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THE
LADIES' REPOSITORY.

AUGUST, 1856.

DICKINSON COLLEGE.

BY REV. C. COLLINS, D. D.

I N many respects our seats of learning have the characteristics of individual life. They have their sphere and mode of action, their animating spirit, character, reputation, influence, and history. This individuality, as in the case of men, is clearly or faintly marked, vigorous or feeble, grasping with a firm hand the elements of opposition, and making a path to sure success, or it is vacillating in policy, undecided, inspiring in others little or no confidence, and making, therefore, but little impression upon the world. A well-written history of American colleges and higher seminaries, would be a contribution to the current of home literature of no mean value. Philosophically developed, it would bring out the relation of these institutions to the great cause of popular education and scientific advancement. To them is committed, directly or indirectly, the supplying of instruction for the masses, and, of course, the whole question of social order, prosperity, and respectability, so far as these depend upon the diffusion of intelligence.

Where do we find a true and firm basis for social order except in a clear understanding of the principles of individual right, as modified by the claims of society? Where do we see prosperity, either public or private, except as knowledge extends our sphere of vision, and, while it cultivates and refines the sense, supplies also increased motives for industry and enterprise? What confers respectability like a mind highly cultivated and richly stored?

But there is another aspect of the subject which such a history would reveal. It is the *inner life* of these seats of learning, where every pulse throbs with vitality, and where go on, under the hand of the educator, those quiet, subjective processes that give cast and strength to character,

and under which the youth becomes changed to the man. College life, like that of the cloister, is, for the most part, *hidden* from the world. It is not, therefore, idle. On the contrary, its hidden retreats are stirring with peculiar activities—the battle-fields where great exploits are achieved and *more* than *cities* are won. It is something to win a battle—it is more to form a Newton, a Milton, a Howard, a Luther, or a Wesley. The works of these live after them, invested with the immortality of their own natures, and transmitting perpetual blessings to mankind. They are propagated also by a species of contagion, which causes them to be continually reproduced in others, and multiplied for the benefit of the world. But the “thunderbolts of war” transmit to after generations no such memorials. Their monuments are heaps of skulls; their memory a record of sighs, and tears, and blood. The greatest blessing which God confers on earth is the truly good man—the man in whom piety combines with learning to make the character complete.

To the eye of Christian philosophy what a scene of interest does the college present! The old Spartans withdrew children from the care of their parents at a certain age, that their training afterward might be committed to the state. Something like this is involved in the modern system of college education. At a tender age, when parental solicitude is most lively, and parental protection and guardianship most needed, boys are sent from home for education. Collected together from different and remote parts of the country, strangers to each other, with varied and unequal talents, with diverse habits, dispositions, and views of life, the result of home training and affectionate intercourse with parents, brothers, and sisters, and friends, and with different plans and prospects of life, they come together in college to be fused into a general mass

by the forming hand of education. It is here that the faculties receive development, and character takes that cast and tone which, for the most part, are to continue through life. What a focus of hopes and powers, springing with young life and brimful of untried, and, as yet, unknown energies! What faculties of reason, unfolding, like the young leaves, under the genial air and sunshine of life's spring-time! What susceptibilities of excitement and hope, under the influence of opening prospects of success, honor, and usefulness! How impressible is youth; how fiery and impatient of rule, yet filled with honorable ambition, yearning for the glittering prizes of manly success, and submitting cheerfully to the restraints and spurs of discipline while climbing the steeps of knowledge! 'Tis the college which supplies the leading minds of both Church and state.

No wonder, then, that religion and state policy look with equal interest upon these seats of learning. They are cherished interests. The founders of these Christian states made them a part of the solid masonry on which the edifice of the republic was reared. With the increase of population and wealth they have multiplied with something of the same sort of regularity, and with a conviction of the same necessity which multiplies Churches as population advances, till now we have no less than one hundred and twenty-two colleges and universities, to say nothing of the forty-four theological seminaries, and the thirty-seven medical and eighteen law schools in these states.

The special object of this article is to furnish a brief history of Dickinson College, to accompany the beautiful engraving which adorns this number of the Repository. There are many readers of the Repository who take a lively interest in this ancient institution. Dating back to times coeval with the foundation of the republic, it has already existed nearly three-fourths of a century, and its alumni, by hundreds, are scattered all over the land, swelling the ranks of the learned professors, and some of them occupying posts of the highest usefulness and honor. It is also identified with the early educational movement of the Methodist Episcopal Church, since which time it has enjoyed the patronage and support of the Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New Jersey annual conferences, and become the *alma mater* of many honored ministers in these bodies. It has shared largely also in the patronage and affections of the Methodist public.

Dickinson College—so called "in memory of the great and important services rendered to his

country by his Excellency, John Dickinson, Esquire, President of the Supreme Executive Council, and in commemoration of his very liberal donation to the institution"—was incorporated in 1783, the year which closed the Revolutionary struggle, and at a time when Carlisle was considered a frontier settlement. But few colleges were then in existence—Howard, Yale, Brown, and Dartmouth, in New England; William and Mary, in Virginia; Columbia, Princeton, and the University of Pennsylvania, in the middle states, I believe, were all. Being so remote from these institutions, its patronage at first was gathered up from a widely-scattered population, especially from Maryland, Virginia, and other southern states. The College was formally opened in 1785, under the presidency of Rev. Charles Nisbet, D. D., a graduate of the University of Edinburgh. Dr. Nisbet was a Presbyterian clergyman of great celebrity for scholarship, and, at the time of his call to the presidency of the College, the settled pastor of a Church in Montrose. In that position, surrounded by affluence, intelligence, and cultivation, his removal to the new world, to build up a college amidst the hardships of frontier life, with scanty means, and in a country then exhausted by its struggles for independence, must have been attended by contrasts marked and painful to a sensitive mind. He entered, however, with vigor upon his duties, and died at his post in 1804, having filled the office of president for nineteen years. During this time, for the benefit of some of his students who were preparing for the ministry, he delivered a course of *four hundred and eighteen lectures* on systematic theology. These lectures are deserving of notice as the first course on systematic theology ever prepared and delivered in the United States.

The first faculty consisted of Rev. Charles Nisbet, D. D., President; Rev. Robert Davidson, D. D., Vice-President, and Professor of Natural Philosophy; James Ross, A. M., Professor of Latin and Greek; and Robert Johnson, A. M., Professor of Mathematics. In 1787 was held the first Commencement, at which nine students received the bachelor's degree.

During its first twenty years the College was located in the eastern part of the borough of Carlisle. Its only building then consisted of a small brick edifice on Locust alley, two stories high, and affording only four rooms, which were used for recitations and lectures. At that time the students obtained rooms and board among the families in town. This old building, venerable for its years and historic associations, is still standing,

and is used as a public school-house. In these early days the operations of the College were cramped by deficient support and by such slender accommodations; but the number of graduates, from year to year, compares respectably with any classes since. In 1792 the number was thirty-three; in 1794, twenty; in 1795, twenty-four, among whom I note the name of the Hon. Roger B. Taney, the present venerable Chief Justice of the United States.

Soon after the declaration of peace the trustees of the College commenced negotiations with Congress for the purchase of the extensive and beautiful grounds and buildings east of the borough, known as the "barracks." From times as early as the old French war in 1756, Carlisle has been a military post. From this point, in part, the recruits of Braddock's ill-fated army, it is said, were sent out. The buildings in question are extensive and commodious, and the grounds ample, making it altogether a most beautiful and desirable location for the College. These negotiations, however, were fruitless. In 1798 the square in the western part of the borough, consisting of about seven and a half acres, on which the College buildings now stand, was bought for *one hundred and fifty dollars and fifty cents*, of "Dr. Edmund Physick," the attorney of Richard and John Penn, the original proprietaries of all this part of the Cumberland Valley. On this square a large and commodious building was reared on the site of the building now known as "West College," but scarcely was it completed before it was burned to the ground. Another and much superior edifice was built in 1805. This is the building seen on the left of the picture. In the front wall it bears a tablet commemorative of the disaster above referred to. This building contains the tenement of the senior professor, the chapel, the halls of the Belles-Lettres and Union Philosophical Societies, two large rooms for their libraries, two lecture-rooms and studies for professors, several dormitories for students and apartments for the steward.

In its early history the College received from the state of Pennsylvania large gratuities in the form of lands and money. These lands, however, seem to have been disposed of without bringing any permanent advantage to its treasury. Oppressed by poverty and in constant struggle for life, the College, notwithstanding, held on the even tenor of its way, gaining increased strength in the affections of the people, and growing in reputation. On the death of Dr. Nisbet, Rev. Dr. Davidson became President *pro tempore*, and thus filled the office till 1809, when Rev. Jere-

miah Atwater, D. D., was elected President. On his resignation in 1815, Rev. Dr. John M'Knight succeeded as President *pro tempore*; after whom followed, in 1821, Rev. John M. Mason, D. D., who, in his day, was considered the ablest divine in the American Presbyterian Church. Revs. William Neill, D. D., and Samuel B. How, D. D., successively filled the office of President, bringing dates down to 1832, at which time Dr. How and the other members of the faculty resigned, and the trustees, under the influence of various causes, determined to suspend the operations of the College.

This brings us to an important era in the history of this institution. Its affairs had become inextricably embarrassed by the want of harmony between the different members of the faculty, and between the faculty and trustees, and between the trustees among themselves. The causes of this unhappy state of things we need not here present. They were disastrous to the College, and, in consequence, these halls, so long sacred to the cause of education, and already illustrious as the abode of eminent talents and scholarship, were closed, and the crowd of young men still in attendance sent home.

At this juncture the Baltimore conference was entertaining the question of establishing a college somewhere within its bounds. The educational movement in the Methodist Episcopal Church had then but just commenced. The Wesleyan University, at Middletown, had barely started in its noble career, under the patronage of the New England and New York conferences. Augusta College, in Kentucky, was in advance by a few years. These were the only two colleges then under the patronage of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Rev. Edwin Dorsey, the preacher in charge of the Methodist Church in Carlisle, aware of the wishes of the Baltimore conference in reference to the establishment of a college, brought this fact to the attention of the trustees of Dickinson College, and suggested the probability, if the transfer could be legally and fully made, that the conference would adopt it in lieu of the college which it proposed to found. The suggestion was received with favor. At the next session of the Baltimore conference a committee was appointed, consisting of Revs. Stephen G. Roszel, Andrew Hemphill, and William Hamilton, to confer with the trustees. The negotiations which followed succeeded in transferring the College, with all its lands, buildings, fixtures, libraries, apparatus, etc., in a full and satisfactory manner, to a board of trustees nominated by the Baltimore and Philadelphia annual conferences—

the Philadelphia conference in the mean time having heartily joined in the enterprise.

As soon as the new board of trustees was organized, the patronizing conferences proceeded to raise subscriptions for the endowment of the College. These soon reached the sum of \$48,000, and thereupon it was determined to open the College in September, 1834. It was, accordingly, opened at that time with the following faculty: Rev. John P. Durbin, A. M., President, and Professor of Moral Science; Merritt Caldwell, A. M., Professor of the Exact Sciences; Robert Emory, A. M., Professor of Ancient Languages; Hon. John Reed, Professor of Law; and Alexander F. Dobb, Principal of the German School. These gentlemen entered immediately upon the duties of their respective offices with a zeal and devotion which at once attracted public attention, and gave the College a rank of respectability along with the best. Since that time it has undergone several changes of administration, and been subjected to trying financial embarrassments, but its advancing career of patronage and usefulness has never been staid. The funds subscribed for its endowment, like such subscriptions generally, experienced a large discount in the collection. New buildings had to be erected for the largely increased number of students. In this and other ways, for the want of adequate means, capital was absorbed and embarrassments entailed, which have found no relief except in the scheme of endowment by the sale of cheap scholarships recently adopted and now in progress. There is reasonable prospect that the endowment, during the present year, will reach the sum of \$100,000.

It remains only to note the changes of administration and give a few figures in the way of statistics. Rev. J. P. Durbin, D. D., retired from the Presidency in 1845, and was succeeded by Rev. Robert Emory, D. D. Dr. Emory deceased in 1848, and was succeeded by Rev. Jesse T. Peck, D. D., who, in 1852, resigned, and was succeeded by the present incumbent. The faculty at present consists as follows: Rev. Charles Collins, President, and Professor of Moral Science; Rev. Herman M. Johnson, D. D., Professor of Philosophy and English Literature; James W. Marshall, A. M., Professor of Ancient Languages; Rev. Otis H. Tiffany, A. M., Professor of Mathematics; William C. Wilson, A. M., Professor of Natural Science; Alexander J. Schem, A. M., Professor of Hebrew and Modern Languages; Samuel D. Hillman, A. M., Principal of the German School; and Benjamin Arbogast, A. B., Tutor.

Since the first organization of the College, in

1785, it has seen the administration of eleven presidents, and been favored by the instruction of forty-eight different professors and fifteen tutors. In this time it has graduated eight hundred and twelve students—three hundred and thirty-seven of whom since it came into Methodist hands. Of the total number of graduates, two hundred and three have entered the Christian ministry.

The property of the College, besides the endowment before mentioned, consists in the campus, a square in the borough of Carlisle containing something more than seven and a half acres, with the two main buildings thereon, called East and West College. These are the buildings which appear in the accompanying engraving. Besides these is another, called North College, standing in the rear of West College, and also South College, a substantial stuccoed edifice, standing opposite the campus on the south side of High-street, in which is kept the Grammar school, the College library, the cabinet of minerals, the museum of natural history, etc. In this building also are the lecture-room of the Professor of Natural Science, the philosophical apparatus, the laboratory, and several rooms for students. Add to these the College library, which contains 6,200 volumes, the library of the Belles-Lettres Society, 6,683 volumes, and the library of the Union Philosophical Societies, 7,500 volumes, making fixtures whose value can not easily be calculated, but which could not probably be replaced for a sum short of \$80,000.

In the point of location, fixtures, libraries, apparatus, and the prestige of its history and long-established name, Dickinson College has long enjoyed pre-eminent advantages. The day of its pecuniary independence seems now to be at hand. Considering its want of adequate endowment hitherto, it has nobly fulfilled its mission and established strong claims to the confidence and gratitude of the country, and especially of the Church under whose patronage it is. But it deserves something more than a bare support. A more liberal policy toward it and more ample pecuniary endowments would add luster, efficiency, and enlargement to its sphere of operations. These it needs in order duly to represent the growing numbers, wealth, and intelligence of the Methodist community. The members of other Churches, as we see by the newspapers, when dying, often remember their colleges in the distribution of their estates. In this way they have become established on solid foundations. In this way also they have become lifted in reputation and influence quite above all ordinary

contingencies, and are reflecting advantages back again upon the Churches sufficient to compensate for all these bestowments a hundred times over. Nothing of this kind has ever been done for Dickinson; but we know of no cause more worthy of remembrance. It is earnestly hoped that the noble example set by other Christians will not much longer be without imitators among us. It will be a reproach to Methodism difficult to remove, if the standard of Christian character which it forms is less noble, liberal, and far-seeing than that of other evangelical, or even unevangelical, creeds.

SARAH MORRIS.

BY ALICE CARY.

OUR heroine was termed a *smart* girl by every body who knew her, and her acquaintance was only limited by the number of people in the neighborhood. And with all she was a favorite, as she deserved to be, for she was blessed with a large share of plain, common sense; and beneath the fun and frolic that always sparkled on the surface of her nature there was a quick intelligence, a singularly happy tact, and a generous amiability.

She was not pretty, but there was a heartiness in the grasp of her little black hand, and a cordiality in the brightness that illuminated her little, dark face, when it approached you, that bore you right away from consciousness of her plainness; for plain she certainly would have been to critical or indifferent eyes, if such could have looked upon her.

There was a rough honesty in her nature that no refined instinct counteracted the expression of, and that ears polite would have required to be toned down; but with the uncultivated people, among whom she dwelt, it was, perhaps, her most potent charm. Wherever there was funeral, or Church, or quilting, wedding, or sickness, there came a sprightly little body, black-handed, and black-haired, and black-eyed, laughing or weeping, as the case might require, active with words and works, or coquettish with nods and becks—tossings of ribbons and flirting with parasol and fan—rustling, and stirring, and winning all eyes from their tears or their devotions—and that was Sarah Morris.

Her horse was the gayest and the best groomed of any one in the neighborhood, the cushion of her saddle of the deepest crimson, and its stirrup of the most elaborate silver plate; and very dexterously she managed the reins as she rode, mak-

ing the spirited creature beneath her gambol and curvet to the proudly graceful extent of her management. No sober filly for her! and many a time her scorn and derision came in the shape of a cut across the flank of the more gentle and unsuspecting one her neighbor rode.

But when the offender was discovered no body was ever offended, and the quick spring of the animal and the jolt of the startled rider were sure to be followed by a laugh and a good-humored exclamation.

She might catch the chair from beneath her grandmother as she was sitting and send her headlong to the floor, but nothing was thought of it by any body, except that it was Sally Morris's way. She might laugh in meeting so loud as to make half the heads in the congregation turn toward her, but still it was Sally's ways, and no face was so rigidly solemnized that it would not relax when it saw the black eyes of Sally twinkling above her fan.

How lightly she used to spring upon the back of her dapple-gray, spurning the assistance of the many hands that reached out to assist her, and how proudly she galloped away, sending a cloud of dust in the faces of her admirers for their worshipful pains!

"Touch us gently, gentle time," was a song that Sarah had no inward prompting to sing. She was equal, she felt, to all changes and all chances; and, in truth, her little black hands, with the assistance of her shining black eyes, could well make their way through opposing combinations.

There was nothing to which she could not turn her talents, from raking in the hay-field and dropping corn, to the braiding of a straw bonnet and the fashioning of a silk gown; and a good deal of broad, brilliant taste had Sarah, as was always manifested in the gay colors and striking contrasts she wore.

The black hair under her red ribbons, and the bright blue petticoat, and the flaunting rainbow sash gave her quite the air of some half-civilized Indian queen, as, on her gallant gray, she leaped fences and divided hedges and underbrush as lightly as the rye-stalks.

The glee of the children was doubled when they saw her, and breathlessly they hurried into the house to communicate the fact of her having ridden past as a piece of most stirring news. The young men paused from their occupations in the wayside fields as she rode past, and were ready to throw off their enthusiasm by shouts and hurrahs for any thing, at any moment, for two days thereafter.