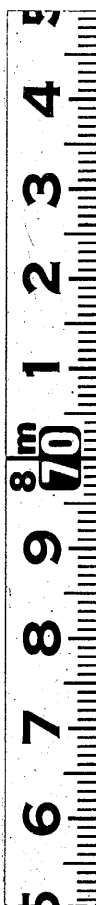


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THE  
D E F E C T S  
OF AN  
UNIVERSITY EDUCATION,

AND ITS  
Unfuitableness to a Commercial People :

WITH  
The Expediency and Necessity of Erecting at  
*Glasgow*, an ACADEMY, for the Instruction  
of YOUTH.

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In a LETTER to J. M. Esq;  
From a SOCIETY interested in the Success of this  
Public-spirited Proposal.

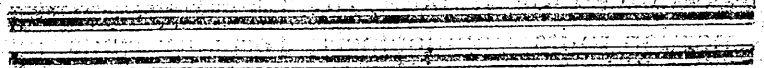
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L O N D O N :

Printed for *E. Dilly*, at the *Rose-and-Crown*, in the *Poultry* ;  
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at *Glasgow*. M.DCC.LXII.

[ Price One Shilling. ]

( I )



THE  
D E F E C T S  
OF AN  
UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

S I R,

**L**AST Time we were in Company with you, you was pleased to exprefs much Surprise, " That fo few Inhabitants of " this City fend their Sons to the Uni- " verfity!" And a Friend of yours added, " That fuch of us as had got a complete " Courfe of Univerfity-Education, had gene- " rally little more Knowledge or Taffe than " thofe who never had that Advantage."

We are fenfible that neither of you is fingular in your Opinion: Many have expreffed the fame Surprise, with lefs good Humour than you did; they have attempted to ridicule us, and feem to imagine, that our Capacities are flower, and our Understandings duller, than thofe of other Men commonly are.

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We readily acknowledge, that there is a good deal of Truth in both the Remarks. In proportion to its Populoufness, this City fends few Scholars to the Univerfity; and many who have been there are hardly to be distinguished from their Fellow-Citizens, who were never at a College.

And yet we hope it is not difficult to make an Apology for ourfelves, in both thefe Párticulars. We will tell you what we apprehend are the Reafons that moft of us who have had an Univerfity-Education are fo little improved by it; when this is done, we imagine your Wonder will ceafe, that fo few among us chufe to fend their Sons to a Place where themfelves reaped fo little Benefit; and we beg Leave to acquaint you with a Propofal that is talked of among our Fellow-Citizens, which, if it is gone into, and properly executed, will put an end to your Surprife, and will, we hope, in a fhort time, remove the ill-grounded Reproach, “ That our Citizens are dull,” as it will be an effectual and lafting Method to improve our Youth.

Candid People will prefume or allow, that it is very unlikely the Blame of our Want of Knowledge fhould lie all on one Side; we think, that from our general Conduct and Tranfactions with the World, we have given little or no Ground to have it fufpected, that the Size of our Underftanding is inferior to that of other Men: If we have little Tafté, or Learning, the Fault may

( 3 )

may be in fome degree in our Teachers; the Things taught may be too abftrufe to be understood, or fuch as muft foon be forgot, being unfuitable to us, and having no Relation to the Circumftances and Manner of Life we are afterwards to be in.

That a great Part of the Courfe of Philofophy taught at our Univerfity is of this Nature, is but too obvious: It is evident, that the Univerfities of *Scotland* in general, and particularly this of *Glasgow*, have been founded and defigned purely or chiefly for the fake of that Theology which was in vogue two or three hundred years ago, fome of the Claffes bear evident Marks of this original Defign, being either totally or in part calculated for the Difputes and Wranglings of Divines, and of little Ufe to the Lawyer or Phyfician, and ftill lefs to the Merchant or Gentleman.

Of this fort we reckon Logic and Metaphysics, which confumed one whole Seflion at the Univerfity, and Part of another. Thefe Arts or Sciences (for it is not yet agreed which of them they are) are to the greateft Part of Students quite unintelligible; and if they could be understood, we cannot for our Life discover their Ufe.

Nature has made all the chief Pleafures of Life eafy to be got; ſhe has alfo made all that Knowledge, which is generally ufeful, eafy to be attained: Did Men obferve this, they would foon discover what is the Knowledge they ought

( 4 )

to acquire and teach : But it has unluckily happened that many, who ought to have been wiser, have ever neglected that Knowledge which is obvious and useful, and have puzzled their Brains to get what is difficult, metaphysical, and useless : From the Difficulty they have found in acquiring it, they have concluded it must be important, and have taken much Pleasure in conveying it to others : But, if these learned Gentlemen would but attend a little, they would soon see the Unprofitableness of what they are accustomed so much to magnify. What ordinary Company, what Company of Gentlemen is it, where metaphysical Disputes or the Logic of the Schools are ever so much as mentioned ? Will a Gentleman, by the deepest Skill in them, make the better Figure in the House of Commons, or appear with the more Dignity at the Bar ? Will his Eloquence in the Pulpit be the more persuasive, or will he be the better skilled in the Animal Oeconomy ? Will Metaphysics inspire him with Devotion, give him a higher Relish of Virtue, or enable him to act with greater Propriety in Life ? Or will the Knowledge of them be of any advantage to the Farmer, the Architect, or the Merchant ? We apprehend that none of these Questions can be answered in the Affirmative. And must Acquirements that are so confessedly of no use in Life, that are never so much as talked of in good Company, waste a Year or two of a young Man's Time ? Is Life so long ? Is Time of so

( 5 )

little Value, that there are not enow of useful Studies to fill it up with ? Must Recourse be had to Things, which any well-bred Man would be ashamed to have it suspected, that he had ever employed his Thoughts about ?

We are very sorry to say, that if the Time some of us attended the University, and spent so absurdly in hearing crabbed Questions and metaphysical Jargon, had been employed in teaching us ancient and modern History, and especially that of our own Country, we should have been much more obliged to the learned Professors ; we should have been much better accomplished, and have appeared to be so in the Judgment of those with whom we converse.

But Logic and Metaphysics, though they appear to us to be the most absurd, and consumed the greatest Part of our Time to no Purpose ; yet they were not the only Things that wasted it at the University : The Disquisitions we heard about the Origin of moral Virtue, are little better remembered by us, and seem to be of little more Use.

We are not ignorant, that the Lectures on moral Philosophy have for many Years past been delivered in this University by very able Masters, and in a very ingenious Manner ; and we are informed, that this was never more the Case than it is at present : But we apprehend these ingenious Gentlemen have rather indulged their Bias to some singular Opinions of their own, than communicated much Knowledge to

( 6 )

even the most intelligent of their Scholars. We suppose also, that as their Disputes are so abstruse, and their Theories about the Foundation of Morality so different, neither can be of much Necessity or Use.

One contends, that Morality is founded in the Will of God; another, in Conformity <sup>to</sup> and Truth; a third, in the Fitness and Unfitness, or in the eternal and unalterable Relations or Differences of Things; a fourth, in a moral Sense or Discernment, supposed to be natural to the human Mind; another establishes his System on Sympathy. But, whatever Scheme the Professor of Morality contrives or embraces, he uses a long Train of thin metaphysical Reasoning to establish it, and spends a great Part of the Year in laying down Arguments for, and answering Objections against, his System. Arguments very pleasing, and perhaps intelligible to himself, as they are familiar to him, and he believes they will please and improve his Pupils; but they are too subtle to be understood by them, and leave little or no Impression upon any of their Minds. Here, we imagine, there is much Time lost, and Pains misplaced. Might not these nice Disquisitions about the Foundation of Morality be left out, or slightly skimmed over, and the Students be just as knowing, and as wise? How few of them are able to apprehend such Arguments, or to pursue such Reasoning? Might not the Time be better spent in teaching them Morality, in explaining the Nature of the particular

( 7 )

particular Virtues? Would not this be more adapted to the Capacity of the Scholars, and incomparably more useful to them through the Whole of Life? And might not the Professors easily pursue this simple and useful Method of Teaching? Ought they not to descend to it, instead of torturing their Invention to establish what it is little matter whether it be established or not. There are Objects, the Nature of which may be easily understood, when their Origin is in vain searched after. We should like better that Geographer, who describes exactly the Course and Soundings of *St. Laurence* or *Senegal* Rivers, than another who tediously and minutely disputes about the precise Spot where each of these Rivers takes its Rise. And we should not expect that a Merchant would thrive, who, when he came to a River's Mouth, delayed to load his Ship with the Commodities which had been brought down the River, or were produced upon its Banks, till he had first traced the River upwards, and made himself sure of the Place where it began. Whatever be the Foundation of Morality, the Nature of the particular Virtues may be described; the Youth are capable of understanding them, though perhaps not able to enter into abstruse Investigations about the Origin of moral Virtue. To know what Virtue is, is useful to Men in every Station of Life; but who is the better for having heard or understood a great many subtle Disputes about its Origin. For our Parts, we should not grudge, though the learned Professor

( 8 )

Professor kept these entirely to himself, or he might for his particular Comfort and Satisfaction communicate his knotty Ideas to that one of his Scholars, who has most Connexion with leading Men, and has the best Chance to be recommended to succeed him; and who will either espouse or think himself obliged to be at an immense Labour to destroy the moral Theory of his Predecessor.

These different Theories may be amusing to contemplative Minds; and, for aught we know, there may be some Truth in each of them, and at bottom they may be less inconsistent with one another than they appear to be; but whether they be or be not inconsistent; whether any of them or none of them is true, we will be bold to say, that no one of them, after so much Time and Pains spent upon it, ever enabled that Scholar who understood it best to restrain a single Passion, or to perform one virtuous Action. And we shall surely be thought to have kept within Bounds, while we pronounce no more concerning the above-mentioned dry Parts of Science, than one who is esteemed a good Judge has done, with respect to a long and compleat Course of University-Education\*. "It would be hard to say what one Duty of Society, or what one Office as a Citizen, a Student is qualified to discharge or sustain, after his close Application of so many Years?"

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\* Sheridan, on British Education.

( 9 )

Some of us were the Scholars of an illustrious Teacher of Morality, himself a perfect and ready Master of Greek and Latin. He introduced, or revived, a high Taste for Classical Learning in this Place; and, while he lived, he kept it alive. If ever a Professor had the Art of communicating Knowledge, and of raising an Esteem and Desire of it in the Minds of his Scholars; if ever one had the magical Power to inspire the noblest Sentiments, and to warm the Hearts of Youth with the Admiration and Love of Virtue; if ever one had the Art to create an Esteem of Liberty, and an Abhorrence and Contempt of Tyranny and Tyrants, He was the Man. What pity was it, that for three or four Months a Year such superior Talents should have been thrown away on metaphysical and fruitless Disputations! When these were got over, how delightful and edifying was it to hear him! If we did not make some Improvement during the few remaining Months of the Session, the Fault, we acknowledge, was in ourselves; and perhaps our Docility was lessened, and our Minds stupified, as we had the Year before been accustomed to hear Lectures, which neither deserved nor caught our Attention. For the moral Disputes, as that Gentleman managed them (tho', as we have hinted, something really useful ought to have been taught instead of them) were not reckoned so insipid as the Logical and Metaphysical. We can yet remember, that had the Regulations of the College permitted that Students might have gone directly from

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the Languages to Ethics, many in this City, who looked upon Logic and Metaphysics as futile and unintelligible, would have sent their Children to him. In that case, they would have had an Advantage that was much desired; their Children would have both heard the Lectures at one hour, and have been examined upon them at another; whereas, by the Rules, except they had been first at the Logic Class, they could but hear the Lectures.

But besides the Intricacy of the Things taught, there was another Cause why most of us imbibed but little Knowledge at the University: Our Professors loved Rank, and kept themselves at a greater Distance from their Scholars, than common School-masters do. This hindered them from knowing our Genius, or particular Turn, and directing us to a proper Course of Reading. When we left the University, we were totally unacquainted with History: We had formed no Plan of moral or of natural Knowledge: Had our Teachers been at a little Pains with us, they might easily have discerned the Bent of our Genius, and what natural Capacity each of us had; from our Circumstances, they might have formed probable Conjectures what Business in Life we were designed for; and they might have directed us to the Books proper to be read: We are of opinion, that the Usefulness of public Teachers lies in this, as much as in delivering their Lectures, and perhaps more. By some Pains taken in this manner, Scholars might in a few Years attain

attain more real and distinct Knowledge, than without such Direction they are ever like to attain in their Lives. We say this, as we have often done, from deep-felt Experience. We were, when young, greedy of Knowledge, and continually reading something or other; but nobody was so kind to advise us and set us on a right Track. We hope we are not vain in imagining, that if our Diligence in pursuit of Knowledge had been well directed, when our Memories were strong, our Thirst after Knowledge great, and our Minds free from Cares, we might have made some sort of Progress in Literature; but this was not done, which we deeply regret, and must regret while we have Breath.

Our Teachers however professed to be great Admirers of the Ancients; but they were too proud or too lazy to imitate them. Did They satisfy themselves with delivering a dry Discourse on Philosophy, containing Ideas to which their Pupils were Strangers? Did They reckon the Business of the Day over, when the Hour was run? Did They expect to convey new and cramp Notions in such a hurry, into the young Mind? Was this all that was done by *Zeno* in the *Stoa*, by *Plato* in the *Academy*, or by *Epicurus* in his *Gardens*? No, they did much more, they threw aside all distant and magisterial Airs; they put themselves on a Level with their Scholars, they walked and conversed familiarly with them, they led their Minds in an easy and gradual manner to the Perception of Truth; and by conversing



and repeating over and over the same Point, made them thoroughly to understand it, and fixed it in their Memories.

If the learned Gentlemen we speak of had but considered how little they were able to recollect of a set Discourse, or of the best Sermon they ever heard, we are persuaded their Method of Teaching would have appeared imperfect even to themselves.

We mention but another Cause of our having made so little Progress; and it is this: We were set on too many different Branches of Knowledge at the same time; there was an odd Sort of Emulation industriously excited among us; it was esteemed honourable to attend many Classes; it was thought shameful, and a Mark of Poverty, to be at few: Most of the Students in the three upper Classes were one Hour at Latin, one at Greek, one at Mathematics, and one or two at Philosophy, all in the same Day; and this Method was continued through the whole Session: By which means our Attention was so divided, and our Minds so distracted with a Jumble of different Things, that not one of them took hold of us; and it was next to impossible, that even those of us who wished and endeavoured to learn, could succeed. This produced a lasting bad Effect: An Inclination to ramble in pursuit of Knowledge stuck fast with us after we left the University. We had been taught to be fond of a Fault, into which from Laziness or Vanity we might naturally have fallen. We could not endure

due Constancy and Affiduity, we soon became weary of any one thing; and, as we had been long obliged and accustomed to do so, we skipped hastily from one sort of Reading to another; an Error which we have not yet been able thoroughly to correct. It is however, manifest, that one Thing at a time ought principally to have been inculcated; but we, who ourselves contrive Schemes of Profit, can easily see for whose Benefit the Multiplicity of private Classes was first set on foot, and continues still to be pursued.

The Things we have slightly noticed will in some sort account for the small Morsel of Knowledge most of us brought from the Seat of Learning; and if we, in the City, have little Erudition, our College-Companions in the Country have not more: We must, and we will affirm, that it is very rare to find a Country Gentleman bred at the same University, who is in Taste and in Extent of Knowledge any degree above ourselves, tho' they have had much more Leisure to pursue Knowledge, than suited with our active and busy way of Life: A Presumption, both that the Things taught were improper, and that the Method of Teaching them laboured under some essential Defect. Nay, we must be forgiven to say it, the learned Professors seem to be convinced of all this, and to be of the same Opinion with ourselves. They had lately two Vacancies in the University in their own Disposal: They looked round the Country, and considered the Abilities of all the Clergy-

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( 14 )

men and Students who had been educated by themselves; and among such a great Number they could find none, that, even in their own Opinion, were qualified to fill them. They made choice of a Clergyman at a great distance, and of a Student, who both of them had got their Education at other Universities: By which Step they reflected all the Honour they could on these two worthy Men; but at the same time made an open and candid Acknowledgment of the Wretchedness of their Plan, and of their own Debility and ill Success, at begetting Knowledge in the Minds of their Scholars; like frigid or impotent People, who are forced to adopt Strangers into their Family, being incapable to beget any Children of their own.

The Faults in Education we have mentioned have had bad Effects on all sorts of People, who resort or have resorted to the University, the Clergy themselves not excepted; and we own, they have had very bad Effects upon ourselves. The Things taught are abstruse and dark; and it is little to be wondered at, if we brought no Knowledge of them away with us: If any of us brought away some knowledge of them, it is as little to be wondered if we soon lost it: It was of such a Nature as to be easily forgot; it was so remote from common Use, that it could not be remembered.

Tho' we have been at some Pains to acquire a little Knowledge from Books and Company, we are sensible that in writing this Letter we give

( 15 )

but too manifest Proofs of the Defectiveness of our Education. But still, we believe this was no ways owing to our Want of natural Capacity. Our City can boast that it has produced as compleat Burgeesses, and Gentlemen of as refined and enlarged Understandings, as any in the Island; that is, when they were educated or improved at other Places.

What we have said, is not with a View to depreciate an University Education, but to apologise for ourselves, and to remove, Sir, your Surprise at our little Knowledge, and that so few of us send our Sons to the University: And by this time, we hope, our Apology will appear to be pretty compleat; an Apology which we have been forced to make. When we saw the Laugh raised against our Town in almost every Company of Strangers, and heard ourselves so often and so groundlessly reproached for want of Taste, we judged it was but a piece of Justice to ourselves and our Fellow-Citizens, to open our Minds to a Gentleman of your Discernment and Candour; and when the Causes of what we are blamed for are laid open, though not near so fully as we could easily have done, equitable Judges will cease to rally us. But if we shall be afterwards reproached upon the same Score, we will beg leave in our turn openly to express our Surprise, that it should ever be expected by any Man of sober Sense, that we should send our Sons to waste a Year or two of their Lives in learning Things so useless, absurd, and ridiculous, as  
Technical

Technical Logic and Metaphysical Speculations are confessed to be. We attended to them with Reluctance and Disgust; we have now hardly any Traces of them in our Minds; and can we think that our Children will be more pleased with them, or remember them better?

The sensible Part of Mankind will, we hope, agree with us, That Education ought to be calculated for the Times we live in; that the Aim of it should be to make the Youth good Men, and useful Subjects; to prepare them to acquit themselves well in the particular Business they are to live by, and to make a manly and decent Figure in the Companies they may be in. We think it manifest, that the musty and intricate Parts of Science we have mentioned, are no ways subservient to any of these Ends.

We are generally a Commercial People; except in Matters of Commerce, our Ideas are pretty much circumscribed. The Thoughts of great Numbers among us move in no very wide Circle, and never towards Metaphysics. We figure not to ourselves any very wide or noble Plan of Education, which might dignify high Life, but would be merely imaginary and unattainable in our Circumstances: To these our Education must be suitable. The Things taught us ought to be such as immediately fit us for Business; or are some way relative to our Employment, or analogous to that Range of Thought to which our Business may be supposed naturally to lead us; or which may adorn Conversation,

tion, and free us from the Imputation of Ignorance.

What these Branches of Knowledge are, it is not difficult to see; practical Mathematics, History in general, the History of our own Country, and of those in the Neighbourhood or with which we carry on Commerce, natural History, Geography, the History of Commerce, and practical Morality. Were there any Doubt about the Parts of Science that are properest to be taught us, it might be removed, by observing, that those of us who are studious naturally apply to some of the Branches we have just mentioned. Many in this City, without any Advantages in their Youth, have by their own good Sense, and the dint of Application, made a very considerable Progress in the Knowledge of History, Belles Lettres, and Mathematics; but we know none who ever turned their Heads to ideal Entities, or to quibbling Syllogisms. And if we had an Opportunity of such a Course of Education, our City would soon shew to the World, that the Desire and Taste of useful and attainable Knowledge are as general among us as in any other City whatsoever, that is but equally populous.

Some eight or ten Years ago, the Principal and Professors of the *Marischal College at Aberdeen*, "in order to render the Study of the Sciences more natural and progressive, did unanimously agree to depart from the old Plan, and from that time forth to observe a very different Order.

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They continued, indeed, to teach the Classical Learning as formerly, but instead of Logic and Metaphysics, they appointed that Year to be spent in teaching History, Geography, Chronology, an Introduction to natural History; and that all the Students of that Class should attend the Lessons of the Professor of Mathematics: That the next Year be employed in natural Philosophy, and the Laws of Matter and Motion; in Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Pneumatics, Optics, and Astronomy; and that the last Year of the Course be allowed to the Study of the abstract Sciences, Pneumatology, Morals, Logic, or the Art of Reasoning." A considerable Improvement in the Method of Teaching, and which does honour to the Gentlemen who appointed it.

We were very much encouraged when first we heard that the *Marisbal College* had so far thrown back useless Things, and accommodated their Course to modern Times. There appeared to be so much good Sense in what they had done, the Alterations they had made were so visibly advantageous and necessary, that we made no doubt but our University would immediately follow so edifying an Example, and would make further Improvements upon it: But after we had waited for some time, we were entirely damped, when upon Enquiry we were informed, that the Professors were not to depart a Hair-breadth from their Plan and Practice. They are, it seems, tied down either by Custom,

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or by Inclination, or by Rules, to observe a Course of Teaching, a great Part of which is at this time of Day useless and absurd, and more especially so with respect to us.

We do assure you, Sir, that when we saw that no Relief was to be expected from the University, we were in distress for our Children, and felt, perhaps too strongly, some Emotions of Indignation against the learned Professors, whom we looked upon as stubbornly tenacious of their own antiquated Plan. We had frequent Conversations with one another, expressing our Grief that this was the Case; and some of us were then pretty much inclined to provide a proper Remedy, and to remove, at our own Expence, the Inconveniency to which our Youth were exposed. But, through a Multiplicity of Business, and Want of sufficient Harmony among ourselves, we allowed our good Purposes to cool; and, with respect to so important a Design, suffered ourselves to relapse into a lethargic Inactivity, for which we frankly own we do not know what Excuse to make.

What we wished for and intended was, to have in this City a School or Academy for instructing our Youth in that Knowledge which is proper to give them an early Liking to Religion and Virtue; that which will fit them for Business, and enable them to discharge the Duties of Life with Honour, and appear to Advantage in the World.

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We were roused from our Lethargy, when we saw the Royal Burgh of *Perth* before-hand with us, in establishing such an Academy as we wished for. Sensible of the like Disadvantages we complain of, they have set us a Pattern highly worthy of our Imitation. The Magistrates of that Town, assisted by a worthy Clergyman in the Place, have, like Gentlemen of Taste, and Men of the World at the same time, generously provided for the Education of Youth: An Exertion of public Spirit, for which Children and Parents will esteem and honour them at present, and which in time to come will be remembered as a Monument of their good Sense and provident Care of Posterity!

Their Aim is "to train up young People for Business and active Life; or to give such a practical and compendious Course of Education, as may in some measure qualify the Gentleman, the Merchant, or even the Mechanic, to act with greater Advantage in their respective Stations: For this purpose the Town-Council have fixed upon two Masters, with each a Salary of 50*l.* besides a Gratuity of two Guineas to be paid at the Entry of each Student to each Master for the Session; which is to begin every Year on the First of *October*, and to continue 'till the End of *May*."

One of the Masters is to deliver, 1. A short History of Philosophy, and the Rise and Progress of Arts and Sciences. 2. A Course of natural History,

History, in which he gives an Idea of Botany and the Animal Economy. 3. A compendious View of Poetry, Rhetoric, Logic, and Moral Philosophy; and 4. A Course of Chronology and civil History, Antient and Modern, especially the History of *Britain*, with regard to its Constitution, political Interest, and Commerce.

The other Master is to teach, 1. Arithmetic. 2. Book-keeping. 3. A Course of Mathematics; and 4. A Course of natural Philosophy, illustrated by Experiments. Each of the Masters is to finish his whole Course in two Sessions, if possible; otherwise what remains is to be gone through, at proper Times, in a subsequent Session, without any further Charge to the Student. A Writing-Master is to attend the Academy every Day; and a Teacher is to read the superior Greek and Latin Classics one Hour every Morning, with such of the Students as would make further Progress in the Languages: Both these Masters to be paid by the Students.

The Instruments for the Experimental Part, they are to purchase by Contribution, and have already about 200 Guineas subscribed for that Purpose. Their first Session begins in *October*." This is their Plan. It is, no doubt, well contrived for that Place. It has nothing in it that can be called useless or superfluous. Every thing to be taught has a Tendency to the End proposed; but it may be proper to vary a little from it, and to make some Additions in an Academy here.

Writing,

Writing, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, and also some Parts of Mathematics are here taught in private Schools; History, Chronology, and most of the other Parts mentioned in the *Perth* Scheme, are hardly even attempted; the Things taught are necessary to accomplish a Merchant's Clerk; the Things hitherto neglected, would form the Merchant for extensive Business and for manly Conversation; and it is unquestionably, by teaching the historical and philosophical Things, that a School either obtains or deserves the name of an Academy.

Writing, Arithmetic, and Book-keeping may be left to be taught as before; and then two Masters will, with the greater Success, manage the remaining Parts.

The Province of the one will be, 1. Mathematics, 2. Geography, 3. Natural History; and 4. Natural Philosophy, illustrated by Experiments.

The Province of the other will be nearly as in the Plan of *Perth*; 1. History of Philosophy, and the Rise and Progress of Arts and Sciences, 2. A compendious View of Poetry, Rhetoric, and moral Philosophy, 3. A Course of Chronology and Civil History, Antient and Modern, especially the History of *Britain*.

The Business of the one Master will be, besides Mathematics, to teach the most entertaining and useful Parts of natural Philosophy, that of the other will be chiefly History.

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We are persuaded that every impartial Person will see at once the great and remarkable Utility of such a Course of Education, and the Propriety of erecting such an Academy in this Place as soon as it can be conveniently done.

The Town of *Perth*, however considerable in itself, is small in comparison of this populous, wealthy, and thriving City; the same Encouragement that is given by them, would be a very light Burden upon us, whether it were given out of the Revenues of the City, or contributed by a Number of the most opulent Citizens: But as a far greater Number of Students would attend the Academy here, less Salary to the Teachers might serve the purpose; nay, there is great Reason to believe, that if the Magistrates and principal Inhabitants will, as we hope, countenance the Project, in a very few Years little or no Salary at all may be necessary.

This Plan will interfere but little with that of the University. The Aims are quite different and distinct; what is designed by the Academy is, to train up young People for Business and active Life; the Aim of the University is, to make Scholars of them: And, no doubt, a great Adept in scholastical Learning is still to be made by some Skill in the learned Languages, and by a long and laborious Course of Study. This we easily discern; the Clergy are ordinarily the People who study longest, and enquire deepest into Science; they do it, or begin to do it, at the University;

and when Vacancies happen in Universities, generally speaking, they can only be supplied from the Clergy, or by such as have been educated to be Clergymen. But the Education we propose is compendious, and of general Use; our School will not keep any Student from the University, who is intent on making a great Figure, by deep and metaphysical Researches: And we are sure the Professors are more disinterested than to wish any Scholar should consume Four or Five Years at their Colleges without being better accomplished for Conversation, or more prepared for the Employment by which he proposes to live.

We allow the Excellence of professed Scholars, and shall leave it to Colleges to fill their Heads with Materials for Argumentation: We propose no such thing; and therefore we persuade ourselves, that the Masters, who love every Branch of Knowledge, will encourage our Plan, and give us their best Advice: And we submit it to themselves, if it would not be worthy the Generosity of such Patrons of Science to apply some Portion of their large Revenues to begin and carry on so useful and necessary a Project.

But, though contrary to our Intention, our Plan should seem to interfere a little with that of the University, or threaten to keep some Scholars from them, this ought not to discourage us, nor to put the Professors into any ill Humour: Sensible that they need such  
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a Motive to rouse them to more Activity, they should for their own Honour and Usefulness wish us Success: Both they and the Teachers of the Academy will the more exert themselves, when they know that their Honour and their Interest too depend upon their Activity and Diligence.

It is a vulgar Error to believe, that Teachers of Religion different from the established one, are in all respects hurtful. The Reformed have forced the Catholics to throw aside many of their Absurdities, and have stirred them up to search for more Knowledge. The Dissenters in *England* have contributed to promote the Learning and Sobriety of the Churchmen; and perhaps even the Seceders in *Scotland* have, by their Strictness, stimulated some of the Established Clergy to a Strictness and Diligence in their Office, beyond what they might otherwise have attained.

The Masters of an University need such a Stimulus, as much as the Teachers of Religion. When Men have got into a settled Way of Life, Laziness often gets the better of the good Purposes they really had, when they first entered into it. The Sense of Duty and the Love of Fame, are not able to overcome the Love of Ease. It is the Opinion of some intelligent Persons, that if the Established Clergy, instead of having Salaries fixed for Life, were hired from Time to Time, we should get better Sermons from them than even those we get at present. Whatever Truth there may be in this, we are persuaded  
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there is much more in the Remark, when applied to the Masters of a College. They have their fine Lodgings, and they have their fixed Salaries as the Clergy have; but the Clergy have one strong Motive to spur them on, which the Professors have not. There are other Clergymen just at hand, and if any one is very lazy and negligent, the People will leave him; but be the Professors ever so slothful, there is no College near to receive the Students from them. Could the Youth be taught by others at as little Expence to their Parents, the Professors would be at more pains and bestir themselves in a very different manner.

We have said thus much in general, to prevent some Prejudices that might have been conceived against our Plan, as if it were to interfere with the University; and we have shewn that instead of being hurtful to that learned Body of Men, it will produce very salutary Effects upon them; and, we hope, it may reasonably be presumed, that by the Activity of our Teachers, and the constant and close Application of their Scholars, more real and useful Knowledge may be delivered and acquired in two Years, than can be in six or seven in the disputatious and slow Method usual in Universities, where there are so few Hours of Teaching, and so many of Diversion.

It has been observed already, that the principal Points in view in the Education of Youth ought to be, to form them to the Love of Religion and  
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Virtue, to render them serviceable to the Government, useful to themselves and to that Society to which they may more immediately belong, and agreeable in the ordinary Commerce of Life.

With respect to forming our Youth to be good Subjects, this Plan needs make no Provision. The Inhabitants of this City, and of all the Country around, are almost to a Man well affected to the present Government, and, were it necessary, would risk their Fortunes and their Lives in its Support. Though we think young People ought to be made acquainted with the Nature of that happy Constitution under which we live; and this may be advantageously done, in reading to them the History of our own Country.

But Religion merits the most serious Attention: It is judged to be a great Defect in the ordinary Education, that, except those who formally set themselves to the Study of Divinity, no Care is taken to acquaint the Students with religious Principles, or to tincture them with a Sense of Piety. Religion takes faster hold of the Mind, and has a stronger Tendency to make Men good and virtuous, than many seem to imagine. It is of infinite Importance, with respect to the other World; and it is the most powerful Restraint to preserve Youth from those Vices, which they are but too ready to fall into. Vices which are both hainous, and hinder them from making that Figure in the World which they are entitled to make. A Sense of God

makes the Life sober and regular. Parents ought to recommend Religion to their Children, and all Teachers should both by Example and Instruction shew their Scholars, that they have a high Esteem of Religion, and a deep Sense of its Importance to promote all the valuable Interests of Mankind.

We have lately seen a printed Sermon upon the Causes of the Decline of Religion, and we verily expected to find one Thing assigned as a Cause of that Decline, which has been and continues to be much talked of, and much lamented in this Place; but which, it seems, the Author did not advert to. If he had pleased, he might have mentioned the bad Discipline of Colleges, and the too little Appearance of Piety in the Department of the Masters; which, though perhaps not so extensive, is as real a Cause of Irreligion as any he has named. It produces very dismal Effects; the Students, who afterwards apply to Divinity, are cool and indifferent in the Study of it; those who apply to Business, in Town or Country, bring along with them from the College a visible Aversion to Religion; and with this pernicious Contagion they infect the unwary, who see them or converse with them.

The blunt Saying of a plain and honest Citizen, some time after public Prayers began to be disused in the University, was quite agreeable to our Sentiments. When he was entering his Son to one of the Philosophy Classes, 'I am indifferent, said he, I am indifferent about your  
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' nice Disputes: Teach my Son Religion and  
 ' Morality; teach him to govern his Passions,  
 ' and to love God and Men: I had rather have  
 ' him a pious and good Man, than possessed of  
 ' all the curious Philosophy you can teach him  
 ' in seven Years.'

Religion ought to be the Ground-work of every Course of Education, and the Principles infilled into the Minds of young People should be scriptural and sound. This is certainly right, in every View. We have known some young Men, who were marred in their Business, and rejected by those who could have advanced them, merely because they were much suspected of entertaining some very loose and unsound Opinions.

But, to consider Religion in the lowest View, namely, as it is a Science and a Subject of Conversation, the Youth ought certainly to be taught it. Every Gentleman and Merchant should be able to talk about the Tenets of that Religion, which is established in his Country. He should know something about the Government and Discipline of that Church of which he is a Member.

We should weary out your Patience, Sir, and protract this Letter to an indecent Length, were we to mention the Use of every particular Branch of Literature proposed to be taught by the projected Plan; and were we to shew how well this Plan will answer the remaining Ends of Education; namely, to prepare young People to be useful in Life, and to appear as accom-  
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plished Gentlemen in Conversation. We will, in a few Words, take notice of the Advantages which a Plan of this sort has, effectually to communicate the Knowledge which is proposed to be taught by it.

1. The Things to be taught are all of them capable of being learned. They are commensurate to the Capacity of the young Mind. Logical Quiddities and metaphysical Subtleties are totally exterminated. History, Geography, the natural Productions of a Country, the Manners of the People, the Manufactures and Commodities they trade in, may all be understood and remembered. These are Things useful to be known by a Commercial People. And, by the way, we beg leave to say, That if Merchants have not dipped much into metaphysical and moral Theories, they have by their Voyages and Travels furnished the World with a far more valuable Sort of Knowledge: We mean that of the Manners and Customs of Men, which is certainly more entertaining, and perhaps lays a surer Foundation of Morality than any of the Cobweb Schemes which have been so finely spun out of the Imaginations of fanciful Men, who have all their Lives been immured within a College, and are quite destitute of the Knowledge of the World.

2. We are almost certain of having the ablest Teachers the Nation can afford. They will readily be left to be chosen and employed by us. A Place in an University is considered as easy,

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honourable and lucrative. It is almost looked upon as a Sine-cure; it is not ordinarily the most ingenious and able for teaching that is pitched upon, but he who is connected, or whose Friends are connected with, and can serve the Men in Power: and this appears to be growing more and more in Fashion. When a Vacancy happens we hear every one saying, "Who will get this Place, who has most Interest with such a Duke or such a Lord." A Man's Sufficiency is seldom or never mentioned; his Ability is no Recommendation of him; his total Ignorance of the Things he is to teach is no Obstacle to his being preferred to the Office: For twenty Years past there are not above One or Two Instances where one was either presented by the Crown, or chosen by the Faculty, merely or chiefly because he was thought best qualified to teach the Class he was called to teach. If there are any who are fit to teach, by a proper Encouragement we may have them.

But the Directors of the Academy, besides Capacity to teach, must have other Qualifications: They must be Men of a grave and respectable Character, who will add Weight and Importance to the Things they teach, and attract the Esteem and Love of their Scholars. The Professors in our Time, to do them Justice, seemed well enough qualified in this respect. Several of the Things taught by them were, as we have said, absolute Futilities; and yet even in these Things, from the Solemnity of the Teachers, we at that time

( 32 )

time suspected there might be some Value in them; or, perhaps, their Diligence in teaching conferred some imaginary Worth on every thing they taught. We have often observed, that the earnest Application of Teachers to their Business procures them Reputation, and adds Weight to the most frivolous and insignificant Things that may be delivered by them. The Men were guilty of no Littleness or Folly; they were Men of exterior Dignity, and we could not but pay some Regard to every thing they said or did. Teachers of that sort, when the Knowledge communicated by them is useful and suitable, do successfully recommend Knowledge and Virtue; and by their regular, decent, and religious Behaviour, they create a Liking of Religion in the Hearts of their Scholars.

3. The Hours of teaching in the designed Academy will be more than are allotted to it in Colleges. It is absurd and hypocritical for Men to give high Commendations of Science, and to use so slender Pains, and spend so little Time in teaching it. Men are become so lazy, and the Desire of Literature is so feeble, that it is a Wonder if Knowledge of every sort does not take its flight from amongst us. The Practice of Universities is quite altered; not one Half of the Hours are employed in teaching that were one Hundred, and not a Third of them that were two Hundred, Years ago. The President De Mesmes shewed a Manuscript of one of his Ancestors to Mr. Rollin; wherein

( 33 )

wherein that ancient Gentleman gave an Account of his Studies at the University of Tolouse. "In 1545, says he, I was sent to Tolouse with my Preceptor and Brother to study Law, under the Direction of an old gray-haired Man, who had travelled much. We got up at Four, and having said our Prayers, we began our Studies at Five, with our great Books under our Arms, and our Writing-Tables and Candlesticks in our Hands. We attended at Lectures 'till Ten without Intermission; then we went to Dinner, after having hastily collated for one Half-hour what we had writ down. After Dinner, by way of Diversion, we read Sophocles, or Aristophanes, or Euripides, and sometimes Demosthenes, Tully, Virgil, and Horace. At one o'Clock to our Studies again, at Five we returned Home, to repeat and turn to the Places quoted in our Books 'till after Six, then we supped and read somewhat in Greek and Latin\*." Such Pains and Time were then bestowed.

But in our University several of the Masters do not teach above One Hour, and others of them but Two Hours a Day. Do they really expect to convey the Knowledge of any thing so hastily, especially of the dark and intricate Points they usually teach; and we cannot but observe, that they treat their Students as if they were Men and Children at the same time. A noble Lord made a Donation of the College  
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\* Rollin's Belles Lettres, Vol. I. Chap. ii. Art. 1.

( 34 )

Garden to the Masters and to the Students to walk in for their Health and Recreation. The Students, even those who entered to the lower Classes, it is pretended, were then Men, and had Discretion not to destroy the Beauty or Policy of the Garden. They are now very young when they enter to these Classes, and the Masters have deprived all the Students of the Liberty of stepping into the Garden, which by the Donation they had and still have a legal Title to. In another respect they treat the very youngest of their Scholars as if they were full-grown Men; they teach them an Hour or two, and then send them adrift; and they are so thoughtless, are so little looked after, and have so much Time to play, that the Lesson so hastily read over to them is neglected and immediately forgot. In the case of the Garden, it argues the Superiority of the Masters to treat their Scholars as mere Children; in the matter of Teaching, it contributes to their Ease to treat them as if they were Men.

The teaching for so few Hours in Colleges has a very fatal Effect upon Children: by getting so much Diversion, they contract settled Habits of Inattention, and their Minds are so dissipated that it is oftentimes found impossible to fix them; by which means many have been ruined, and could never afterwards, by all the Arts and Intreaties of their Parents, be brought to apply themselves in earnest to any Business whatsoever.

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( 35 )

Common Sense would dictate, that the two lower Classes at least, ought to be treated as Children are in other Schools; they ought to be kept as it were under the Rod, and obliged to apply to their Business for four or five Hours a Day: and so many Hours of Attendance at the fewest, shall, it is proposed, be given by every Teacher in the designed Academy.

4. Our Teachers shall study the Genius, and learn the Views of each particular Scholar, and direct them to a proper Course of Reading when they are at Home. We suffered so much ourselves, through want of such Direction, that we will be at the utmost Pains that our Children may not suffer as we have done. The Teachers will put those Books into their Hands which are most accommodated to their Genius, and relative to the Business they are designed for. They will converse often and familiarly with them, and twice every Week will, in an easy Manner, enquire into the Progress they have made, and cause them to make Observations themselves upon what they have been reading. Possessed of such Accomplishments as we have mentioned, they will be in no dread of being puzzled by the Questions that may be put to them by sprightly Lads of Fourteen or Fifteen, nor under any Necessity of concealing their Ignorance by an affected Gravity, and entrenching themselves behind a Form.

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5. To confuse or distract the Minds of the Youth by different Studies at the same Time, will be avoided with the most scrupulous Care. All possible Art will be used to make what is the immediate and principal Study of the Scholars amusing and delightful to them: The other things, that are allowed them by way of Diversion, will always have some Relation to the one thing, which is at that particular time the chief Object of their Pursuit.

These are certainly great and visible Advantages, which Scholars at the Academy will enjoy above those who attend the University.—The Things to be taught are plain and important.—The best qualified Men will teach them.—The Hours of Attendance will be more than double those that are given at the University.—The Teachers will converse familiarly with the Scholars, and direct them to a proper Course of Reading.—Confusion of Studies will be cautiously avoided, and all will be done in a clear and expressive *English* Stile.

They propose at *Perth*, no doubt for very good Reasons in their Situation, to have a Teacher of the superior Classics. We confess we do not see the Propriety or Necessity of such a Teacher in the Academy here. We think it ought to be an *English* Academy, and that the chief Design of it should be to train up young People for Business. Indeed many of our Citizens have found that their Children had less Latin when they left the Humanity-Class than when

( 37 )

when they entered to it; and every Body is convinced that in the Two Years spent at Greek and Latin in the University, a very poor Proficiency is made in comparison of what might well be expected. But the great Evil would be best remedied by Childrens staying a Year or even two Years longer at the Grammar-School; in which Two Years they would certainly acquire more Skill in the learned Languages than they could possibly do in Six or Seven at the University: And if the Rector can discharge his present Office, and also teach a superior Class, we are informed he is very well qualified to do it. But if it is necessary there be another to teach the higher Classics along with him, a very particular Search should be made to find a proper Person; he must be a Man of Taste and Imagination: it is not difficult to find one who can drudge and labour, and by the help of Grammars and Dictionaries can hammer out the Construction, and heavily tell his Scholars the Meaning of an Author; these are Commodities not rare to be found, but such a one is far from answering to the Idea we have of a Teacher of the superior Classics: He should be a Man of Sense and Genius, of Spirit and Vivacity, who feels the Author's Sense, who imagines himself in the Place of the Poet, and is warm with his Fire; who discerns, who sees and feels the Beauty of the Historian's Description. In short, one who feels the very Sentiments of the Historian or Poet, and transfuses them into the Minds and  
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( 38 )

Hearts of his Pupils. We would have him at the same time to have Discretion enough to pass over several Parts of Ovid, Horace, and Catullus, which were they taught in a spirited Manner might be dangerous to young People. A dull phlegmatic Teacher may seem to have some Advantage in this Respect: He can read over the whole of Horace, and not miss a Line from Beginning to End, without a Smile: He can explain and comment upon the most licentious Passage without feeling himself, and without exciting in his Scholars any disorderly Emotion; but then he feels as little and makes as little Impression with respect to any the most beautiful Picture or striking Description: In reading the Passages of a Tragedy or Epic Poem, which shake the human Frame and fill the throbbing Breast with the alternate Emotions of Admiration, Terror, Pity, and Distress, his Heart is quite unmoved, insensible, and callous. Such a one can never teach to Advantage, nor excite Admiration of antient Learning in the Minds of Youth: They weary, and think it is doing Penance to hear him.

A Teacher of Spirit and Taste fires his Pupils with the Love of classical Learning: And though it is digressing a little from our principal Point, we cannot but take notice, that such a Teacher would be of unspeakable Advantage to those in higher Life than we are. If Gentlemens Sons made a competent Progress in classical Learning, and were besides instructed

( 39 )

in the several things proposed to be taught at the Academy, we aver they would have a far more compleat and genteel School-Education, than has ever been publicly given in this Country.

And such a Teacher of Greek and Latin should be carefully sought for, on account of those Students who are designed for any of the learned Professions, and especially of those who are to be Clergymen: For as Education is so tedious, and is become so expensive, we think that Divines may and ought to be trained up in this Method. When they are well founded in the Languages, they may by proper Direction be taught as much Knowledge, and to express themselves with as much Propriety, Precision, and Force, as Divines ordinarily attain, in one third part of the Time which they would be obliged to attend a Divinity-College: And if they were found to be as knowing as College-Students, we do not see but Presbyteries might get over any Difficulty in Licensing them; provided always their Morals be good and their Principles orthodox. For which purpose we would have the Gentleman who has the Direction of their Studies found above all Suspicion, even tho' he should not be so deep in Learning as we could wish.

For it would seem that in Divinity it is the Genius or the Application of the Student, and not the Ability of the Professor, that produces the Effect. We have heard some of our Divinity-

( 40 )

nity-Professors much run down, and others as much applauded; but we could never see this Difference by the Effects of their Teaching, or that those, who studied under the weak Professor, were a whit inferior to those who were the Scholars of the able one: Nor indeed do we discern that these Preachers appear worse in the Pulpit or in Company, who were never at a Divinity-College at all, several of whom we know and esteem.

In Things that relate to Divinity, the learned Professors seem to think in this manner: For three or four times, they have chosen Hebrew Professors, who, except the Letters, were said to know no more of the Language; and Church-History, though they have a Professor of it, has not been taught for many Years past: It is supposed that one may teach Hebrew, without knowing it; and that Divines may know Church-History, without being taught it: Just as the little or great Ability of the Divinity-Professor makes no Alteration upon the Scholar.

But if it is so with respect to Divinity and what relates to it, the Case is quite different with respect to a Professor of Mathematics: Whether he has or has not the Art of Teaching, is manifestly known by the great or small Proficiency which his Scholars make. It is impossible that those who study at one University should be generally good Mathematicians, and that those who study at another should generally know nothing of the Matter, if the Professors

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( 41 )

were equally skilful and diligent in teaching. The Gentleman who has long taught in this University has unquestionably great Ability; but whether he has run over the Propositions in too great a Hurry, or has employed too few Hours in teaching, it is a well-known Fact, which we are sorry to mention, that he has had little Success in teaching: There are extremely few who have been made Mathematicians by him. We mention this because if the two Masters, under whose Direction the Academy is proposed to be, shall be thought to have too much to do, there may be, without any additional Expence, a Teacher of Mathematics alone. If he has only the Countenance of the Magistrates, such Numbers will attend him, that he will not need a Halfpenny of Salary: And if he has the Art of Teaching (which he must have, otherwise it were better not to have him) we may reasonably expect in a very few Years to furnish out a Choice of able Mathematicians to the University, and save them the Trouble of going to a great Distance in quest of one.

The Plan, as we have spoke of it, extends to fewer Parts of Literature than that of *Pertb.*; yet we persuade ourselves every one must be convinced of the Advantage and Necessity of it; and, if possible, we wish to see it established, or at least begun this very Season.

Many Branches of Manufactures have been introduced, and many have been pushed as far by the Inhabitants of this City as has been done

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by any in the Kingdom; and if we should make no Provision for the Instruction of our Youth, when such Provision is so necessary, we should but too justly deserve Reproach.

But from the Opulence of this City, we cannot but indulge the Hope, that the Academy here will be more extensive than that which has been agreed upon by the People of *Pertb*. We wish the *French* Language was taught more perfectly than has yet been done here: It has become almost an universal Language, and the Knowledge of it is particularly useful to trading People; and especially, we wish that there were an *English* Belles Lettres Education. Except to Gentlemen, and to those in the learned Professions, the learned Languages are not necessary. A Man may make himself Master of an immense Variety of Knowledge without any other Language but *English*: And of how great Importance would it be, if young People were made acquainted with the Beauties of the *English* Poets, and most elegant Prose Writers, and were taught something of Composition in their own Language. To know their own Language well is of more Importance to them than even the most full and accurate Knowledge of Greek and Latin: While they applied to the Study of it, they would be taught not Words but Things, not Stile only but to see and feel the most noble Sentiments, and to express themselves with Elegance and Force.

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It is really astonishing, that the Study of the national Language has been so much neglected, and that a Course of Education, proper for Men of Business, entirely in *English*, has never been set on-foot: If we were not accustomed to see the Thing every Day practised, it would appear absurd to the last Degree, that Children, who are to be put to Business as soon as their Age permits, should spend Five or Six Years in learning dead Languages; Languages which it is foreseen they will immediately forget when they go from School; and which, though they could be remembered, can never be of any use to them. If that Time were employed in conveying Ideas into their Minds, as they are capable to receive them, and in teaching them the *English* Language, they would have more Knowledge, and they would acquire a great Facility of writing and speaking what they know. If they were first taught to pronounce justly, and were then set to compose little Things, and to imitate the Stile of Mr. Addison, Dr. Swift, and some others, the Letters of Men of Business would appear to much more Advantage than some of them do at present. There would not be so frequent Complaints that People do not write to their Friends at a Distance: The real Cause of which oftentimes is, that they have neither a competent Stock of Ideas, nor a sufficient Command of Language. To write a Letter of News, of Friendship, of Thanks, or Congratulation, is above their Capacity, or is at best a tedious

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( 44 )

and difficult Task. If Children were properly instructed in their Mother-Tongue, they would not when they became Men falter and hesitate in Speech, but would express their Meaning with Ease and Beauty.

The Taste which has been raised at *Edinburgh* by Mr. Sheridan should excite our Emulation. The Parts of Science we have mentioned before are absolutely necessary; this last is also highly useful and highly ornamental.

The Plan, Sir, which we have laid before you, is neither chimerical nor difficult to be executed; it is easy, advantageous, necessary, and not expensive; and we cannot suffer ourselves to fear but that our City will immediately agree to it, or to something like it: For our own part, we have merely studied the Honour and Advantage of our Fellow-Citizens. We desire no Commendation for having mentioned to several of them the great Advantages of such an Academy. If we are in the right, you will be able to judge by this Letter, which you are at Liberty to use as you please. There are, no doubt, others of our Citizens, who are both able to form a Plan that is more compleat, and also to forward the Execution of it: Let them have the whole Praise, but let the thing be done, and done as soon as possible.

And we think ourselves sure that it will be done, when we consider the Merit and Vigilance of the honourable Gentlemen, who are our present Magistrates. One of them is illustrious  
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( 45 )

in his own City, is well known at a great Distance, and has been long respected by those in the highest Rank; he had a College-Education; but soon saw the Impropriety and Defectiveness of it; and, by a Strength of Judgment, a Depth of Penetration, and Retentiveness of Memory peculiar to himself, he attained a Knowledge of the Laws and Constitution of his Country, which is seldom to be found in professed Lawyers. He has acquired such Variety of Knowledge, Moral, Historical, Political and Commercial, and is so distinct and accurate upon every Point, that few Burgesses or others in the Island can pretend to excel him. What is proposed to be taught at the Academy, is but the Rudiments of a few of these Parts, in each of which he is a Master.

We have another Gentleman in public Office, who is also justly looked upon as a very extraordinary and happy Genius. His Skill in Commerce is extensive; his Invention of new Branches of Manufacture, fertile; his Activity to promote them unwearied; his Generosity and public Spirit are discerned and honoured by several of the Nobility, and by many of the Gentry and Men of Taste, who court his Company: He is possessed of such Accomplishments in Science and Taste, which by a quick Discernment he saw the Value of, and acquired; that did he not by a singular Greatness of Mind acknowledge the Disadvantages of his Education, hardly any body that converses with him would suspect but that he had been conversant in literary Contemplations from his earliest Youth. We

( 46 )

We have, besides, many Citizens, whose Knowledge is extensive, and whose Elegance of Taste is undisputed. The Magistrates and they will heartily concur to promote so useful a Design. They will be convinced, that among a numerous Youth there are comparatively speaking but few, who in Science and Taste can hope to succeed as they have happily done, unless an early and proper Method be taken to facilitate the Acquisition of Knowledge, and to teach them the Elements of these Parts which are of universal Use.

For that Reason such an Academy as we have given a Sketch of is so useful and necessary, that there ought to be one of them in every populous City within *Great Britain*: and certainly People will some time or other open their Eyes, and not suffer themselves to be deluded by mere Sounds, nor imagine that, because a Thing is called an University or Seat of Learning, that therefore it will convey every sort of useful Knowledge; when they see, or may see so plainly, that the Knowledge taught is unsuitable to such People as we are; and, were it suitable, no suitable Time and Pains are employed to teach it.

And we say one thing further, in behalf of our City, which to you may appear incredible, and yet nothing is more true. It is the Nearness of the University to us, that is the Cause of our little Knowledge, and that an Academy like that now projected did not long ago take place. We expected from time to time that the Professors would

( 47 )

would turn from intricate and useless, to useful and plain Parts of Science, and teach them with Care and Diligence. Had it not been for this vain Imagination, we are verily persuaded *Glasgow* would have set an Example to *Perth*, instead of *Perth's* having set one to *Glasgow*.

We have at present the best Hopes, and imagine that we are within reach of having the Reproach of our Want of Taste, and that we are careless about the Education of our Children, entirely wiped away. We think ourselves as sure as we can be of any thing that is future, that, if this Proposal is properly executed, within eight or ten Years every Stranger and every discerning Person will observe a sensible and general Improvement in Taste and Knowledge among the Inhabitants of this City; and that from thenceforth there will not be the least Ground for any such Surprise as you expressed.

But if, after all, nothing is done, we shall suffer you and every one to rally our Citizens as you please; and as your Raillery, tho' poignant, is genteel, so far from avoiding your Company, we will court it; and judging ourselves unconcerned, we will with Patience, perhaps with Pleasure, hear your Burlesque without opening our Mouths.

Indeed if our City shall relapse into a Lethargy, as before; if there be not Sense enough to see the Utility, or if there be not Authority, or Spirit, or Numbers enough to forward the Execution of a Project so necessary and easy, we must

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( 48 )

acknowledge that, notwithstanding all our Partiality to ourselves and our Citizens, we should not know what to say further in our Defence. We should, we fear, be forced to confess that we betrayed some Symptoms of that Dulness, and that Carelessness about our Children, for which we have been so often blamed; or that we mistook our Childrens Interest, and esteemed a small Saving of Money to be of more Importance to them, than the ample Fortunes they might be fitted to acquire, and all the great and shining Improvements in Taste and Science, which by a proper Course of School-Education they might easily make.

But if unhappily our City shall not be roused to Action by the Example of *Pertb*, if our principal People, being too busy and careful about other Things, shall neglect or postpone a Thing so needful, we make not the least doubt, but that other populous Towns in the Kingdom, where such an Academy may be as necessary as it is here, will act a more generous and spirited Part, and will wisely sacrifice a small Expence to form the Minds of their Children, to accomplish them for Business, and to make a Gentleman-like Figure in Conversation.

Mean time useful Arts and valuable Knowledge will flourish at *Pertb*. In a Commercial Sense at least, *Pertb* will be the modern *Athens* of this Country: Numbers of young Men properly educated there, will spring abroad and make a Figure in the several Trading Towns of the

( 49 )

the Nation, and particularly in this great City. Strangers will, by the Superiority of their Parts, acquire great Fortunes; they will lead and conduct the Affairs of this City, and be respected by the Nobility and Gentry, while our Sons, free-born Citizens, through want of Education, will be humble and tame under the Sway of greater Merit, and make no becoming Figure.

These are Events easily foreseen. The Example of *Pertb* is not that which should chiefly influence us; it is the Necessity, the visible Necessity of the Education proposed. Let the *Pertb* Scheme be ill contrived, let it be worse executed; suppose there be some who, from fordid Love of Lucre, are squinting at it with an evil Eye, and wishing to blast it with their noxious Breath; suppose they and their Emissaries be striving to get hold of this hopeful Infant, to crush it, or to stifle it in its Cradle; nay suppose, contrary to all Probability, that its frightened and self-interested Enemies should be able with their poisoned Arrows to reach its Vitals, and to lay its Head in the Dust; it is certainly possible to contrive the Plan of a manly and genteel Education for Men of Business, and to secure the Execution of it, in this Place. There are here a great Number, who have been long and deeply practised in Commerce, who have great natural and acquired Abilities, and are possessed of those Attainments which are useful, and which are ornamental. These Gentlemen

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( 50 )

are well qualified to direct the Education of young People who are designed for busy and active Life. And we must agree, that till this be done, our City will not make that Figure in *Great-Britain* which it is capable of making, nor appear with a Lustre in proportion to its Trade, its Wealth, and its Greatness.

On the disagreeable Supposition that no Academy is set on foot here, and to prevent, were it in their Power, the disagreeable and well-foreseen Effects of that Neglect, there are not wanting a Number of judicious Citizens who seem determined to send their Sons to be educated at *Perth*, if they shall be informed that the Plan agreed upon there is but as well executed as it is contrived. We hope and assure ourselves that they will not be under the Necessity of sending them out of our own City for that Purpose. At any rate, you know our Mind by this Letter. We hope to be exempted from your Satire; or, if you sometimes play it off in our Company, we will consider it as not intended personally against ourselves; unwilling however, to join you in it, even tho' we see it just, we will beg leave to be silent.

You see, Sir, that we pay all possible Defe-  
rence to the University. It has been long, and continues to be a loud Complaint in several Kingdoms of *Europe*, that the Science retailed at Universities is unprofitable and dangerous. Wise Men have judged; that if such Science has taken  
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( 51 )

any hold of young People, the wisest Thing they can do is to unlearn and forget it as soon as possible\*. Personages of the highest Rank and Merit have seen Cause to be thankful or well satisfied, either that they never were at an University, or that by some favourable Accidents they were soon removed from it†. And we know sensible Men among ourselves, who judge, that it would be much better for the Interest of Learning, that every Part of Science were left to be taught by private Academies and private Teachers; that there ought to be a total Subversion of the Universities of this Nation; and that the Price of the Buildings, together with the Revenues and Salaries, ought to be applied to augment the Livings of the Clergy, or to pay the National Debt. On the other hand, we think, they should rather be allowed to continue as they are. They are Monuments of Antiquity. We consider what Good they may have done of old, when the Course taught by them was suitable to those remote Times. There are valuable public Libraries in them, which it were pity not to take care of. Our City may have Influence to procure Places in them for the superannuated Teachers of the Academy, who, by their assiduous and useful Labour will highly

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\* Moleworth's Preface to Account of Denmark Shaftesbury's Characteristics, Sully's Memoirs, Discours sur l'Esprit.

† Henry IVth of France. See Sully's Mem. Du Maurier, &c.

( 52 )

merit such Salaries, and such Ease, in their old Age. They are useful in some Respects, and they may change their way of Teaching, and become so in more. We find our Hearts warm towards our own University, and towards the Masters that taught us; with all their Defects we loved them, and we reverence their Memory. We remember, with a Mixture of Regret and Pleasure, the idle and happy Days we spent about the College; how we went sauntering up and down at our Ease, with our Gowns, the Badges of Scholars, about us; tho' it appears to you, and if we would, we cannot get it denied, that we received but a poor Pittance of Instruction.

We wish the College to subsist and thrive; *esto perpetua*. The Crown or the Faculty may now and then pitch upon an able Teacher educated at our Academy, or elsewhere, whom we would wish our Posterity might have the Opportunity of being instructed by, just as we at present have the Opportunity of the Ethic Class, to which many of our Citizens will send their Sons, after their Course in our own Academy is finished. When they have first learned useful and necessary Things, those of them who are in easy Circumstances, and have Genius, will be entertained with the ingenious and amusing Theory of so eminent a Master.

If there is any Expression in this Letter which may seem to convey a too diminutive Idea of Universities, we beg you will look upon it as a Push  
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( 53 )

made in necessary Self-defence, and ascribe it to our Eagerness to screen ourselves and our Fellow-Citizens from the Point of your Raillery, and that of others, which has been often and keenly levelled against us. With great Respect we are,

S I R,

Glasgow, Oct.

1761.

Your most humble Servants.

F I N I S.

