

MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editors of the Star

Dear Sirs, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the subject of the Literary Institution in this State.

THE literary institutions of your State have seriously attracted my attention. Being a foreigner, and listening with perhaps too much credulity to the capricious tale of every traveler, I had formed strong prejudices against your country in general. Having been told that the soil was barren, its inhabitants uncivilized, scarcely civilized, and its towns composed of a few miserable cottages, you may be sure that the picture I had drawn of it was contemptible enough.

My first inquiry was directed towards the University of this State. I expected to find in its organization, at least some faint resemblance of the Colleges of my own country; but let me express my surprise, whilst I inform you, that I could scarcely discover a single trace. Its general plan to be sure is liberal, for so rude a country as this, and might have made, had it been executed, a tolerable place of learning—but that learned and venerable body who constitute the wisdom of this State, by whom it was organized, appear to have shamefully deserted it just in its infancy.

As to the Academies of this State, the majority of them present a melancholy spectacle. They stand like so many crumbling monuments of ignorance and inactivity—or like so many slaughtered pens of Genius. That of Fayetteville, with some others, has some time since met its destiny—that of ***** I fear, has almost sunk to rise no more—and that of ***** I fear, is tottering towards its fall. But, notwithstanding the prejudices I had formed against the Raleigh Academy, from some unknown cause, I must give it a very different character. Even as to its local situation, it has every thing in its favour—fine water, a salubrious climate, and a very moral society.

Let an inquiry into the causes of this degeneracy of learning engage our attention a few moments. It must have some real cause, and cannot arise from that blind chance to which some have ascribed the fluctuating popularity of Schools. In searching for causes, four appear to be very prominent, which are these:—The dissipation of youth, want of energy to govern, inability to instruct, and the insufficiency of pecuniary reward.

Whether it is owing to the heat of climate, the luxuriance of soil, or their indolent occupations, or to all, the youth of N. Carolina are so extremely dissipated, is perhaps in our present purpose, a matter of no great consequence. But so it is, and unless strict restraints were given to their impetuous inclinations, and licentious habits, they would in no long period sap the foundation of the best Literary Institution in the world. The vices of fiery youth, where so many constitute a family, unless crushed in embryo, will immediately swell to a monster that will spread rebellion, discord, and ruin all around where peace and harmony, authority and submission ought to reign; and which no chain formed by the laws of God or man can bind to obedience.

The government of a literary institution is perhaps more difficult than most men apprehend. I have seen many men of learning and parts who could not govern with success. The principle things requisite in the government of a school, are laws calculated to preserve inviolate the morals, to enforce the submission, and to excite the emulation of the pupils; and a proper degree of vigilance, firmness and energy in the governor to execute those laws, and enforce his authority.

Inability to instruct appears to be one principle cause why teaching is so unsuccessful here. I suppose there is scarcely an enlightened American who will deny that there are few men of profound erudition in America. Their learning is mostly very superficial. Few, in this plentiful and idle country, will stoop to so laborious a task, except those who, having laboured under adverse circumstances and many difficulties in acquiring their scanty educations, are willing to find employment any where, and upon almost any terms.

The last, and I was going to say, the principal cause of this degeneracy of learning is, the low and inadequate price of tuition. At its present price no man who has a family can support himself by tuition fees alone—and there is not one young man in a thousand who is properly calculated to conduct a seminary of learning; they all want stability of character to fill that place with dignity and usefulness. Those men also, who have to pursue at the same time some other business to procure them a competent support, are badly calculated (with a few exceptions) to pay due attention to the different branches of a school.

To properly instruct youth, to ingeniously unfold to them the mysteries of nature and philosophy, to strew for them the path of science with flowers and enamour them with its beauties, and at the same time to preserve unswerving their morals, and enforce upon them the benign precepts of virtue and morality, is a most laborious task, as well as the most useful employment. Why then should the Lawyer, the Physician and the Mechanic be more amply rewarded? By their occupations they can live, and even become wealthy. It is unreasonable to suppose that a man should waste the prime of life, at the risk of destroying his constitution, and perhaps spend his fortune too, to qualify himself for filling an office, the revenue of which would not be sufficient to feed and clothe him. It is the common remark of almost every enlightened European, that sufficient pecuniary

encouragement, in this State, as well as almost all the States of America, is not given to men of real talents. I think no judicious man who reflects candidly on this subject, will hesitate in drawing the conclusion, that as long as this is the case your Academies will want men of abilities to conduct them. Hence it is that your countrymen are so often imposed upon by those superficial jacks, who are more in love with money than with learning and virtue, and are willing to find employment on any terms.

Citizens of North-Carolina! upon the education of your youth hangs the welfare, the prosperity, and glory of your country! To your schools you must look for those who must occupy the different departments of church and state, which the demands of Nature will in a little time compel you to surrender! Your country is extensive and fertile; your air is pure and vivifying, and your waters are salubrious. Why, genius in all her majesty may not spring up in such a soil, I know not. And why you may not in some period not far distant, boast a Washington, a Patrick Henry, a Rush, and a Dwight, will be perhaps owing to your blind aversion, your indolence, and your inactivity. I hope you will not entail upon posterity the necessity of atoning for your crimes, and give them reason to reproach you for your abuse of so many glorious privileges.

PHILOPAIDIA.



AGRICULTURE.

"The first of Arts, source of Domestic ease, Pride of the Land and patron of the Seas."

Gypsum, better known by the Name "Plaster of Paris"—Signs by which to Judge of its purity—By a Member of the Keenbeck Agricultural Society.

Extracted from a paper published by the Massachusetts Agricultural Society. Trouen Plaster of Paris has long been used in the arts, yet within forty years only is it understood to have been applied to agricultural uses. Mr. Meyer, a clergyman of the canton of Berne, in Switzerland, is the first who made it known as a manure, to the lovers of agriculture. The intelligence soon communicated itself to the middle states of the American union, probably by the means of their German settlers. From these two centres the practice is gradually extending itself; but less gradually perhaps in Europe than in the United States.

The plaster employed in America, is sometimes shipped from Havre de Grace, in France; but it is more constantly brought from Nova Scotia. It is doubtful which of these is the best, when applied as a manure in the American climate.

The plaster or gypsum imported into the United States, when proper for agricultural purposes, has the following signs: Before it is pounded it exhibits many shining specks, some what resembling those seen in loaf sugar; its particles are often arranged in figures more or less regular; it has no constant color, though parts of it are frequently of a dirty pale yellow brown, a pale pink, or a pale blue color; its weight seldom very much exceeds double the weight of water, when the specimen is pure; and the nail of the finger commonly makes an impression upon its surface: when it is ground for a short time between the teeth, it ceases to be gritty. If the powder be placed in an iron pot over the fire, it will briskly bubble (or seem to boil) without the aid of moisture, commonly sending out a smell like that of brimstone; and while bubbling will admit of a straw being thrust to the bottom of the pot. Powdered plaster may be dissolved in about 500 times its weight of spring water, at the common temperatures of the rooms in which we live; but when the water is heated considerably, more may be dissolved, though the chief of the extra quantity will be deposited when the water becomes cool again. If the plaster be moist, it seems to rust iron more readily than mere moisture alone; for nearly one half of the weight of plaster (in the common temperature of the air) consists of vitriolic or sulphuric acid. This quantity of incorporated acid, probably prevents the effervescence of plaster with fresh quantities of acid, when the plaster is pure.

For common farming purposes, it may be sufficient to know, that dry powdered plaster, when well heated over the fire, will bubble briskly, and in general will yield a smell like that of brimstone. The trial by the teeth and by the nail may also be attended to.

N. B. Any who have been in the use of the plaster, would oblige us, and undoubtedly gratify the public, by a communication of their success, the kind of soil, the manner and the purpose for which it was applied.

* Gypsum, in general, if supposed divided into ten parts, contains five of acid and three or four of calcareous matter, the rest being water.

Method of preserving Cabbages so as to have them good till late in the Spring.

Make a trench in the driest sandy ground, nine inches wide and of equal depth; in which place a row of Cabbages, with the roots upwards, contiguous to each other. Fill the cavities about them with some dry straw, and then shovel the earth up to the stalks on each side, almost as high as the roots, shaping it like the roof of a house. The Cabbages will

come out in May as sound as when put in, and the outer green leaves will keep well afterwards they are taken out, they may at a time may be taken out as they are wanted for use, and the bunch immediately covered up with straw and earth as before.

Extract of an Opinion delivered by Dr. J. C. Smith, in the Agricultural Society of New York, on the subject of Agricultural Improvement.

SYSTEMATIC AGRICULTURE. Hitherto the American husbandman has cultivated a soil, enriched for ages by the daily addition of a fresh stratum of mould. From the first existence of vegetation upon the dry land, decayed plants have continually furnished a supply of manure, which the winds and the rains have liberally spread around. As the supply was annually greater than the consumption, the earth, unexhausted by its productions, increased in fertility. The thick layer of vegetable mould which covered the face of the earth was a store-house of food for plants, and their quantity was greatly increased by the conversion of wood into ashes by clearing. It is not wonderful then, that for some years newly cleared settlements should abound in produce, and require little more labour than that of ploughing and reaping; for during this period the provision is wanting, which for centuries had been accumulating. But the time will come, and indeed in many places now is, when the land repeatedly wounded by the plough-share, and exhausted of its richness, shall be too weak, of itself, to make plants grow with their former luxuriance. This may be called the *crisis of systematic agriculture*, when men taking the earth from nature's hand, bare of manure, is to manage and dispose it artificially, that it shall yield him first a subsistence, and then an overplus to grow wealthy upon. How far we may go in this species of improvement is yet unknown, as the *ultra-terminum of fertility* has never been reached. As far as experiments have been made, we find the earth liberally affording its produce, in proportion to the labour and skill bestowed in its tillage; and as the ingenuity and invention of man may increase to an unknown and inconsiderable degree, so may the improvements and arrangements of husbandry keep pace therewith, until the most fruitful spot that now exists, may produce a tenfold quantity, and the land which now supports an hundred men, give equal enjoyment to a thousand.

For Sale.

A HOUSE AND LOT IN THE CITY OF RALEIGH Situate on Harget Street, nearly opposite Mrs. Mitchell's Tavern.

THE House is nearly new, well built, two stories high, with a shop and kitchen attached. The stand and business is excellent. A long credit will be given for the greater part of the purchase money if required. Enquire on the premises, or WILLIS HOLMES, Nov. 10, 1838.

SCHEME OF A LOTTERY For 1000 Dollars worth of

JEWELLERY, GOLD & SILVER WATCHES, SILVER SPOONS, LADLES, &c.

- 1st Prize, last drawn blank, entitled to a Gold Watch, Chain and Key, worth \$100
2d do. first drawn blank, after 500 numbers are drawn, entitled to a Silver Watch, Gold Chain and Key, 75
1 do. a Gold Watch, Chain and Key, 50
1 do. a dozen best Silver Table Spoons, 25
1 do. a dozen ditto, 20
1 do. a dozen best Silver Tea Spoons, Ladle and Sugar Tongs, 25
1 do. do. do. do. do. 25
2 do. Silver Watches, each \$25, 50
3 do. \$15 each, to be taken in any article, 45
10 do. at \$10 each, 100
22 do. at \$5 each, 110
30 do. at \$4 each, 120
67 do. at \$3 each, 201

122 Prizes make 1000 Tickets, at 1 dollar each, make \$1000. The drawing of this Lottery will commence in the State House, the first Friday in December next. Those gentlemen who have undertaken to sell tickets, will please to return any which may remain unsold, by the 25th of November.

J. SCOTT Respectfully informs his friends in general, that he has settled himself in Raleigh, and hopes to meet that share of patronage he deserves. He has made in addition to his former assortment of Jewellery, fast Bonnets, Bar & Finger Rings, Gold Watch Keys, Chains and Beads, Sleeve Buttons, Breast Pins of every description, Lockets and Miniature Cases, Jet Necklaces, Ornamented Combs, Bracelets, &c. of North Carolina Gold; Table, Dessert and Tea Spoons, Soup, Punch, and Sauce Ladles, Sugar Tongs, Salt Shovel, Ladies Chains, &c. made of the best Silver. Orders from the country will be strictly attended to. State Gold, Spanish Cob Pieces, plated Half Jewels, or old Silver received in payment. November 1, 1838.

Boarding.

THE subscriber informs the General Assembly and the public, that he has rented the house lately occupied by Mr. William Anderson, opposite Casso's Tavern, for their accommodation. Those who favor him with their his exertions to render their situation comfortable. Raleigh, November 1, 1838.

H. GUYRE

TAKES this method of informing the General Assembly and the public at large, that he has furnished himself with the best materials for BOOTS, and which will be furnished with either short or long notice by applying to his north of Mr. Parikh's Tavern. He has on hand an assortment of boots for sale at his usual prices. To his friends and former customers, he wishes to express his warm thanks, and hopes a continuance of their patronage. Raleigh, Nov. 1, 1838.