

## AMERICAN MAGAZINE,

CONTAINING

A MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTION of Original and other Valuable ESSAYS,  
In PROSE and VERSE,

And CALCULATED both for

INSTRUCTION and AMUSEMENT.

" Science the guide, and truth the eternal goal." BAR.

For FEBRUARY, 1788.

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while they remained in this island; and some of them were desirous of attempting a settlement. A little consideration however, induced them to relinquish a design, which they were by no means prepared to execute. They therefore returned, and arrived at Exmouth on the 23 of July.

In the succeeding year, Captain Martin Pring, with one barque of 50 tons and another of 26, crossed the Atlantic and fell in with the land about the latitude of 43. He followed the course of Capt. Gosnell, and made no discoveries worthy of notice.

In March 1605, Capt. George

Weymouth sailed from Ratcliff for America, and in May fell in with the shoals off Cape Cod. He however escaped shipwreck and put to sea. He changed his course and made the land in a safer harbor, at the mouth of a river;\* but after a short stay, he returned to England, without making any important discoveries.

Hitherto all the voyages to North America had ended in some fruitless attempts to make a settlement, or in a few discoveries. The effectual settlement of a colony in this country was reserved for Capt. John Smith, the author of this history.

## E D U C A T I O N.

WITH respect to literary institutions of the first rank, it appears to me that their local situations are an object of importance. It is a subject of controversy, whether a large city or a country village is the most eligible situation for a college or university. But the arguments in favor of the latter, appear to me decisive. Large cities are always scenes of dissipation and amusement, which have a tendency to corrupt the hearts of youth and divert their minds from their literary pursuits. Reason teaches this doctrine, and experience has uniformly confirmed the truth of it.

Strict discipline is essential to the prosperity of a public seminary of science; and this is established with more facility, and supported

with more uniformity, in a small village, where there are no great objects of curiosity to interrupt the studies of youth or to call their attention from the orders of the society.

That the morals of young men, as well as their application to science, depend much on retirement, will be generally acknowledged; but it will be said also, that the company in large towns will improve their manners. The question then is, which shall be sacrificed; the advantage of an *uncorrupted heart* and an *improved head*; or of polished manners. But this question supposes that the virtues of the heart and the polish of the gentleman are incompatible with each other; which is by no means true. The gentleman and the

\* This river is not named, but by other accounts it appears to have been Pemaquid, scholar

scholar are often united in the same person. But both are not formed by the same means. The improvement of the head requires close application to books—the refinement of manners rather attends some degree of dissipation, or at least, a relaxation of the mind. To preserve the purity of the heart, it is sometimes necessary, and always useful to place a youth beyond the reach of bad examples—whereas a general knowledge of the world, of all kinds of company, is requisite to teach a universal propriety of behavior.

But youth is the time to form both the head and the heart. The understanding is indeed ever enlarging; but the seeds of knowledge should be planted in the mind, while it is young and susceptible: And if the mind is not kept untainted in *youth*, there is little probability that the moral character of the *man* will be unblemished. A genteel address, on the other hand, may be acquired at any time of life, and *must* be acquired, if ever, by mingling with good company. But were the cultivation of the understanding and of the heart, inconsistent with genteel manners, still no rational person could hesitate which to prefer. The goodness of a heart is of infinitely more consequence to society, than an elegance of manners; nor will any superficial accomplishments repair the want of principle in the mind. It is always better to be *vulgarly right*, than *politely wrong*.

But if the amusements, dissipation and vicious examples in populous cities render them improper places for seats of learning;

the monkish mode of sequestering boys from other society and confining them to the apartments of a college, appears to me another fault. The human mind is like a rich field, which without constant care, will ever be covered with a luxuriant growth of weeds. It is extremely dangerous to suffer young men to pass the most critical period of life, when the passions are strong, the judgment weak, and the heart susceptible and unsuspecting, in a situation where there is not the least restraint upon their inclinations. My own observations lead me to draw the veil of silence over the ill effects of this practice. But it is to be wished that youth might always be kept under the inspection of age and superior wisdom—That literary institutions might be so situated, that the students might live in decent families, be subject in some measure, to their discipline, and ever under the control of those whom they respect.

Perhaps it may also be numbered among the errors in our systems of education, that, in all our universities and colleges, the students are all restricted to the same course of study, and by being classed, limited to the same progress. Classing is necessary, but whether students should not be removeable from the lower to the higher classes, as a reward for their superior industry and improvements, is submitted to those who know the effect of emulation upon the human mind.

But young gentlemen are not all designed for the same line of business, and why should they pursue the same studies? Why should a merchant noble himself  
with

with the rules of Greek and Roman syntax, or a painter puzzle his head with conic sections? Life is too short to acquire, and the mind of man too feeble to contain, the whole circle of sciences. The greatest genius on earth, not even a Bacon, can be a perfect master of *every* branch; but any moderate genius, may, by suitable application, be perfect in any *one* branch. By attempting therefore to teach young gentlemen every thing, we make the most of them mere smatterers in science. In order to qualify persons to figure in any profession, it is necessary that they should attend closely to those branches of learning which lead to it.

There are some arts and sciences which are necessary for every man. Every man should be able to speak and write his native tongue with correctness; and have some knowledge of mathematics. The rules of arithmetic are indispensibly requisite. But besides the learning which is of common utility, lads should be directed to pursue those branches which are connected more immediately with the business for which they are destined.

It would be very useful for the farming part of the community, to furnish country schools with some easy system of practical husbandry. By repeatedly reading some book of this kind, the mind would be stored with ideas, which might not indeed be understood in youth, but which would be called into practice in some subsequent period of life. This would lead the mind to the subject of agriculture, and pave the way for improvements.

Young gentlemen, designed for the mercantile line, after having learned to write and speak English correctly, might attend to French, Italian or such other living language, as they will probably want in the course of business. These languages should be learned early in youth, while the organs are yet pliable; otherwise the pronunciation will probably be imperfect. These studies might be succeeded by some attention to chronology, and a regular application to geography, mathematics, history, the general regulations of commercial nations, principles of advance in trade, of insurance, and to the general principles of government.

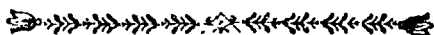
It appears to me that such a course of Education, which might be completed by the age of fifteen or sixteen, would have a tendency to make better merchants, than the usual practice which confines boys to Lucian, Ovid and Tully, till they are fourteen and then turns them into a store, without an idea of their business, or one article of Education necessary, for them, except perhaps a knowledge of writing and figures.

Such a system of English Education is also much preferable to a University-Education, even with the usual honors; for it might be finished so early as to leave young persons time to serve a regular apprenticeship, without which no person should enter upon business. But by the time a University-Education is completed, young men commonly commence *gentlemen*—their age and their pride will not suffer them to go thro' the drudgery of a counting house—and they enter upon business without the requisite

requisite accomplishments. Indeed it appears to me that what is now called a *liberal Education* disqualifies a man for business. Habits are formed in youth and by practice; and as business is, in some measure, mechanical, every person should be exercised in his employment, in an early period of life, that his habits may be formed by the time his apprenticeship expires. An Education in a university interferes with the forming of these habits; and perhaps forms opposite habits—the mind may contract a fondness for ease, for pleasure or for books, which no efforts can overcome. An academic Education, which should furnish the youth with some ideas of men and things and leave time for an apprenticeship, before the age of twenty-one years, would in my opinion, be the most eligible for

young men who are designed for active employments.

The method pursued in our colleges is better calculated to fit youth for the learned professions than for business. But perhaps the period of study, required as the condition of receiving the usual degrees, is too short. Four years, with the most assiduous application, are a short time to furnish the mind with the necessary knowledge of the languages and of the several sciences. It might perhaps have been a period sufficiently long for an infant settlement—as America was, at the time when most of our colleges were founded. But as the country becomes populous, wealthy and respectable, it may be worthy of consideration, whether the period of academic life should not be extended to six or seven years.



## L E T T E R III.

[Continued from page 89.]

S I R,

March 18, 1786.

A CERTAIN philosopher of Ancient Greece used frequently to go to an elevated situation of the city on the market days, and call out to the people as they passed—“*If you wish for happiness at home, or safety to the state,—EDUCATE YOUR CHILDREN.*” So say I; but my plan of education is suited to the present state of society, and considerable alterations, it will be allowed, have taken place since the days of Ancient Greece.

There is a book called the *BRIBLE*, and particularly that part cal-

led the *NEW-TESTAMENT*, which I utterly abhor. Pray keep it *carefully* out of your son's hands; for one does not know what passage may strike his mind, and totally ruin the plan of making him a *fine fellow*. As you make little use of it yourself, except in the way of ridicule and witticism, there is no danger of its doing much harm; and the tutor (if you have made a right choice) will only use it to enable him to get a living, without having any conviction of the truths it contains upon his heart. Never

X

Speak

Speak to your son respecting his duty to God, to society, or himself. Let all your precepts and example teach him to please himself, and gratify his passions, without regard to the rights of others.

It is delightful now-a-days to hear my young friends speak of *hell*. They mention it with as much familiarity as if it was their *father's house*; and, **POOR THINGS!** they shall always be welcome to my habitation. If a civil question is asked at them, or if they invite a companion to go to any frolic, and he refuses, they pleasantly retort, *go to hell*; that is no more than to say *go home*, where they will always find a *warm* reception.

Let your son ramble about wherever he pleases, and particularly in the evenings (for I love works of darkness), and make no enquiries where he has been; for, if you do, you won't be much the wiser. He will by this practice acquire a free, bold, and forward manner, much above his years, to the surprize of every serious thinking person. Let him associate with what companions he pleases; and, as you have in your city a very *indulgent* police (or rather no police at all), he will find, at every step, plenty of idle boys and girls, of all ages, in the street ready for any frolic. Your late dinners, card parties, or public amusements, no doubt, will put it out of your power to attend to your son; but you need not think of him—by my plan he will find amusement for himself. If he comes home in the evening, before the card party is broke up, and his father should chide him, let mama observe (*betwixt the deals*) that really she can see no good to be

got by always poring over books. The child's health might suffer by confinement. Young master hearing this once or twice will soon learn as much artifice as to evade ever looking at a book. What signifies Greek and Latin, or knowledge, or morals, to a *fine gentleman*.

When the boy does any thing uncommonly vicious, or deceitful for his years, laugh at the frolic, for it shows *spunk*. Stroke his head upon such occasions, and call him in a kindly tone, a *wicked little rogue*, or a *little Pickle*. He will from this treatment, every day improve, and *Pickle* will soon become a *very wicked dog indeed*. Don't restrict him from keeping company with the servants, or reading improving ballads with the maids; for he should know all characters.

And now comes the time when the most necessary part of modern education should be attended to, and that is **DANCING**. This is the period to form your son either a *pretty gentleman*, by some thick-pated people called a *coxcomb*; or a *fine fellow*, not unfrequently termed a *blackguard*: But it is not unlikely you may succeed in making him a part of both, which is the most *fashionable* of all characters. This branch of education he will probably be fonder of than any other; and therefore give him as much of it as he pleases, altho' all that is made of it now-a-days is to be able to *scamper* through a country dance. Gracefulness, elegance, and taste, are totally out of fashion in dancing. Romping is the *ton*. The frolicking with the misses will please him *vastly*, and the evening practising he will delight in.

Let

Let mama study now to dress him well, by giving him laced linen, the most fashionable large buckles, handsome silk stockings, embroidered waistcoats, and every *ton's* piece of dress in perfection.

The father, if he is (what is called) a sensible man, will probably remonstrate against all this finery, and represent dancing as only a frivolous and secondary accomplishment. But the proper way of reasoning for mothers is, to hold these as antiquated notions. The poor fellow must be clean; and then it looks so *wastly pretty and genteel*, and the misses will be quite in love with him—had not Lord B——'s son such a dress? and Sir R. S——'s son such another? Ten-to-one but the father may say—People of rank's children are the most simply dressed. This, however, must be laughed at, and master will be indulged. When the ball comes about, the *dear boy* must have pocket money, and surely nothing *ripens* a young person more than plenty of pocket money. The same sort of father may perhaps say—What occasion has his son for money?—he gets what is proper for him, and money he may put to improper purposes—All he can want at a ball is perhaps an orange.

But it must be answered, poor thing! it makes him *so happy!* and then master *Such-a-one* had so much money at the last ball, and people must be neighbour like, you know. Not that I would give our son so much gold as—Gold! perhaps the father will interrupt haughtily. Why,

Mrs. Careful, who has the best bred sons at the school, gives them only sixpence, and it is enough. There was but last year a parcel of your *pocket-money* boys had a hot supper and a drink! in a neighbouring tavern, instead of their bread and milk. Others again bought negus (which, by the way, ought always to be *permitted* at dancing school balls, and made strong), and the consequence of all this was, that a number of boys got drunk, disturbed the company, and insulted the girls.—The answer to this remonstrance of the father is plain enough, viz. Your dear boy is better bred, and won't do so; therefore give him the money and make the boy happy.

If the father is a man of an easy temper, or one of the *ton*, who follows his own pleasures, he will let the mother and son do just as they please, and then all parties will be satisfied, which is what I wish.

By following this plan, which is now indeed very much practised, your son will be a MAN at twelve, a boy all the rest of his life. And as you mortals wish to remain young as long as you can, this system cannot fail of being very agreeable. It would be tedious to suit this plan of education to every condition; but discerning parents will be easily able to apply the general principle to particular situations.

In my next I shall introduce my young man a little more into life.

I am, &c.

BELZEBUB.