

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

T H U R S D A Y, APRIL 7, 1803.

Annapolis, March 10, 1803.

At a meeting of the visitors and governors of St. John's College, on the first day of February last, which had been appointed on account of the resignation of the reverend Owen Fitzgerald Magrath, professor of languages, and Mr. Hugh Maguire, his assistant, the board proceeded to elect a professor only; and the reverend William Duke, having a majority of votes, was accordingly declared professor of languages in St. John's college.

It was afterwards resolved, that Mr. Hanson, Mr. Carroll, of Carrollton, and Mr. Ridgely, or any two of the, be authorized, in behalf of this board, to publish an account of the state of the college, and of the advantages it possesses, and may afford.

The said committee, therefore, beg leave to state to their fellow-citizens, not only circumstances of which few can be fully apprized, but also certain things which might be supposed to be generally known.

St. John's college was founded, and has been carried on, under an act of assembly, passed in 1784, by private contributions, by a public annual donation of £. 1,750. and by tuition money. Various untoward circumstances delayed the opening and dedication until November 1789. But in the course of 18 months from that period, the plan of the college, and the regulations in the several schools, were completed, and the professors and teachers employed in the discharge of their offices.

It is notorious, that from that time methods have been essayed to destroy, or suppress a seminary, the institution of which had been considered as reflecting a permanent honour on the state. It notwithstanding soon acquired a reputation scarcely exceeded by that of any other college within the United States; and although reports industriously circulated, have lately impaired its credit, no seminary on the continent has afforded superior advantages to students of every description.

It is incumbent on us to notice these reports.

It has been bruited through the country, that young men and even boys, belonging to the college, have been corrupted, or at least rendered idle and dissipated, by the attentions paid to them by the citizens of Annapolis.

It is indeed to be wished, that students be so far controlled as that they shall not neglect their college duties. But what is it that a wise parent or guardian comprehends in liberal education? Does he not wish something more than languages, and abstract science, to be attained by his child, or ward, whilst at college? Can he be insensible of the vast importance of early acquired manners? Let him then believe all that with probability, can be told of those attentions. He may nevertheless, be persuaded, that the respectable houses which have been reported as the haunts of collegians, confer on them at least the advantage of polishing their manners, and of preventing, in some instances, a more pernicious dissipation of their time.—Besides, it cannot be denied, that valuable connexions may be formed in the polite societies, to which the address or good fortune of some of the students has introduced them, and which prejudice or ignorance alone represent as baneful to the rising youth.

And now, admitting that students have heretofore been allowed to consume too much of their time in certain genteel, amiable circles of society, is it to be imagined, that no remedy will be found for the grievance? The bare report through the country will be sufficient to bring about a correction of the evil.

The truth is, that in Annapolis, where every person is known to every other, and where there are constant men unfriendly to the college, viewing every thing about it through the medium of prejudice, the conduct of a few irregular young men may fix a reproach on the whole body of students, as well as the trustees and the faculty.

Can it be necessary to suggest to our intelligent fellow-citizens, that signal advantage, enjoyed by the students in St. John's college of attending, at times, the debates in the general assembly, and in the several superior courts? It is at Annapolis, that listening to the eloquence of the bar, the senate, and the house of delegates, an ingenious, ardent young man may catch the flame of patriotism, imbibe a laudable ambition, and lay the best foundation for future eminence.

Let us be permitted, then, barely to hint at a comparison between this seminary and a college held in the country, or at an obscure place. What are the superior advantages to be derived from the latter? Is it beyond a doubt, that youthful innocence will be there better preserved? No! but the latter seminary is cheaper. This consideration is indeed important to men of scanty fortune. But, to men of easy circumstances, it surely cannot have weight sufficient to give preponderance to the scale, in which it is triumphantly thrown.—We will not permit a subject, which may be invidious, further

than by giving a plain, correct statement of expences at St. John's college:

Of a youth, boarding in the college buildings, board, including washing, fire and candle, both in the public and bed rooms.	£. 50 0 0
Tuition, fire-wood in the schools, pens and ink,	6 10 0
Total,	£. 56 10 0

To which add £. 3 to each boy in the higher classes, learning French.

At the last meeting of the trustees, it was resolved, that after the next summer vacation, every student entering the college, who has not in Annapolis, a parent or guardian, or a friend who will give him his board, or in whom his parent or guardian reposes a confidence, and who will receive him as an inmate, shall board in the college building. And the cases in which a dispensation is to be allowed, are to be judged of by the principal. Inferior teachers, who are not married men, or house-keepers, are likewise to board there, for the purpose of superintending the students. Mr. Duke, the professor of languages, already boards there. All the rooms are spacious, airy, and convenient; and the family which keeps the house is respectable, and affords such fare and treatment in every respect, as ought to give satisfaction.—Students now boarding in private houses are not to be compelled to board in the college, although they are earnestly invited to make that exchange, which must be salutary to themselves and to the institution.

We presume, that there are few seminaries in town, where the whole expence, exclusive of cloaths, pocket money, and books, does not exceed £. 56 10 0 or £. 51 10 0, and where a student shall not, to the mortification of himself and his fond parents, submit scantily on unpalatable food, and be stinted even with respect to clean linen, &c. It is certain that wherever board is fixed too low, either it must in a short time be raised, or the boarder must submit to hard fare, and other inconvenience.

Reports injurious to St. John's college have originated from an unhappy difference between a teacher and a professor. We content ourselves with remarking this most extraordinary circumstance, that the professor, who is indeed eminent for his knowledge of the learned languages, and who has voluntarily quitted the college, without censure from the trustees, has lately been appointed to an high station in a seminary of rising importance and reputation, in the prosperity of which every enlightened liberal citizen must feel an interest; although he may not wish the downfall of St. John's college.

We proceed to give an account of the professors and teachers, and of the plans of education in St. John's college.

John McDowell, A. M. principal.

The reverend Ralph Higinbotham, vice-principal.

The reverend William Duke, professor of languages.
Mr. John Connell, professor of English and grammar.

Mr. Philip Curran, assistant to said professor.

Mr. Richard Owen, master of writing and arithmetic.

Mr. Marin Detargny, professor of French.

It is the duty of the principal and vice-principal, to teach logic, rhetoric, moral philosophy, the higher branches of the mathematics, and natural philosophy, and to hear lessons in the higher authors in Latin and Greek, so as to preserve the knowledge, which the students have acquired in the school of languages.

It was the object, in appointing the professor of English and grammar and his assistants, to afford the opportunity of obtaining a complete English education (as it is called) to the boys who are not destined for a regular course through the college.—They were to teach English grammatically, writing, the lower branches of the mathematics, viz. arithmetic, surveying, navigation, dialling, &c. and to prepare young learners of Latin for entering the superior school, by teaching the grammar, the vocabulary, and Corderius.

The school of writing and arithmetic has been nearly 13 years carried on, with success, by Mr. Owen. It was created as an appendage to the school of languages, of which each student except the 1st and 2d class, was to attend him, half an hour every day, to learn writing. The said two classes were to attend him, an hour every day, to learn writing and arithmetic. The time of attendance was to be at the discretion of the professor.

On the resignation of Mr. Magrath and Mr. Maguire, and before Mr. Duke's appointment, an arrangement was made by which the place of assistant master in the school of languages was dispensed with; and the two professors, Mr. Duke and Mr. Connell, with Mr. Curran his assistant, and Mr. Owen, under the principal's general superintendance, are to teach every thing, heretofore taught in the three schools, of

languages, of English and grammar, and of writing and arithmetic; each professor still presiding in his own school. In short, it has been thought proper, in some sort, to unite the said three schools; although, for convenience, they occupy three separate chambers. It was thus that the board was enabled to dispense with an appointment in the place of Mr. Maguire, until the number of scholars shall so considerably increase, as to require another teacher. The scholars, learning Latin and Greek, are to be instructed by each professor. Most of the classes indeed have their seats in Mr. Duke's school; but each of them goes once a day to Mr. Connell with its lesson.

The last school is that of French. The professor, a native of France, has been lately appointed in the room of Mr. De L'Allie, who, many months before his decease, had been incapable of his duty, to the signal disadvantage of the college. Mr. Detargny has already a considerable number of scholars. It is his duty to teach such of the students who are under the immediate tuition of the principal and vice-principal, and in the two highest classes in the school for languages, as shall chuse to be taught. They attend him, at stated hours every day, at the direction of the principal. He is also to take a certain number of students, who may enter the college for the purpose of learning French only, paying each at the rate of £. 9 10 0 per annum.

It is in the school of languages that the plan of education has been most fully and carefully delineated. There is not here room to detail the whole system. Suffice it to say, that the greatest attention, during the whole course, is to be paid to grammar, in all its branches, to translation of Latin into English, and of English into Latin, and to compositions in both languages.

The last, but not the least, important thing to be mentioned, is the art of speaking. True it is, that we have no professor of oratory. But arrangements are made for having each student trained to this most desirable, useful art; and we refer to the exhibitions which have taken place to prove, that this art has not been unsuccessfully taught, or rather practised; in St. John's college.

From a conviction that St. John's college, if properly conducted, would afford important benefits to the state, the subscribers, and their associates, accepted a trust, which has occupied no inconsiderable portion of their time and attention. Nobody, in the beginning, could suppose, that all the youths on the western shore of Maryland, whose parents or guardians could bear the expence, might be educated at St. John's college. A discerning patriotic legislature had perceived, that one college at least on each shore of the state was requisite to keep up a succession of able and honest men to discharge the various offices in society. It was also expedient to prevent the sons of wealth from being sent out, and it was of no small consequence to retain money, in the state. They recollected instances in which promising youths had formed attachments abroad, and had been in consequence wholly lost to their native country. In short, the foundation of St. John's college was a measure which denoted the wisdom of a legislature, acting on the extensive scale of public good; and not studious only of the interests of the place in which a college might be fixed, by its trustees, at their first meetings.

The college, erected on the eastern shore, was proposed and advocated on the express principle of the incompetency of the county schools, which had been instituted under the proprietary government; and the funds of several of those schools were consolidated with the funds of Washington college.—Who then could have foreseen, or even imagined, that neither of the colleges would be permitted to attain its maturity, and spread its reputation, before the idea should revive of having a public endowed school in each county; and that to county schools should be sacrificed the colleges.—It is impossible that a man of true public spirit can be opposed to the erection of those schools; provided only that they can be properly conducted. If they cannot, the public treasure is wasted, and individuals may suffer an irreparable injury. But the foundation of those schools, or academies, formed by the union of two or more counties, does not necessarily demand the destruction of either of the colleges; nor could any important public benefit result from the suppression of those sacred institutions. Assuredly it will not be alleged, that Maryland is overstocked with seminaries of learning; and if it really be contemplated to destroy St. John's college for the advantage of one or more of the inferior institutions, the plan is one of the most illiberal, delusive plans, that ever was conceived. Can it be supposed that the advantage of locality will ever be overlooked? And if St. John's college be abandoned, because its advantages are enjoyed chiefly by the citizens of Annapolis, can the proprietors or patrons of any other, more favoured seminary flatter themselves that, in the end, a similar opposition will not