

## DR. BENJAMIN M. SMITH'S REPORT ON THE PRUSSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL SYSTEM

(FINAL INSTALMENT)

### SEMINARIES FOR TEACHERS.

The last topic of enquiry presented in your letter will now be considered. You ask, "How are teachers obtained?"

Formerly, schoolmasters were appointed by the parish authorities, without any previous examination on their literary qualifications, excepting their knowledge of the catechism, and ability to read, write, sing and cypher. Numbers employed in keeping sheep in the summer, were transferred to the business of *keeping school* in the winter. The nobility who held some appointments, often conferred them on their valets and grooms, as rewards for services. Unsuccessful mechanics and merchants often supplied the place of teachers in the lowest schools, and disappointed candidates for the learned professions assumed the office of instructors in those of more elevated character. In short, the whole business was conducted very loosely, and often he who was good for nothing else, "would do" for an office of the most delicate and difficult nature.

In 1748, an institution for the instruction of teachers, was founded by a benevolent gentleman of Berlin, which in a few years received royal notice and patronage. The pupils were mostly young mechanics, who were scattered in various parts of the city, and much impeded in their studies by other avocations. Yet the institution did well in its time.

Frederick II. appropriated \$2000 annually, (in 1771,) for the improvement of country schools, declaring that "primary education had been too much neglected: it is imperative to remove bad masters and re-

place them by competent men." As he had removed native custom house officers to make way for those imported from France, he ordered, with similar arbitrariness, that teachers should be brought from Saxony. But good teachers were not always to be had in Saxony. Frederic could theorize as a philosopher, and fight as a soldier, but he lacked patience and perseverance to contend with prejudice, and things went on very much as before till 1810, except in the province of Brandenburg, where partial success had attended the efforts of individuals and the local authorities, in establishing several of these institutions. At this period great improvements were made in the original school in Berlin; and after being adopted by the government, it was removed to Potsdam and reorganized under the uniform system which I shall now explain.

The government assumes the organization and support of these institutions. In some cases, private liberality had already endowed such schools to a partial extent, as seen above; in others, they have arisen on foundations designed for other purposes; and in others, they receive contributions from the regency governments in which they are established, or from benevolent individuals.

Their government is in the hands of the provincial school boards, under the inspection of the minister and central board. Every institution reports annually, the number, health, order, discipline, and morality of the pupils, together with the number and changes of instructors, the results of examinations, and any interesting occurrences connected with the school; also its wants, and suggestions as to its improvement. The frequent publication of these reports awakens and preserves a lively interest in their behalf, communicates a spirit of laudable emulation to the several schools, and diffuses through the community useful information on the science of instruction and the art of education.

Before proceeding to describe these

This is the last of four instalments in which an important Virginia document is again made generally available. Dr. Smith's report originally appeared as House Document No. 26, and was issued as of February 1, 1839.



schools, I will remark that clergymen or teachers of skilful character may train up masters for primary schools by permission of the provincial boards. This regulation is necessary, as there is yet a deficiency of these institutions. Every encouragement possible is held out to young men desirous of teaching to frequent some teachers' seminary; and one powerful inducement has recently been proposed, by making the graduates of such more eligible to places than others. Besides the great teachers' seminaries, as they are styled, of which I shall now speak, there are numerous establishments of similar character, though of lower grade and smaller size, designed to prepare teachers for the very poorest villages. These are greatly aided by government, as well as private liberality. In describing the larger, I shall of course describe these, so far as they rise in character to the standard of the former.

Every seminary for teachers must be furnished with *buildings* sufficient to accommodate the director and his family, the steward and his, and the teachers, whether married or single, if possible, together with all the pupils, so that the latter may constantly be under the eyes of their preceptors. Connected with these buildings must be a garden, bath houses, mechanic shops and grounds for gymnastic exercises. They must, of course, be provided with the necessary apparatus for scientific instruction.

#### INSTRUCTORS.

A *director* and as many *assistants* as necessary constitute the faculty of each seminary. The number of the latter is of course varied—generally five or six—though sometimes not more than two, and sometimes as many as thirteen are needed. Five may be considered a fair average. The selection of directors has been made from the ranks of gymnasial teachers, or from those of the learned professions, where individuals may have distinguished themselves by their knowledge of the science of instruction, or otherwise manifested a pe-

culiar aptitude for conducting such institutions. Hereafter these seminaries will supply their own teachers, while supplying those for the primary schools. The qualifications necessary for the regular instructors are of course those necessary for the highest grade of instruction in those institutions for which those seminaries design to prepare teachers. That is, they must be acquainted with the various branches of instruction in those schools; but they must, in order to give proper aid to those preparing to teach, possess a more thorough and accurate knowledge of each branch than if only required to teach children. A knowledge of the Latin and some modern languages is also required of the principal assistants.

#### PUPILS AND COURSE OF STUDY.

The *age* at which *pupils* may be received is seventeen or eighteen; though older persons may be admitted. None can enter younger. In order to admission, they must have received a good primary school education, must be sound of body, of good moral character, must possess musical talents and have improved them, so far as the acquisition of the art of singing, and the ability of performing on the piano forte and violin. The request for admission, must be presented the director, some time previous to that of entrance, and be accompanied by certificates to the possession of the above named qualifications, and also a promise of the father or guardian, or some responsible person, to guarantee the payment of the sum required for admission, in cases where any such requisition is made. Besides these provisions to prevent the admission of improper candidates, every applicant must sustain an examination on his knowledge of grammar, reading, religion, composition and arithmetic, together with his musical attainments and talents, both instrumental and vocal. Even with all the qualifications required, if a pupil is found to manifest no aptitude to teach, by his experiments in the schools for practice, attached to these sem-



inaries, he may be dismissed. Every pupil receiving aid from the state, must obligate himself to teach for at least three years, after completing his course, or refund the money expended for his education.

The course of study prescribed, and the mode of instruction, must necessarily bear a strong resemblance to that already delineated for primary schools. On every branch, a greater degree of proficiency, is of course expected, and it is therefore taught more thoroughly and extensively. The scientific course of study, in our best colleges, may correctly represent it. The pupils are engaged during the first half of their course, whether of two or three years, (most generally, the course is completed in two years,) in the acquisition of knowledge from books. During the latter part of this first half of the course, the study of *paedagogics* is introduced by that of mental philosophy and psychology. The pupils are also instructed in the science of method, by which they are guided to the best possible means for acquiring or teaching any science or art. They are thus prepared for the duties of the latter half of the course which consist in experiments in teaching in the schools for practice already noticed, one or more of which are located conveniently to the seminary. These experiments are made in presence of the director, who corrects errors and gives hints, while they are thus engaged, and makes their exercises subjects of more special remark at a proper time.

#### DISCIPLINE.

The discipline of these seminaries is strict, yet kind. As in the primary schools, the most diligent attention is given to secure regularity and system in every pursuit. This could not be otherwise, in institutions which prepare men for a business, requiring more than most others, the utmost order, punctuality and promptness. The punishments are, admonition, deprivation of privilege, suspension or expulsion.

#### STATISTICS.

There are now thirty-three seminaries of

this character in Prussia, besides the very small schools for similar purposes, already noticed. The government expends annually about \$85,000 for their support. They contain about 1600 pupils, and thus afford nearly 800 teachers annually, which is only 50 less, than the annual need.

There could scarcely be devised a more efficient means of promoting the cause of common school education, with the same amount of money. These institutions are acquiring a great reputation. Most of what I have stated above, is the result of personal observation in a seminary, at Weisenfels, about 20 miles west of Leipsic, and of conversation with the highly accomplished and intelligent director of the institution. While there I met a gentleman from Scotland, the sole object of whose residence of three weeks, in the place, was the examination of the structure and operation of the school, in order to establish one similar to it, in his native country. I mention this fact, for the tribute is worth more, coming as it does, from a country, which has long been proverbial for the excellence of its primary schools. Similar visits have been made by gentlemen from Sweden, Denmark and England, and M. Cousin, in his reports, assigns these institutions, the most important place in the work of promoting the cause of primary instruction in Prussia.

Institutions of a similar character for the education of female teachers exist in Westphalia, according to Dr. Julius. As already intimated, however, there is great backwardness on this subject in Prussia, considering the general advancement made. It is probable that a better state of things will gradually succeed to proper efforts for the education of female teachers, and their abilities to instruct, may be more highly appreciated.

#### *Private and Boarding Schools: Military and Charitable Institutions, &c.*

I notice here some minor topics, which



have found no appropriate place in the body of this report.

By private schools, are meant those undertaken by individuals at their own cost, without aid from the state, which, permitting them to manage the minutiae, still reserves to itself, a general supervision.

Thus every person desirous of opening such a school must inform the school authorities, and when this application has been sent by them to the provincial board, the petitioner is directed to submit to an examination, by the county inspector or some proper person. Should the moral character of the petitioner be exceptionable, however, the petition may be at once refused. When license to open a school is granted, the establishment may be advertised. The supervision of it, is assigned to a member of the school committee or one of the school directors. It has relation only to the discipline, and progress of instruction. Should any evil practice be introduced, bad books or masters be employed, it is in the power of the school authorities, to remonstrate, and if the evil be not removed, to complain to the provincial boards, who may withdraw the license and close the school. No person obtaining a license for one kind of school can open another, without a new license, preceded by an examination. No unmarried man can open a school for girls. Widows and unmarried ladies of competent abilities, are encouraged in this service. All changes affecting the school, intermissions, examinations, and final or temporary dissolution, prices of tuition, and the like, must be made known to the school authorities.

Persons desirous of receiving boarders, either for public or private schools, shall submit themselves to an examination, by the local school authorities, on their moral fitness. Their houses shall also be subjects of attention, as the bodily health, as well as moral and intellectual improvement of children is a matter of importance.

Masters who give lessons by the hour,

and persons opening schools for instruction in any particular branch or branches of moral, mental or physical education, are in like manner under the supervision of the school authorities. These remarks, however, do not affect the relations of private or family teachers, who are employed in the capacity of literary friends for children, by those who can afford the expense.

Infant or Dames' schools for children under 7 years of age, may be established by the permission of the local authorities and county inspectors. It is necessary that the persons who establish them be free from reproach, of competent capacity to exercise a beneficial influence over the manners and reason of the children, that their dwellings be located in healthy places, and sufficiently large. It is the duty of the school authorities to see, that the children are not kept beyond the proper age to frequent, either the public school, or some one of equal grade.

There are various establishments of a peculiar character in Prussia, in which the general mode of instruction, and discipline pursued in primary schools prevails. Of the institutions for military science I need say nothing, as this subject is connected, rather with the federal, than state policy. It is gratifying to state, that the orphans of soldiers are specially provided for, by orphan schools, in which they are well trained till fourteen, and after that period otherwise kept under governmental patronage, till able to provide for themselves.

There are in the large cities, many charity schools, for those children of misfortune and crime, whom the benevolent provisions of the general system, cannot so well reach. In Berlin alone, there are 4500 such. The attendance of these children is secured by a special regulation. At a certain period, each charity school furnishes the pupils with a printed certificate of attendance: the school commissioners at the same time, inspect the census of the city, and that of the schools under their control. These elements enable them to ascertain the



number of absentees, and provides against all obstacles, resulting from the irregular life of those who are shifting from place to place. Before the adoption of this plan, there were 8000 children in Berlin, who did not attend school, now there are not as many hundred. It has exercised a happy influence on the regular public schools. Every charity scholar is required to pay at least  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents, and not more than 30, per annum, and this sum materially aids the income, and by the principle already alluded to, enhances the value of the schools in the estimation of the parents and children. The instruction of these schools is that of the primary schools generally, omitting the highest branches, and limiting some of the others to less extent, as the term is 6 instead of 8 years tuition. The state pays \$12,000 annually to support 14 such schools in Berlin, each containing 300 pupils.

Connected with charity schools may be noticed two institutions of a more special character. One of these is a school for vagabond youth and juvenile offenders against the laws. This is supported by private bounty, and with a manual labour department, consisting of various mechanics' shops, and a garden, the pupils earn about one half of their expenses. When I visited the school, though on the sabbath evening, the pupils presented an appearance every way betokening their origin and previous character. They attended well, however, to a short address I made them, and from the reports of many connected with the school, it appears to be the means of reformation to many of the most vagabond and vicious. Religious instruction is most prominent. The other institution alluded to, is a prison school. Whenever a parent is imprisoned for crime, and his children likely to be left destitute, they are removed with him to the prison, subject of course to school confinement only, and maintained and educated, by the government, for useful employment.

There are 27 such schools, as the first above named, in the kingdom, and where

there are not enough children of that character to form a school, they are scattered among the different families, and specially attended to on the sabbath, besides sharing with others in the instruction of the parish school during the week. When speaking of the methods and subjects of instruction, I adverted to the "Real-schools," of a character answering to the Polytechnic schools of France, and corresponding to some of the features, which distinguish the national academy at West Point, in this country. I have no means for giving very accurate information as to the number and condition of such schools in Prussia. I visited one in Berlin, and was politely furnished with its reports, and shewn its arrangement and apparatus, by the director. From these sources, I present a brief account of the institution. It is one of the highest character, and more strictly a school of trades, arts and manufactures. Its design is to convert "*knowledge to practice*." The studies are arithmetic, algebra, geometry, natural philosophy, astronomy, and mathematical geography, natural history, chemistry, geography, history, the French, English and German languages, architecture, drawing, projections, painting, &c. The arts of dyeing, mixing and making paint, engraving and sculpture, and others connected with the sciences taught, are also subjects of attention for such as desire it. This school is comparatively expensive, but it is certainly of a highly useful character. It is well calculated to draw out extraordinary talent for the acquisition of any fine art, or the more difficult and nicer efforts of human ingenuity, as well as to prepare the mechanic and civil engineer for attaining greater skill and perfection in their respective departments. An interesting feature of the plan is the study of agricultural chemistry, and of botany and geology, in connexion with it, to prepare the student for a scientific and skilful culture of the earth. The building is well arranged with good lecture rooms, and apparatus for all the sci-



ences, including collections in botany, mineralogy, geology, zoology, mathematical instruments, models for painting, sculpture, drawing, engraving, writing and statuary.

This institution is under the supervision of the provincial and state school authorities, and belongs to the rank of secondary instruction.

Such, sir, is the result of my effort to comply with your request. It would have given me great pleasure to have introduced a notice of gymnsial and university instruction, but I fear I have already proved more prolix than you desired.

I do earnestly desire that this report may aid you in your patriotic efforts. I fear, sir, that I have not succeeded in imparting just that kind of information you desired, in the best manner, yet whatever be the imperfections of the report itself, I flatter myself it presents the outlines of the Prussian system in such a manner as to render them intelligible. Should these afford you any useful hints, my object will have been accomplished, and I shall ever feel a most sincere pleasure, in reflecting on any effort of my feeble instrumentality, in such a cause.

Accept sir, my assurances, &c., &c.,

BENJ. M. SMITH.

Danville, Va., January 1st, 1839.

### SUGGESTIONS

#### ON THE APPLICATION OF THE SYSTEM OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS TO VIRGINIA.

On perusing the foregoing report, the question may naturally arise, "can this system be applied to our own state?" And as the answer is given, the importance of its consideration may be decided. But I take the liberty of remarking, that while no one can for a moment suppose the institutions suitable to a monarchy, *can* apply to a republic, still we may derive from them many important principles of action, and obtain valuable hints, and discover plans worthy of imitation. In this view, I am disposed to

consider the information contained in this report may be valuable.

It is with great diffidence I now propose to your consideration a few suggestions which have occurred to my mind on those plans and principles presented in this system, which appear to me worthy of entering into the composition of a system of primary schools for our own state.

1. The principle of state and parental obligation to educate all the children of the country, expressed by the phrase "school duty" among the Germans, must be recognized to some extent. Says a writer in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, No. 24th: "If children provided their own education, and could be made sensible of its importance, it would be a *want*, and might be left to the natural demand and supply; but it is provided by the parents, and paid for by those who do not profit by its results, and is therefore a *duty* liable to be neglected." Numerous decisions of the English courts take a similar view of this subject; and I think some of our own laws are based on the correctness of this principle: thus, it is made the duty of every master to furnish his apprentice with a certain amount of instruction, and our state publicly proclaims its sense of obligation to the destitute by appropriating a large amount of money for their instruction. If, as Burke said, "education is the defence of nations," I see but little difference in the character of that obligation, which every state imposes on its citizens to perform military duty, and that which a state imposes, which obliges itself and parents to educate all the children. If, as we often hear, the prosperity and happiness, nay, even the existence of our republic, is based on the combined virtue and intelligence of the people, it becomes a question of practical importance and great moment, whether the state is not bound to see that this virtue and intelligence be promoted as far as education can promote them: and if the protection of life, liberty and property be that which every citizen



may claim at the hands of the state, then may every one claim that every child be educated, and thus the safeguards of prevention of evil be added to those salutary restraints of law by which we are protected. To what extent this principle should be recognized in any plan of common schools, I am not able to say. I do not believe, in a popular government, any such principle, if recognized by law, could be enforced to its full extent, without much caution and previous efforts to explain it fully and commend it to the approbation of the people.

2. The mode of supporting schools pursued in Prussia, recommends itself to our attention. The connexion of privilege with the performance of duty, or the suspension of sharing the benefits of schools, on sharing in their support, seems as necessary as the formation of a system.

We well know that the greatest obstacle to the operation of our present system has arisen from the very terms on which aid has been offered. You must confess the misfortune of poverty, ere you can receive the alms of charity, but poverty and pride are generally found together. I mean false pride, and no school commissioner need be told the numerous trials to which this feature of the system has exposed his patience.

Now, make the support of schools as the support of government, a matter of general taxation, based on some similar grounds as other systems of taxation; and though you may tax the childless to educate the offspring of parents, yet I believe the general benefits flowing to a community, from the universal diffusion of education, would more than repay such individuals, even in dollars and cents, for the apparently unjust expense to which they might be subjected. Is it no interest of the wealthy but childless man to have the value of property enhanced, the expenses of prisons and criminal prosecutions and poorhouses lessened? Does not education contribute directly to national wealth, by increasing the capacity of each individual in the community, and enabling him to turn his powers to the best

account? by quickening ingenuity and promoting inventions and discoveries? by enabling men to push their researches farther into the powers and productions of the natural world? Let a comparison of Anglo-America with Spanish America, of England with Italy, of France with Spain, of Scotland with Ireland, and of Europe with China, or any part of civilized christendom with any part of Africa or Asia, answer such queries. "The muscular force of England and France are about equal," says Baron Dupin, "Yet the English by machinery have increased their force to a power equal to that of 25 millions, while France only rises to eleven." A single invention for supplying water to London saves to that city about 40 millions of dollars annually. But the position that education is wealth, is too obvious to need farther illustration.

I am well aware that many obstacles exist to the application of this principle. Our sparse population would render it impossible to furnish schools on this plan to some neighbourhoods, without great expense. But we are not to be deterred from the adoption of a principle, because its practical operation is liable to obstacles, in some cases. In neighbourhoods where a few wealthy persons reside, this principle would operate less injuriously on pecuniary interests, than the present system of private schools.

3. You have doubtless observed that the efficiency and success of the Prussian system, depend most materially on the qualification of teachers. How can the impregnable walls, in which ignorance is entrenched, be demolished, except by trained soldiers? This subject, as already observed, has attracted the serious attention of several legislatures. By the latest returns of the Massachusetts school board, the subject seems to awaken great interest in that state. Indeed, when we have devised the best theory of common schools, we are met at the threshold of all our calculations on its practicability by the question, "how can teachers be obtained?" For, in vain, may



we speculate and plan systems, and declaim about popular ignorance, so long as we are unable to find men competent to teach. You may build school-houses in every district, 6 miles square, tax the people to the last point of endurance, pour our appropriations with princely munificence, and force children to school at the point of a sword, yet if you permit a man with "iron hands and wooden brains" to preside over your school, all will be vain and worse than in vain. Why should we educate a lawyer, or physician, or clergyman, why expect an apprenticeship of the mechanic, who shoes our horses, or paints our houses, and yet suppose that the most difficult and trying of all tasks can be performed by one who has had no experience and no instruction?

I am aware of obstacles here also. We are told that the business of teaching affords so little remuneration that we cannot secure the men. For our lowest schools, this is a serious obstacle. It does not apply to the academies and high schools. I am only permitted in this place, to throw out a few hints.

1. Educate teachers and you enhance their value. A good teacher can do more for a child in six months, than a bad one in two years. But farther, it is no difficult matter to perceive, that what is worth nothing, is dear at any price, and I apprehend one reason why good teachers are poorly paid, is because so many indifferent teachers have been too well paid.

2. Educate teachers and you elevate the dignity of the profession. Much of the aversion of young men to an engagement in this business, arises from the low station it has been permitted to occupy.

But supposing the work undertaken. It must be done by the state. This will cost a large sum, if separate institutions are established. I would venture to suggest the connexion of a teachers' department with each of our colleges, and also one for teachers of Latin schools, with the university. This would render the charge on the state lighter. By an appropriation to such insti-

tutions of a sum, sufficient to defray the tuition of every young man, who might be received as a candidate for the office of teacher, and another for supporting an additional professor in each, who should have the special charge of their instruction in the duties of their future office, I apprehend we might secure much of the benefits of teachers' seminaries, and avoid much of the expense, incidental to separate establishments. Some suitable arrangement might be made, requiring youth thus educated, to devote themselves to the business of instruction for a definite term. Provision could be introduced for defraying all, or nearly all the expenses of poor young men, of proper natural abilities, and the power of deciding on such cases, vested in the officers of the college, or better in certain persons in various parts of the state. Such a plan would cost much, it may be, but what then? Is it necessary to advert to the fact, that we are consulting to save the expenses incidental to an ignorant, uneducated community? England, with a population of six times that of Scotland, furnishes nearly 11 times as many criminals. Ireland, with a population about three times that of Scotland, and one half that of England, furnishes ten times the criminals of the former, and nearly as many as the latter. England sentences to death 480, Ireland 197, and Scotland 6, in one year. Judges and sheriffs will tell you, sir, that ignorance and crime are companions: and your own observation will confirm the statement. But I cannot dwell on this subject.

4. The systematic arrangement of the external organization of the Prussian school system, must be obvious to every one. Can we not effect something of this kind? We have already something similar established. Our superintendent of the literary fund supplies the position of the minister. A board already exists. In every county men can be found to undertake the duties of school councillors and inspectors, and in every neighbourhood school directors may be had. We must, it is true, pay all, except



the last, and these their expenses. Whenever the subject of cost comes up, I am irresistibly disposed to ask questions similar to those above. Let us here introduce another item on this point. How much does Virginia lose annually, in young enterprising citizens who emigrate to the west, for want of employment, above that of day labourers and mechanics? and how much money is annually carried to other portions of the country by birds of passage, who have stopped to teach long enough to pocket a few hundreds, aye, to sit in seats vacated by our own sons? I intend to foster no sectional spirit by these remarks. We should welcome teachers, if they come from China, so that they serve the state and *stay with us*. I am no politician, but have heard much of southern subjection to northern manufacturers. Will some politician inform us how much we pay to the northern manufacturers of school books and teachers? We complain that young men go northward for their academic education, and yet while they can acquire as good and cheaper educations, (in institutions better endowed than our own,) than can be had at home, they are not to blame.

5. The Prussian system provides for every grade of instruction, and holds out its assistance alike to the poor, the independent and the rich. We endow a university to which those can repair, who have 400 dollars a year to expend on their education; and we offer a common school education to the poor for nothing, while the middle classes, who mainly support the whole burdens of government, are left to provide for themselves. Ought this state of things to continue?

6. I presume we may derive some useful hints from the Prussian system, on the mode and subjects of instruction.

I cannot enlarge on this topic, without entering too much into details. The introduction of history, the study of our constitutions, of the first principles of natural science, and of drawing, and above all the elements of agricultural science, appears to

me an object of great desire. I feel a peculiar delicacy in adverting to another topic,—I mean religion, not of a sect, but of the bible. I believe we might safely go this far,—to say in the proposed plan of elementary instruction,—“the bible shall be a class book, where the majority of the school patrons desire it.” And lest I might be misunderstood, I will speak my sentiments in the language of a *French* philosopher, M. Cousin, “The less we desire our schools to be *ecclesiastical*, the more ought they to be *christian*. Religion is in my eyes the best, perhaps the only basis of popular education. I know something of Europe, and never have I seen good schools where the spirit of christian charity was wanting. Primary instruction flourishes in Holland, Scotland and Germany, and in all it is profoundly religious. I am not ignorant that this advice will grate on the ears of many persons, and that I shall be thought extremely *devot* at Paris. Yet it is not from Rome, but from Berlin, that I address you. The man who holds this language is a philosopher, formerly disliked, and even persecuted by the priesthood; but this philosopher has a mind too little affected by the recollection of his own insults, and is too well acquainted with human nature and history not to regard genuine christianity as a means of civilization for the people.” Report on Public Instruction in Prussia, pp. 290-2. N. Y. edition, 1835.

And now, sir, I bring these suggestions to a close. Their worth is their only recommendation, and behind the sincerity of my desire to do good, I must shield myself from the imputation of presumption.

Let it not be supposed that a servile imitation of other countries is recommended. “The true greatness of a people does not consist in borrowing nothing from others, but in borrowing from all whatever is good, and in perfecting whatever it appropriates.”

I remain, with great respect, yours truly,

BENJ. M. SMITH.

Danville, Va., January 15th, 1839.