

INDIANA PALLADIUM.

David V. Culley.

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VOL. IX.]

LAWRENCEBURGH, (IA.) SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1833.

[NO. 34.

From the Western Hemisphere.

WEST POINT.

We extract the following from the letter spoken of in our paper last week, and cannot withhold our warm approbation of the sentiments it inculcates. We are sensible its perusal will afford much satisfaction to our numerous readers, and have in consequence, deferred our own remarks to a future period.

The letter breathes a spirit of lofty independence, natural to the human heart.—It gives advice, adapted to every department in society, which must fall upon the ear of the young and inexperienced, as the rich droppings of the disciplined and well stored mind. It urges upon all, the exercise of those powers and talents conferred by an All-wise being, for the best of purposes—their own happiness—and condemns in *toto* that base subserviency to the powers that be, or that truckling adulation, which would barter independence for a *title* and the privilege of indulging on the *public bounty*, that appears to be made, through which West Point is sustained.

We look upon the facts thus elicited as strong corroborative proof of our assertions. The article is pleasingly interspersed with reflections and sentiments, which cannot fail to meet with a warm response of every true American. Public opinion has hitherto been diverted from a proper investigation of this subject, from various causes; but with the writer of the article in question, we are of opinion the time is near at hand when it will sink, like all other monopolies, beneath the withering frown of a people, the genius of whose government and the permanency of whose institutions, can only be consulted and secured by a free, equal and National system of EDUCATION.

The judgment, tact and talents of the writer are of a high order, and he possesses the important advantage of an intimate acquaintance with every subject connected with the academy, gathered from personal observation. That there are few more capable of advising those of our youth, who have a desire to determine their after profession or character in life, will be abundantly evident to the reader. Brief as it may be, however, considering the importance of the subject, there is a fund of invaluable information and sound Republican counsel embodied in its language. As it is specially intended for young men, we trust their minds may receive a due impression, and that its benefits may be lasting, as its sentiments are correct and honorable.

Let every young man, be his course in life what it may, ponder well on the truths contained in this letter, and then determine whether, in the sense of the writer, they too, "will be the children of their own actions."

"In your last letter you asked my advice as to the choice of a profession.—My superior experience may have been the cause of this application.

Your own inclinations you say have led you to prefer a military education, and that you are anxious to obtain letters for admission as a Cadet at the *West Point Academy*. You seem to desire my opinion as to the propriety of this step, and I will now give it to you in the same spirit of frankness that characterizes the inquiry.

You will remember that but few ever succeed who apply for admission into that institution; and those few, either the sons of men of wealth or descendants on those whom some peculiar public favors have fallen.—How then can a son of a farmer of the country, with no other pretensions than those which arise from the study of Books and a humble parentage, look for success in such an application?—It is the height of presumption in you to dream of such a thing! and if you have a reason to hope for the bestowment of such a favor, I would devote my latest breath in offering arguments to dissuade you from it. You are yet young. The world is before you. You have partaken largely in the kindness of the parental roof, and now participating in all the good feelings which an indulgent father can exercise towards a favorite son. Your two elder brothers have been long settled in life and you have witnessed their success. They struggled hard and amidst the buffettings of fortune, without a friend to aid them, they have triumphed over opposing obstacles. Now separated as we are, from the hearth of our childhood, we can look upon the past with no other emotion than that of a filial affection for those we left behind; and you will not fail to receive, in a spirit of charity, the advice I may give you, on any matter connected with your own best interests. You may yet learn that most of the solid and useful lessons of human life, are to be attained only from the book of experience; and as you add in years, you will see more clearly the utter imbecility and folly of all that idle parade, and empty show, to which the giddy word is so eager to afford encouragement.

West Point has failed to fulfil its design. Originally it was intended as a school of military science for those sons of genius, the immediate descendants of American patriots, who bled in the cause of liberty. It was founded in 1802, and what added to its early celebrity, was the fact that the *traitor Arnold* intended its surrender to the British in the War of the Revolution.

If it were necessary, or even prudent in this country to keep up such an establishment, the site on which it stands is indeed a very chosen one, possessing all the romantic scenery, and those natural facilities which give it the appearance of a fortress of beauty and strength. But my objection goes to the very foundation of that institution—to the principal—the utility—the expense—the wretched favoritism that seems to govern the selection of students to share its honors. I know full well that high and honored names were associated in its early establishment—that *Washington* and *Jefferson* were its patrons—and I know, too, that many who now live, whose names are endeared to the heart in every real patriot, have been its friends. Its early history was free from the objections that now exist against it. Like most human institutions, it has been the prey of great abuses. Public inquiry has never been properly directed to an investigation of those abuses, and this is the true answer to the argument, that *Washington*

and *Jefferson*, and others have encouraged it—*Members of Congress*, too, have encouraged it. Most of them do so yet, particularly those who can educate their sons on the public charity, and succeed in procuring them comfortable salaries when they graduate. The expenses of keeping up this expose is heavy, and what is received by the people as an equivalent? Some few *favorites* may add a fresh row of buttons to their coats, at a cost of some thousands, but how is this expense reimbursed? In what way is this amount placed back to the public treasury?—Is the answer to be found to this, that those thus educated, thus distinguished, are sent forth into the public service and made to earn *that public* the very money thus expended? Is this the fact?

These breveted young men, it is true, are often, indeed quite too often entrusted with the charge of important public works to the exclusion of men of talents and captivity, far their seniors. The West in particular has been brought in for a goodly share of this species of *official favoritism*; and we are at this time, literally flooded with a troop of these foot dragoons, nearly as plenty as mile posts, paying for their education and segars by making all smoke before them—Clothed, and fed, and paid, as they are by the government, I would like to see the problem solved, in what way they ever make return for these favors received? But there are indeed, but a small portion of them thus employed. Hundreds who receive the favors of West Point, immediately leave the service, without offering a solitary day's labour in return. I have now in my eye, several gentlemen of Ohio, the sons of men of wealth, who after flitting from the public, the money to educate themselves, have taken to the other employments. I believe at least, it is fair to calculate that one half of the *Cadets* at the Military School, enter that Seminary with the mere intention of receiving an education on the bounty of the public, without the single thought of any after pursuit, connected with the objects of the institution. I know of but two solitary instances, in Ohio, out of 20 or 30 who have shared in the munificence of West Point, in which the *Cadets* are in the actual employment of the government; and I know of *hundreds* in New York who never rendered the nation an hour's service.

Place the annual expense of these *charity scholars* into the scale of national economy, for the last thirty years, and we will find a sum nearly sufficient to pay off one fourth of the National debt!!! The fact is, in whatever light it may be viewed, *West Point* is a germ of aristocracy in the land, entirely uncongenial with the nature and spirit of our free institutions, and which cannot bear the light of investigation. You and I will probably witness the catastrophe. We live under a government that sanctions no privileged orders, creeds or systems—where equality prevails, and the poor and humble have a place in society as high as the highest; and where too, all distinctions should be unknown but those of the mind and of the heart. It was an admirable saying of Napoleon Buonaparte, that "it was a matter of indifference whether he was descended from an emperor or a Cobbler—that every man in this world was the child of his own actions, and that he derived his titles from the French people."

Here too in this land of freedom title should be conferred only by the people. Washington wanted no other distinction. The sages and patriots who flourished in his day, were all the children of their own actions. Our bravest generals, and firmest patriots are now children of their own actions; and he who would expect great success in any station, occupation, or calling, must make himself the child of his own actions; and at no time depend upon such artificial aids as so frequently serve to make arrogant fools, and effeminate upstarts, rather than men of mind, talents or character. Resting on this basis, no man can well fail of success in this country, and he who diligently pursues the path of improvement, rectitude and duty, will in the end find his reward in the generous confidence of a confiding public, and be enabled to hold that station among men, which nothing less than great diligence, honesty and uprightness, will enable him to attain. I am unwilling to believe you capable of undervaluing the importance of your own personal exertions. You have no line of ancestry to boast, and I conceive it well that it is so. On your unaided efforts, must your future success essentially depend.

Banish from your mind, then, the idea of presenting your application for admission at West Point, and rely upon the resources which God and nature have given you, for acquiring that character and standing in life to which you aspire. No man can well be great without industry, or learned without study; and when we look on the past history of the world, we find comparatively few of the favored and the wealthy, who have risen to any eminence. Most of the ancient heroes, poets, statesmen and philosophers, came up from obscurity to greatness. The memorials of their renown stand amid the desolations that have marked the fall of empires, and the genius of science and learning sits weeping round their tombs. We live in after times; in another age. Our country is free and prosperous. Every young man of talents has here the chance of distinction. Genius has no peculiar restraint—learning no barrier—preference no unsurmountable obstacle, and in this nation and country, the proof is every where around us, that no man, however obscure or humble, who wills to become distinguished, and pursues the direction of that will, fails in the full accomplishment of his ambition."

Remarkable Occurrence.—On Friday last, while the workmen were employed in levelling the Railroad at Newark, over a piece of low spungy ground a short distance south of Market street, between Mulberry street and the river, they discovered a break or crack in the road which they had previously levelled. Shortly after an opening presented itself and the earth began to cave in and sink out of sight. Several loads of dirt were thrown in—this also disappeared along with the ground, which con-

tinued to cave in on every side, until the opening extending about sixty feet east and west, and one hundred and fifty north and south. As the earth disappeared, a body of water presented itself and rose towards the surface. Several thousand loads of dirt have been thrown in, a great portion of which has sunk away, nobody knows where.

The hole is now partly filled up on the north side, but a considerable space still remains open where it first appeared. The depth or extent of this cavern has not yet been ascertained. Whilst the work of filling up was in progress, it was discovered that the level ground on the east side, covered with stumps and roots of trees, about 60 feet by 100, was rising up and forming a hill; it has now risen several feet in the centre near the hole, and slopes off gradually in other directions. Large cracks are to be seen in different parts of this raised ground.

These are the facts; but whether it be a bottomless subterraneous pond of water, or a bed of quicksand, or some other mysterious agent which sucks in and devours such vast quantities of earth, we must leave to the decision of the more learned advocates of Symmes' theory. *Newark Eagle.*

FROM SPURZHEIM'S PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION.

LONGEVITY.

"It is not probable that the life of man has diminished with the duration of the world; it is more reasonable to suppose, that the years mentioned in the Old Testament were shorter than ours. It is a common observation, that the same term has quite different meanings among different nations, and even in the same nation at different periods of its history. The English and Germans, for instance, measure the distance of localities by miles; but it is known that about six English miles make only one mile in Germany. In the same way, it may be that the expression *year*, did not always denote the same lapse of time. It is also possible that the duration of a family, that is, of all male descendants, was considered as the continuation of the same life, as it is still a common saying, that parents continue to live in their children."

CONSTITUTION.

"Among the causes which contribute to longevity, the most important is the innate bodily constitution. In this respect, savages have an advantage over civilized nations. The health of the former is more durable, and they do not experience a number of bodily and mental disorders with which the latter are molested."

TEMPERATURE.

"A moderate temperature is more conducive to old age than great heat. The latter accelerates the natural changes of organized beings, and brings them sooner to death. Pure, dry, and cold air, moderate exercise of all the bodily and mental faculties, a good physical education in general, and quietude of the mind, are all very favorable to longevity."

IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

"During childhood, as well as in infancy, the regulation of the vegetative functions ought to be the most important point of education. A good and healthy organization is the basis of all employment and of all enjoyment. Many parents, however, are anxious to cultivate the mind at the expense of the body. They think they cannot instruct their offspring early enough to read and to write, whilst their bodily constitution and health are overlooked. Children are shut up, forced to sit quiet, and to breathe a confined air. This error is the greater, the more delicate the children, and the more premature their mental powers are. The bodily powers of such children are sooner exhausted, they suffer from dyspepsia, head-ache, and a host of nervous complaints: their brain is liable to inflammation and serious effusion; and a premature death is frequently the consequence of such a violation of nature. It is indeed to be lamented, that the influence of the physical on the moral part of man is not sufficiently understood. There are parents who will pay masters very dearly, in hope of giving excellency to their children, but who will hesitate to spend the tenth part to procure them bodily health. Some by an absurd infatuation take their own constitutions as a measure of those of their children; and because they themselves in advanced age can support confinement and intense application with little injury to health, they conclude that their young and delicate children can do the same. Such notions are altogether erroneous—bodily deformities, curved spines and unfitness for various occupations and the fulfilment of future duties, frequently result from such misunderstanding management of children. The advantages of a sound body are incalculable for the individuals themselves, their friends and their posterity. Body and mind ought to be cultivated in harmony and neither of them at the expense of the other. Health should be the basis, and instruction the ornament of early education. The development of the body will assist the manifestations of the mind, and good mental education will contribute to bodily health. The organs of the mental operations, when they are too soon and too much exercised, suffer and become unfit for their functions. This explains the reason why young geniuses often descend at a later age into the class of common men. Indeed, experience shows, that among children of almost equal dispositions, those who are brought up without particular care and begin to read and to write, when their bodily constitution has acquired some solidity, soon overtake those who are dragged early to their spelling-books at the detriment of their bodily frame. No school education, strictly speaking, ought to begin before seven years of age."

"The brains of delicate children and premature geniuses ought to be exercised late, and the greater their mental activity is, the less it needs to be exercised, and the more care is to be taken of the body and the physical education.

"It is also very important to know, that during the climacteric years, when the body increases most rapidly, the mental powers are weaker. Hence, at that period, the body deserves greater attention than the mind."

A MOTHER'S DUTY.

"A mother ought to attend to the first education of her boys and to that of her girls entirely, but let

useful knowledge precede that which is merely secondary. There may be single individuals among girls who have a great disposition to learn languages, let them exercise their talent; but let them not be a standard for girls in general. I am sure that few of them, as well as boys, will be greatly delighted with the study of classics. On the other hand I doubt that, on account of this acquirement, girls become better wives and better mothers, and that they will, for this reason, gain the affection of their husbands. Rich and independent females certainly should be occupied, and if they be married without having children, some may be entertained by the study of languages, ancient and modern. No sensible man will object to this, the question is only what shall be the general rule and what the exception. It, however, still seems to me, that even such ladies might become more useful to their fellow-creatures and more meritorious by other occupations."

INNOCENT AMUSEMENTS.

"As bodily exercise particularly strengthens, as it invites to sleep, and secures against great disorders, it is to be generally encouraged. Gymnastic amusements may be established for all ages and for all classes of society. The Jews were ordered on the Sabbath day to take a walk out of the city; and here, rich and poor, young and old, master and slave, met and indulged in innocent mirth or in the pleasures of friendly intercourse. Moses, too, instituted three national festivals, not only for the sake of religion, but also to maintain national union. The gymnastic exercises and national games of the Greeks and their good effects are generally known and admired. Why there are similar enjoyments and means of producing public spirit neglected by modern legislators? Why are priests allowed to change the Sabbath day into a day of gloom, whilst Moses wished it to be a day of cheerfulness? The rich amuse themselves during the week, they have balls, or at least other parties of joy, in which the clergymen themselves participate; but are the poor, who work from Monday to Saturday for their sustenance, to be deprived of every kind of amusement? Will they not naturally be drawn to ale-houses, or at least feel inclined to indulge in drunkenness or other animal propensities, since all public amusements, even a walk in the fields, are interdicted. The true sense of religion is misunderstood, and the bad consequences are unavoidable. I have reason to believe that refined civilization on the one hand, and gloom in religion on the other, are great causes of misery and many secret sins which ruin the health of many individuals. The priesthood should consider it their duty to be better acquainted with human nature and the laws of the Creator, which man never violates without suffering for it. Religion cannot be instituted to make man miserable, or to prepare him for the mad-house."

PUBLIC CHARITIES.

"In examining mankind at large we shall find that general happiness is founded more on morality than on intellect. Public establishments for relieving distress, improving morality and correcting manners, are more beneficial to society than colleges for the study of mathematics under the government of conquerors.

EXAMPLE AND PRECEPT.

"It is a great fault of parents and teachers to preach sobriety, and themselves to give a contrary example. The example is more effectual than the precept. I think it also wrong to give dainties and liquors to children as rewards, for it is in this manner that they are taught to value them. They may enjoy the sense of taste, but they ought not to be governed by it."

NATURAL EXPRESSIONS.

"In the cultivation of the feelings the natural language is of the greatest importance. Have the feeling which you wish to inspire, speak its natural language, and you will impress the juvenile minds. Avoid particularly the natural expression of the inferior affections as of anger, jealousy, envy, impatience, etc. In showing anger to children, you give a particular lesson. Follow the example of the philosopher, who said, 'I should punish you if I were not angry.'

MANNER TO CHILDREN.

"Never vex quarrelsome or obstinate children, particularly do not at length yield to them and let them have their own way; never desire such children to do what is unjust; make every demand on them quietly, but never yield."

JUST AND NOBLE.

"He who pursues his own advantage only, so far as he can do so without injuring another, is just; he who gives up his superiority rather than to do harm to another, is noble; he who works only for the common welfare is the most noble, and no one but him deserves that name."

HAPPY PERSONS.

"There are persons who may be called fortunate if not elect, namely, those who, from the felicity of their natural constitution, desire only what is good, who act from love and show pure morality in their actions. In these happy beings, the superior feelings predominate much over those common to man and animals."

RICH AND POOR.

"There are more poor, willing to give charity from their necessity, than rich from their superfluity."

SUDDEN RETRIBUTION.

"In yesterday's paper it was stated that a man, who had gained an entrance into one of the upper stories of the store belonging to Messrs. Kilgour & Taylor, on Front st. fell through the hatches, into the cellar, and was instantly killed. We have now further to state, that the body, after being interred on Sunday morning, was immediately afterwards taken up, and exhibited in the room under the Council-Chamber, in order if possible that it might be recognized by some acquaintance. The skull being very much fractured, and the features of the face, in consequence, rather disfigured, the task of recognition was extremely difficult. The body had thus laid from 11 until 4 o'clock, when it was identified as that of Jo. Johnson, who has resided

on water street, in this city, for the last fourteen years—and was the father of a large and respectable family. The body was immediately surrendered to the family, and by them was interred, for the last time, on yesterday. An examination was made by the City Marshal, and a number of articles of merchandise, supposed to be stolen, were discovered at his residence.

This notice, brief as it is, might with propriety be closed here, but justice to Messrs. Kilgour & Taylor, and their clerks, obliges us to make a further statement. A report was circulated through the city, yesterday, that Johnson met with his death by violence, from some of the persons in the store, and was afterwards precipitated through the hatches.

We have examined the store, minutely, and are clearly convinced that this surmise is without the slightest foundation. Johnson entered the house through the cellar—reached the first story through the hatchway, by the aid of a board set up on the head of a tar barrel. The second story was reached by a flight of stairs at the back of the building, at the head of which is a small room, in which a clerk sleeps. The sound of footsteps aroused the clerk, who rushed to the door attempted to give the alarm. The probability is, that Johnson, having his retreat cut off, and knowing the situation of the hatchway, ran forward in order to let himself down by the rope, and either stumbled or missed his hold and fell to the cellar. There is not a particle of evidence, on any of the floors, of violence being used. The clerk hearing him fall, immediately aroused his brother clerk, who slept in another apartment, and, procuring a light, descended to the cellar where the body was found. The neighbors were instantly aroused, and by day light, the coroner and his jury had made their examinations.

These are the facts, as we have spared no pains to obtain them, we sincerely trust that