer in each state for supplying the seminaries with the proper authors in each science. This regulation, it is presumed, would in no small degree contribute to the success of the plan.

THE youth educated at the publick expence might also, if properly conducted, and disposed of,

tend highly to the interests of literature, especially in keeping up a supply of proper tutors for all the different departments of the course.

UNDER such a system, properly founded and organized, it does not appear that the expence of education would be much greater to the community than it is at present, especially as it respects the two first introductory seminaries. On account of trusting to unsettled or itinerant teachers of the first rudiments of instruction, most of the youth fit for the primary school loose at one time what they gain at another; and, thus, not only mispend one half of the season for instruction; but also occasion double expence for the same degree of proficiency.

It cannot be properly objected to the preceding plan, that it requires too much time to complete the scientific course, while it provides for those of every possible circumstance, profession or view in life. It may suit very many of the youth in the community to be satisfied with what literary instruction they receive in even the primary school, and should it be conducted on the plan specified in the consideration of that seminary, it must be sufficient for all the common concerns, business, or even happiness, of life.

THE higher stages of the system, it is presumed, may be adapted to all the different views or designs of the publick, so that while an ample field of improvement is held out and provided for the most exalted genius or the most liberal professions; each subordinate degree also may be accommodated to its satisfaction.

INDEED it is only a system of this nature that can be worthy the adoption of an enlightened nation, disposed impartially to provide for the improvement of all its citizens agreeably to their views and circumstances.

IN England, enlightened in literary improvement as they conceive themselves to be, has it not been owing to so much being expended on founding and endowing two pompous Universities, without taking care to found proper preparatory seminaries connected with them, that a few only have become eminent in science, while the bulk of the community in that country continue to be so illiterate.

IN every country possessed of genuine freedom and impressed with a just sense of its value, nothing can be more worthy of publick attention than an improvement in the means of publick instruction.—  
Wherever scientific knowledge is generally cultivated,

there must the dignity and rights of man be best known and, consequently, not only most highly valued, but also best secured from corruption, and most ably maintained and vindicated from encroachment and usurpation.

BUT in order to this it is necessary that the system of education should be generally suited to the citizens ; that it should comprehend every description of situation and circumstance, uncircumscribed by partial endowments, local prejudices, or personal attachments.

HABITS of attention to science are generally fraught with knowledge and virtue. It is impossible that the mind which has undergone, from the first dawnings of reason to maturity, that discipline which such a uniform and extensive system of instruction would inculcate and require, can have imbibed any strong bias in favour of vice or immorality.

THE principles of morals, however, and of publick and private virtue, would not, on the preceding plan, be left to the mere effect of scientific discipline. They would require the diligent, fostering hand of care, as well as all the influence of dignified example. And such, and such, only should be the examples exhibited in the characters and con-

duct of all the various tutors throughout their respective seminaries, at least in suitable proportion to the eminence of their situation.

ONE great deficiency in modern education, it must be allowed, is, that as the sciences have been enlarged and improved, especially such as depend on mathematical knowledge, a proportionable attention to a preparatory introduction by mathematicks has been, too generally, either dispensed with altogether, or at best inculcated in a very superficial manner.

FROM this consideration, ample time has been allowed in every department of this course for acquiring a thorough knowledge of mathematical learning in all its various branches. No part of instruction so much merits public patronage as this, whether we view it as regarding all the useful purposes, arts and occupations of life; or as elevating the human mind, enlarging the capacity of its powers, and enabling it to extend its scientific comprehension from the most humble to the most sublime and exalted of the works of God.

IN the pursuit of literary knowledge some may have a genius for mathematicks and the sciences founded on them, who might discover little taste or abilities for understanding the elegancies of classical

composition, the acquisition of ancient languages, or enriching their own by their copiousness and dignified beauties. A general or national system of instruction ought therefore to be well accommodated to every different genius whether classical or mathematical; and it is only by being so accommodated that it could merit general or publick encouragement. It will be found, however, that there are few who have good natural abilities for one species of literature, who may not also make competent proficiency, to whatever part of it the mind may be directed. All, then, who should be considered as liberally educated, ought to be well instructed in the mathematical sciences. There is, perhaps, no nation of the modern world, that hath yet adopted any uniform system of publick patronage for the general diffusion of this part of education; but its various advantages are perhaps impossible to be calculated, could it be generally extended to the greatest part of the youth in any community.

ON an impartial review of the course here laid down, it does not appear that any known science, really useful or ornamental, or the means of acquiring it, hath been omitted. Should any such omission, however, appear, it ought not to dif-

credit the plan, the principal object of which hath been, not only the consideration of the publick establishment of the best means of promoting the highest degree of literary improvement ; but more especially, its establishment on a general, uniform, national foundation ; leaving, in some measure, the practical part to be filled up, as the progressive improvement in the sciences, and in the means of acquiring them may, under proper patronage, encouragement and direction, from time to time, inculcate.

————— quibus hæc, sint qualiacumque,  
 Arridere velim : doliturus, si placeant spe Deterius nostra.

Hoc

**THE END.**