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1854



Philadelphia. Independent Medical School  
of Pennsylvania

THE

# VOLUNTARY SYSTEM

OF

✓  
MEDICAL EDUCATION,

INSTITUTED BY

THE INDEPENDENT MEDICAL SCHOOL OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Chartered, May 8th, 1854.

Who ever knew truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?  
Her confuting is the best and surest suppressing.

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1854.

THE

VOLUNTARY SYSTEM

MEDICAL EDUCATION

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1854

THE HARRISBURG MEDICAL SCHOOL OF PENNSYLVANIA

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1854

## MEDICAL EDUCATION.

EDUCATION in medicine, more than in any other of the learned professions, demands the attention of the public. Of the pretensions of lawyers and clergymen, laymen are greatly more capable of forming a correct judgment than they are of the attainments and capabilities of medical practitioners. The management of a case at the Bar lies fairly within the compass of unprofessional judgment, and the revision of the Bench, adapted, as it always is, to the apprehension of the jury, supplies whatever of deeper criticism may happen, in special cases, to be required for a thorough judgment of its management. The Clergy deal with subjects that every man is equally concerned to understand, and every intelligent mind is capable of; but the Healing Art is not thus open to the tests of ordinary judgment and experience. Discerning, distinguishing, and treating diseases, are not guided and ruled by any settled standards of doctrine, or issues of experience, that are easily or certainly applied. But there is, nevertheless, a right and a wrong in medical theories and modes of remedial practice; at least, there are bad and better systems in existence, and there might be a still better or best, if it could by any means be discovered and applied.

“Fools and children,” says the proverb, “must not judge unfinished work,” but in Medicine, it is just as true, that the wisest and most mature minds are, in general, incapable of judging justly of the Doctor’s work, even after it is finished, whether fortunately or fatally. The only security that the community can provide, therefore, is in the institution of such methods of Medical Education as shall, at all events, insure thorough instruction of the students in all that is known of the healing art, and, at the same time, open the way for higher and better knowledge in the future.

The public, including the medical profession, as it now stands, cannot decide, with any certainty or safety, whether

disease is best treated by any particular method in vogue; or, whether it might not be still better and more happily managed by other methods which lie within the easy reach of enlightened and liberal inquiry; but, the public, whether professional or unprofessional, is abundantly competent to institute a policy of study that shall assuredly result in the most thorough qualification of the candidates for its confidence, that the state of the science allows; and, a method of ascertaining acquirements which will insure a just and accurate judgment of their respective pretensions.

Men who understand what a world of sciences is really embraced in a thorough knowledge of medicine, and what a range of education, devotedness of study, and talent for them, are required, must needs regard the quack, the nostrum-vender and the reckless adventurer, with contempt and indignation; and, so far as such enlightened opinion can go, it is available against the evil of these lowest forms of imposture. But, unhappily for the influence of this corrective, incompetency within the pale of the regular profession is as common as quackery beyond it. The world knows so well that a diploma does not make a doctor, that the parchment now scarcely raises a presumption in favor of the holder; and the resulting loss of faith in orthodoxy has the natural effect of relieving vulgar pretension of much of that weight of scorn which might otherwise crush it out of existence. When Medical Doctor fails to be a title to confidence, Quack is only a term of distinction, without a difference of any practical importance.

Under the system which prevails, Doctor of Medicine means a man of twenty-one years of age or upwards, who has received a diploma from some chartered college. A Medical College is a corporation created by any one of the thirty or forty legislatures of the Union, authorizing the corporators to erect buildings, hold real estate, appoint a faculty of teachers, prescribe by-laws for their general government, and, on certain customary conditions, to grant diplomas to students who finish their terms of study within their respective institutions. The trustees of these colleges usually establish a number of Chairs, varying from five to seven. The students, more or less prepared, or wholly unprepared, are admitted, upon the payment of about one hundred dollars, to the lectures of a

session. Each Professor lectures from fifty to seventy hours during the session of four or five months. The next year the same things, in all respects, are repeated, even to the rehearsal of the same lectures; and then, upon the certificates of the private teachers of the young gentlemen, that they have studied medicine three years in all, including the time of attendance upon the public lectures, they are admitted to their examination, and if found competent, (whatever that may happen to mean in the judgment and under the policy of the Faculty,) they are furnished with their diplomas.

There are now more than fifty of these colleges in the United States; and they are every year graduating about one half of the students who crowd their halls.

The provision for doctor-making is, beyond question, ample enough; but, the more important question arises, is it adapted to the work of adequately indoctrinating them in the known truths of the science, and qualifying them for its practice?

Let us see what is the fair result of a brief but sufficient examination of this point:

Colleges, so constituted and governed, it is not denied, might, by properly guarding their admissions, extending their terms, and amplifying their teachings, impart to competent and industrious pupils, all which they undertake to teach; and so, very fairly qualify them in that special system of theory and practice which they severally adopt. This is the utmost that the system is capable of, but a great deal more than it ever performs. Its best administration could do no more—its ordinary operation falls terribly short of this.

The causes are obvious enough. They are such as these:

Almost any small company of gentlemen, without other qualification than ordinary respectability, can procure for themselves an act of incorporation. They are made legally competent, however otherwise incapable, to appoint a Faculty of teachers. The Faculty, however well qualified for their office, are put under the necessity of building up a school that shall be popular and will pay. The benches must be filled; and this can be done most certainly and promptly by making the chances of graduation as promising as possible, without utterly running down the credit of the institution. The rivalry thus engendered shows itself in an underbidding, not in the

cost of tuition, but in the qualifications required for graduation. A small difference of expense is a matter of little importance, but young men do not willingly court an increased risk of rejection. It is enough for them that they get the parchment of an institution in good credit, at the usual time; and a college that would singly set itself up with a reputation for severity in its examinations, besides losing its prosperity, would fail of achieving the reformation aimed at. It could not make its diploma practically worth the difference in attainments, by which it must be secured, and for this good reason it would be avoided by the students who must make its fortune and fame at their own peril.

It is not necessary to institute comparisons among the classes of these institutions; but it is very apparent from their yearly reports, that those schools which have the largest classes of pupils, are *not* those which graduate the smallest proportion of their pupils. A diploma is—a diploma. It answers all the uses of which it is capable to the less worthy, and the deserving know that they must make for themselves a character as independently of its assistance as though they had never fairly earned it.

The rivalry of the schools in the business of doctor-making illustrates the old proverb, that “competition is the life of trade,” but, let it be observed, that it reduces it from the rank of a liberal science to that of a trade, by which the public is injured, the profession degraded, and only the traders are profited.

The mischief lies in the fact, that the teachers, whose popularity and pecuniary interests are promoted by large classes and flourishing schools, are the men who have the power to grant the certificates of qualification to the pupils!

It is not intended to say that every Faculty of professors are so destitute of honor, conscience, and professional pride, as wantonly to sacrifice principle to interest; but, it is not too much to say, that too many Faculties are seduced from their integrity, and, that these have the power to lower the standard, and compel submission, in a greater or less degree, from the worthier or more honorable institutions.

But if the public could be secured from the mischief of this rivalry of interests, (which in the nature of things is quite

impossible,) the fatal objection still lies against the system, that under it, the men who are the teachers are made the judges of their own competency and fidelity in their office, as well as of the devotion and abilities of their pupils.

The public ought to have a more disinterested and reliable judgment in the premises:

The apparently parallel practice of literary colleges affords no warranty for such a violation of safe principle, and is capable of no such mischiefs, as it is in medicine. They have no such vital differences of doctrine to settle—they have no such uncertainties of science to resolve—no such practical responsibilities to encounter—no such bigotries of sectarianism to embarrass and mislead them; and, the honors which they confer are not, like medical diplomas, commissions of trust in matters of high import, of which they are the only competent arbiters.

Again:—At least three-fourths of the medical schools of the country are but copies of each other, to all practical and important purposes. They teach nearly the same doctrines in nearly the same way; on nearly the same conditions of time and expense; and their diplomas are as nearly of the same value. Some of the Professors have a higher reputation, both at home and abroad, than others, and deserve it too; but the system under which they all work, gives their pupils little or no advantage that should result from this difference of ability. The Alumni of the most respectable schools are not by any means distinguished for their greater attainments, or their after success in practice, from those of the most ordinary. Limited and crippled as these institutions are by the policy which rules them, the emulation, so natural and beneficent, which otherwise might inspirit them to noblest efforts, degenerates into a mere rivalry for reputation and material prosperity.

They should be put under happier influences.

Again:—As faculties are now constituted, and the rules of graduation are established, the student must select, not by individuals, the particular professors upon whom he shall attend, but he must choose them in lots of six or seven together; and, he must reject them also in bulk.

Now, a school must be deemed peculiarly fortunate, that has four or five out of seven of its faculty every way qualified for teaching acceptably and advantageously. There are not a

few instances where one or more chairs are held by men tolerably well, or even very well, skilled in the branches which they are appointed to teach, but very badly qualified to impart instruction. Indeed, there are not many instances in which more than three or four are such as the classes would choose if they had the liberty of making their own selections, while in an edifice not more than half a dozen squares distant, they could find the very teachers whom they would gladly prefer to those comparatively incapable men who are fastened upon them.

The faculties were appointed by laymen, generally, who had no special qualification for choosing wisely; and, if the schools have been some time prosperous, all the arts, intrigues and influences, usually at work in securing fat benefices and honorable posts, have further vitiated the elections.

This also is an evil requiring correction.

But, even more than this—these faculties are monopolies, exclusive as well as inclusive. They at once contain and retain mischiefs which are now nearly incapable of reformation; and they shut out and keep out benefits, which would be worth more to the cause of medical education than all that they in fact secure. They shut out from the office of teacher all those able men of the profession who have not the influence of cliques, and the aid of extraneous advantages, to procure their election to professorships in well established colleges, or cannot find vacancies waiting to be filled, or such vacancies as they are best fitted, by talents, taste and special study, to fill to the best advantage.

Private teachers are sometimes, as protégés of the incumbents of professorial chairs, encouraged, or are appointed at a small per centage to adjunct professorships; but, their Independent teaching is of no avail to the student in the procurement of his diploma. It may even prejudice his chances of obtaining it.

This wrong also demands amendment. The system that operates in prohibition of the best talents, that would otherwise be exercised for all the best uses and to the best ends, should be altered.

Again:—The courses of lectures given under the present system are entirely too short. During the session of four or five months, six or seven branches are taught, or are attempted to

be taught, by as many professors, lecturing, say, seventy hours each. The lecturers themselves invariably complain of the shortness of the time allowed them. They hurry, skip, and finally make a dead halt before they have nearly traversed the ground which they intended to occupy; and every succeeding winter, make the same haste, and the same omissions, upon the same grounds of excuse. This complaint lies very justly against the system. It is every day made by its own supporters; but it is one for which the system itself admits no remedy.

It must be remedied.

A change is demanded, not merely, however, to afford room for the subject matters of the customary programme of instruction, but to give room and verge enough besides for all those auxiliary natural sciences, and related departments of remedial practice, which are now entirely shut out. Many of them are as essential to an adequate medical education as any of those which it embraces, and all are of such value, that any scheme of study which excludes them must sooner or later be discarded.

It is surely allowable to say that a house should have its own proper foundation under it; and, it is even more to the purport of our complaint, that a tree without its roots cannot grow or yield its appropriate fruits.

Out of the customary limitation to a *duplicated session* of four or five months, (the two sessions which make up the term of public instruction are, in fact, but copies and repetitions of each other,) there grows an unavoidable confusion of study—a mixture without order, relation, or natural sequence and dependency. Anatomy, for instance, which certainly ought to have some fixed place in the programme of tuition, corresponding to its natural order in study, is taught in a tangled coil of surgery, physiology, therapeutics, and obstetrics! The Surgeon begins, perhaps, with inflammation, and the Chair of Practice opens upon fevers, while the Anatomist is still lecturing upon the bones. And amputations, the action of remedies upon the vascular and nervous systems, and the mechanism of parturition, are under discussion, in their several chairs, before the Anatomist has reached a muscle, artery or nerve, involved in the prelections of his fellow-professors!

In justification of this system of cross-readings, or colloca-

tion of incoherencies, it is assumed, and may be replied, that the previous private study of the pupil has given him such general notions of the structure as will render the dislocated teachings of the chairs, which in natural order are based upon anatomical knowledge, sufficiently intelligible. But, this is not true. A student who has learned his anatomy from books only, though he may have been so laborious as to commit the text to memory, will nevertheless be unable to find, or recognize, a single muscle in the body. He will hardly be able to credit his senses when the membranes, which figured so largely in his reading, are exhibited to him; and those relations of position which are of the essence of Surgical Anatomy, are as dark to him as though he had never before heard of the tissues with which an operation is concerned.

The chairs of remedial treatment which depend upon a previous acquaintance with Chemistry, Botany, Materia Medica, and Pharmacy, are in similar disorder.

So obvious are these facts, and so fully are they felt, that a Teacher of large experience, and unquestionable authority, has more than once told his classes, in the concluding lecture of his course, that they probably understood less clearly the subjects of his instruction at the end than they did at the beginning of the session; but, he always added, that by faithful study afterwards they would be able to unravel and arrange what they had been hearing from him. Such a statement might restore the bewildered student's self-complacency, but it could only reconcile his vanity to his felt ignorance, without removing it.

But, if any one radical fault could be a more conclusive objection than another, the bigoted sectarianism which is not only actually chargeable against the existing system, but inseparable from it, would be entitled to such bad eminence.

There are in this age of progress quite a number of unlike systems of medical practice. Beside the time-honored Allopathy, we have now such others as Homœopathy, Hydropathy, Chrono-Thermalism, Electro Medicine, Kinesipathy and Eclecticism. Old Physic and Young Physic, and several sects besides, within the pale of orthodoxy, serve to increase and diversify the creeds of parties, all of which have their partisans and their pretensions, inviting the judgment and acceptance of the pro-

fession and of the public. But constituted as our schools are, and non-intercourse maintained as it is by the policy which governs all sects alike in the granting of diplomas, a fair and adequate investigation of the respective claims of these diverse theories is made impracticable to the student.

For every difference of system, a separate institution is provided, and the special differences of each are ignored by all the rest, or noticed only in the spirit of partisan controversy. A spirit alien to the temper of true philosophy is indulged and fostered, and the student is kept strictly within the limits of sect, as a determined condition upon which the honors of the doctorate must be conferred.

If there were an infallible tribunal for the settlement of medical theories, or, if any party in all this crowd of opponents could lay claim to absolute certainty in the peculiarities which it maintains, and, at the same time, completely cover, not only all that is actually known, but all that is possible to be known in the healing art, it might, with some show of reason, forbid all differences of method, and all further research. But, if each for itself, and all the world for the whole, denies any such perfection of attainment, assuredly, inquirers after truth should have the most liberal range allowed them for ascertaining it.

A Doctor of Medicine should be a man fully informed of all that experiment and observation have revealed to discoverers in every range of inquiry which promises the acquisition of a new truth, or the correction of an old error. The issue depending is a matter of life and death, and the men professionally devoted to the discovery of the truths of the science, like the men empanelled to find a verdict, should have the evidence of every witness competent to testify upon the subject.

It is a final and fatal objection against the systems of medical education in vogue, that they not only make no provision for such liberality and comprehensiveness of inquiry, but absolutely prevent it.

The sick, or those who have them in charge, are now compelled to choose between practitioners who are at war with each other, and almost wholly unacquainted with the systems which they severally reject.

Assuredly, it must be the narrowness of the policy, the restraints in the organism, of our medical schools, which make them proverbs of illiberality. Even sects in religion, though they differ as widely, and on matters held to be infinitely more important, fraternize better than sects in medicine. They understand each other better, and, what is still more to the purpose, the disciples of each faith really have access more freely and fully to the teachings of their antagonists, and, therefore, asperities are abated. If the barriers that forbid comparison of medical systems were frankly removed, candor and fairness would grow up with a better mutual understanding. Science at least should be a Republic, for there only Reason is authority.

To abate these evils, and to provide the required conditions for freedom and progress in medical science, the subscribers have procured an act of incorporation from the Legislature of Pennsylvania, dated 8th May, 1854, for the establishment in Philadelphia of the

## INDEPENDENT MEDICAL SCHOOL OF PENNSYLVANIA.

The constitution of this school, its powers and policy, are based upon the

### VOLUNTARY SYSTEM

which differs from the system that we have been discussing, in all those respects, general and special, which require reformation.

It is republican in spirit, free in its policy, just and equal in its operation, diametrically opposed to the middle-age despotism of the existing dynasties in medicine, easy of introduction, and eminently practical in its proposed agency. Yet it does not, and cannot, interfere with the organization, procedure, or interests of the present schools, farther than it shall tend to advance them in prosperity and usefulness. Not one of the professors in the established colleges, who is eminently worthy of the chair which he occupies, need lose, or is likely to lose, a single student under the operation of the plan proposed.

It introduces no new or distinct system of tuition; it organizes no Faculty of Teachers; decides no controversies in doctrine; prefers no method of curative treatment; and exerts no

favoritism toward any party among physicians. It claims no fees, and has no interests which can enlist it in any warfare; and it has no commitments which might pervert its agency, or lead to any abuse of its functions.

It concedes and recognizes an equality of rights, and an even levelness of respectability, to all regular colleges as the accredited exponents of the various systems; and it accords to all the Professors of the colleges, as well as to all Independent Teachers who have the talent and character to gather a class of pupils around them, the whole effective worth of their powers to serve in the vocation of medical and scientific tuition. From the nature of its powers and offices, they cannot be used to the prejudice of any school or teacher whatever.

As a Medical College, its constitution resolves it into a Board of Examiners, simply, with no other administrative functions than that of conferring degrees in medicine. Its reformatory action will be in its tendency to emancipate and liberalize medical education, and to extend its scope over the whole field of tributary study.

The Corporators of the Independent College of Medicine, or the Trustees chosen by them, are authorized to appoint a Board of Examiners, embracing such Physicians as shall be competent to examine in all the branches of medicine, and auxiliary sciences; who shall, also, represent the different doctrines and schools in the profession; taking care that every such examiner shall be a regularly educated and respectable physician, and free in character and conduct from all taint of quackery, nostrum-vending, or other form of charlatanism. In addition to this power of appointment vested in the corporators, the Governor of the State is authorized to name three members of the board; and every chartered Medical College within the Commonwealth has the privilege of appointing one.

To the Board of Examiners thus constituted, the applicant for a diploma will address himself, and he will be required to produce satisfactory evidence of his formal study of the profession, or of such branches of it as may rightly entitle him to a degree—that he has attended what is called two courses of lectures on those branches, or, as an approximate statement, that he has had one thousand hours of instruction from the chairs in which they are taught—in a word, that he has

had a regular scientific medical education, before he can be admitted to an examination; and, upon his examination, he must satisfy the Board that he has made adequate attainments in all those fundamental departments of the study, which are, or ought to be, the same in all the schools, and that he has, also, fairly mastered such specialty in remedial theory and practice as he shall have chosen to adopt.

The Board of Examiners, provided for by the Constitution, will embrace a large number of members, having, indeed, no limit short of that comprehensiveness of number and variety which is required to meet and satisfy all the requisitions of the plan. From among these the applicant will be required to select seven, or more, to whom he will submit his pretensions.

This liberty of choice will secure him an impartial examination—it will organize the tribunal which must decide upon his qualifications, according to the faith he has adopted; and, it will afford him, besides, the opportunity of having the names of all his Teachers, along with those of the particular Examiners whom he may prefer, attached to his diploma. The seven or more, so chosen by him, will examine him in the presence of the Board.

These outlines of the Voluntary System will serve to indicate its capabilities, and to demonstrate its practicability; especially, its power of inducing all desirable improvements in the economy of medical tuition, and of conforming to them, as they shall be progressively evolved.

Its advantages are really so numerous and important that we cannot here undertake to give them their deserved consideration. We must content ourselves by submitting, or rather suggesting, a few of them.

The Trustees have no patronage, carrying with it professional honor and pecuniary profit, to bestow. Divisions and differences among the Board of Examiners are nullified by the student's power of selecting freely from among them the judges of his qualifications. No combinations among them, arising from prejudice, or bigotry, or interest, can be made mischievously effective. The diplomas issued will be worth just the weight of the names attached to them, backed by the general credit of the institution; and they will be worth no less; for as there will be no balloting by the Examiners con-

cerned, every signature will certify the competency of the graduate in the branch which it represents. Thus the certainty and the equity of the decision will be at once insured, and its value accurately estimated.

But this policy accommodates itself to other and equally important requirements of a perfected system. The student under it may, at will, extend his studies to any number of branches of medical and associate sciences, beyond the standard requirement, and, to several systems of practice; and secure the due attestation of his attainments therein, and so take honors in the exact measure of his acquirements. For, such diplomas will not be mystical documents in a dead language, and on a dead level, but will correspond to all differences of attainment, and certify them unequivocally; and, they will thus incite emulation by rewarding it, and induce liberal extension of study, by attesting it.

Another advantage of the plan, and a very valuable one, is, that it will allow of successive examinations. A diploma will not issue till the applicant has passed in the standard number and variety of branches, but, his examination for each of these may be had at different and distant periods; and even after the ordinary series shall have been completed, he may add the additional honors which he shall be able by after attainments to earn. Thus, among other things, the desirable extension of the customary term of pupilage may be effected, without danger of misconstruction, for it will be justly taken to arise from the expansion of his studies. Moreover, a failure to satisfy a particular examiner at one time, will not be followed by the disgrace which, under the old system, attaches to a rejection; and the Board will be under no inducement of compassion to waive the duty of rendering strict justice, out of tenderness for the applicant's feelings and fame.

Naturally and necessarily, such gradual examinations will favor and induce a more methodical order of study than the present system of graduation permits, and the student will be thereby relieved of the greatest share of his embarrassments, and delivered from the apprehension of an ordeal, such as the several members of the Faculty before whom he appears could scarcely endure. Six or seven examinations, on as many diverse departments of science, encountered in but little more

than as many successive hours,—always in less than as many days,—must be either a terror or a sham. In fact they are too much of both to abide a candid criticism.

It is quite impossible, within the space to which we are necessarily limited, to review with adequate completeness the system which demands the reformation proposed, or to exhibit the principles and workings of the scheme by which it is to be effected. With those who have deeply considered the one, and those who are familiar with the history of the other, no argument can be necessary. In Germany, in all past time, the voluntary system has been in operation so far as is required to demonstrate its practicability and prove its superiority. There the principle is in full force, so far as the older methods of practice are concerned. It has not all the liberality in application to the more recent schools which its spirit would embrace; but the student's liberty of hearing, and the qualified physician's liberty of teaching, have never been abridged; and, to the extent which the policy obtains, its benefits are, by the largest experience, put beyond all controversy. It is for the United States of America, the most progressive of the nations, but as yet behind the most progressive of the sciences, to give the Voluntary System its fullest and most beneficent application. The first republic which has established and reconciled order and liberty in its political, religious, and social institutions, is destined, also, to inaugurate the reign of justice and freedom in the economy of the liberal sciences.

The formal organization of "The Independent Medical School of Pennsylvania," its by-laws, method of procedure, and such details, as are necessary for the information of students and the profession, are reserved for another publication, but the generalities of its design may be inferred sufficiently from what has been said, and from the following summary of the ideas which it embraces:—

The qualifications peremptorily required as the conditions of graduation, and without which no diploma ought to be issued, are, competent attainments in Chemistry, Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, Therapeutics and Materia Medica, Surgery, and Midwifery.

Proficiency in these branches, it will regard as indispensable. In this it does not differ from the average requirements of the

established schools of medicine. Six of these branches are substantially the same among all parties and sects. In *Materia Medica* and *Therapeutics*, only, is there any considerable diversity of theory and practice. And the Independent School differs from them all in nothing except that it recognizes them all.

But besides embracing them all, and allowing all their claims alike, it makes provision for, and endeavors to induce a thorough systematic study of, such other branches of a complete medical education as—*Botany*, *Pharmacy*, *Dietetics*, *Medical Jurisprudence*, and the treatment of the *Insane*. Nor does it overlook any of the natural sciences related serviceably to the *Healing Art*; and it is capable of a like attention to the numerous sub-divisions of study within the customary departments of medicine; such specialties, for instance, as, treatment of the diseases of the *Eyes*, of the *Ears*, and of the *Teeth*, *Microscopic Anatomy*, *Comparative Anatomy*, and, whatever else may be made a separate and integral division of medical learning.

For all such specialties, superadded to the standard established by the prevailing usage, it has a place, and will exercise a fostering care.

The students, having perfect freedom of choice thus secured to them, will be at once incited and enabled to extend, vary and methodize their studies, without any other limits than those of their own time, talents, and means; and these will be found vastly more available under the new system than the disorder and restraint of the old can possibly be made to allow; and all who, under this better order of tuition and more equitable distribution of honors, shall qualify themselves beyond the customary limits of professional study, will have their just claims upon the public confidence endorsed by competent authority.

The new system, it will be observed, accomodates itself with the happiest facility to that which has hitherto been accepted by the profession and the public, but endeavors, and is every way adapted, to extend and improve it.

The Corporators entertain no doubt of the success of the Independent School, or of its efficiency for the excellent ends which it has in view. Its operation does not depend upon the

assent or support of any establishment or party, so far that their opposition can defeat it. It is not in any such sense or degree hostile to their interests or prepossessions, that any such opposition is to be apprehended; and it is safe to expect that, so soon as its grand aim, Liberty of Teaching and Liberty of Hearing, is secured, all narrow-minded hostilities will rapidly abate, all favoritism be overthrown by freedom of competition, and that a new spirit of liberty and emulation will animate both lecturers and students—that it will bring about a sound and healthful controversy upon contested doctrines by exposing them to candid examination before competent audiences, and especially—that the free intermingling, of students under an acknowledged respectability of the several hostile systems, and an equal allowance of them by public law and authoritative professional opinion, will speedily remove the bigotries which now discredit the profession, retard its progress, and impair its usefulness.

In this hope, and with these aims, the proposed institution is submitted to the judgment of the public.

#### NAMES OF CORPORATORS.

JOHN P. BROCK,	Philadelphia,	ROBERT P. KING,	Philadelphia,
HENRY C. CAREY,	“	EDWARD M. LEWIS,	“
EDWARD M. DAVIS	“	W. T. LINNARD,	“
ISAAC R. DAVIS,	“	ADOLPHUS LIPPE,	“
WILLIAM MORRIS DAVIS,	“	S. W. MIFFLIN,	Pittsburg,
HENRY DUFFIELD,	“	EDWARD P. MITCHELL,	Philadelphia,
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WILLIAM IRVINE,	Bellefonte, Pa.	WILLIAM D. KELLY,	“
JAMES KAY,	Philadelphia,	&c.	&c. &c.

*Direct letters to Philadelphia Post Office, Box 453.*

## CHARLES L. BRACE, HOME-LIFE IN GERMANY.

NEW YORK, Scribner, 1853.

I cannot leave Halle without expressing my sense of the contrast between the American and German Universities.

Whatever our Colleges may have done, they have certainly in one respect proved a failure—they have never succeeded in producing any genuine intellectual enthusiasm whatever, among the mass of the students. I never yet met a set of college-men in America, who took any deep interest in their pursuits. The idea with most is, that college-life is a kind of wearisome sea voyage—the great object lying beyond—and that their first duty to the studies is to get rid of them. With some of the best minds, half of the most laborious efforts of the four years are spent in gulling tutors, and *rushing* through recitations on small capital. If the lesson is broken up, or the lecture put off, it is considered a victory. The teacher is the student's natural enemy, in our colleges. Those who do study, work so mechanically, for "honors," or under some equally unworthy motive, that it is hard to imagine any high intellectual interests in the pursuit. The thing is the more remarkable, as in all the intellectual pursuits of active life we find in America the most absorbed enthusiasm and activity. But the moment we enter a college, even among men no younger than those without, it is all changed. The student's business is a *bore*—a task—a punishment—and the sooner it is over the better.

There are exceptions to these remarks; but I am sure that in their general truth, I shall have the agreement of the mass of college graduates throughout the country, whether they care to express it or not.

The appearance of things in a German university is utterly different, and one sees at once that the common idea of their pursuits, is quite another from that of our students at home. There is the deepest attention in the lectures. The students constantly discuss and talk over their studies. There is as much enthusiasm among them for an abstract theme, or a scientific subject they are investigating, as there is among the politicians or the business men without, in their pursuits. This studying is their business, their profession, and they know it; and the mass of them would no more think of *shirking* lectures, than a botanist would of getting rid of his flowers, or a lawyer of his briefs.

The feelings towards the teachers, too, is very different. With less outward difference than with us, there is a far deeper love and reverence—a feeling that there are great men among them, who are helping them on to higher stages of knowledge, and that any assistance from them is a kindness, and that their intercourse and instruction is a privilege to be received with gratitude.

I am aware that there are many exceptions to this, especially among the "corps members," and exceptions there naturally would be, where so many attend the university merely because it is required by their station in society; but among the great majority of those who enter the institution, as with us, for the sake of *education*, and who expect to gain their livelihood by their intellectual efforts, I am confident there is generally this high intellectual enthusiasm—an enthusiasm which seems to me almost utterly wanting in our colleges.

The causes of this difference will not be found in the greater youth of our students, as contrary to my expectation, there is very little difference in years. Nor will it altogether in the different nature of the studies pursued, as the last half of our course corresponds almost precisely with a part of the course in a German university. The great and prominent reason of this difference is in the fact that the German system is, from beginning to end a *voluntary system*. No student is obliged to attend lectures. No account is taken of presence or absence. No strict supervision is maintained over him with respect to his studies. The whole matter is left to his own sense of responsibility, or his interest in the subject taught. He is treated at once as a *man*—as a reasonable and responsible man. And the effect is, with a few exceptions, what we might expect—he acts like one. The idea is not in any way brought before his mind, that the studies are a task, a burden, placed on him by another. He can stay away or attend, as he chooses. The whole impression left is that study is a privilege, an intellectual pleasure.

This is not the idea in our colleges. And whether this be the right explanation or not of the difference, the fact is worth considering. And it is worth considering also, that where the voluntary system is tried, as in our professional schools, the intellectual life, the enthusiasm for study, is far higher than what appears under the other system.

We know that against the evils mentioned here, many of the teachers of our colleges have struggled long and earnestly. That more than anything else, they have labored to infuse into college life a higher moral enthusiasm. If they have not succeeded, the fault, with many, has been in the system, not in themselves.

No one can doubt, of course, that even with these defects, our college system has done much for the thought of the country. But in my opinion, the great benefit of the course, the highest intellectual life, will be found to be not so much from the regular studies as from the *contact* of the student's minds one with another, from the general intercourse, from the "voluntary studies," and from those literary and debating societies which form the most original feature of our college course. [Chart. 19, pp. 176-179.]



