National Intelligencer.

& WASHINGTON ADVERTISER.

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER

Military Academy.—The following Message, with the accompanying Report, were submitted to Congress, at a late period of their last session. It is probably principally owing to this circumstance, that no measures were definitively adopted to carry the suggested plan into effect. In the House of Representatives the Message was referred to a committee, who made no report. In the Senate, a bill was reported by General Smith of Maryland, which is subjoined to the report. As few objects possess more intrinsic importance, and none can be more seasonable, we have little doubt of its commanding the early attention of Congress at their next meeting.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States.

The scale on which the military academy at West-point was originally established, is become too limited to furnish the number of well instructed subjects in the different branches of artillery and engineering, which the public service calls for. The want of such characters is already sensibly felt, and will be increased with the enlargement of our plans of military preparation. The chief engineer having been instructed to consider the subject, and to propose an augmentation which might render the establishment commensurate with the present circumstances of our country, has made the report which I now transmit for the consideration of Congress.

The idea suggested by him of removing the institution to this place, is also worthy of attention. Besides the advantage of placing it under the immediate eye of the government, it may render its benefits common to the naval department, and will furnish opportunities of selecting on better information the characters most qualified to fulfil the duties which the public service may call for.

TH: JEFFERSON.

March 18, 1808.

COPY.

WASHINGTON,
March 14, 1808.

SIR,

In conformity to the commands of the President of the United States, I have the honor to transmit a report on the progress and present state of the military academy with some suggested alterations, in which I have included those you had the goodness to point out.

I have the honor to be,
With the greatest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
(Signed) JONATHAN WILLIAMS,
Colonel of Engineers.

The Secretary of War.

COPY.

WASHINGTON,
March 14, 1808.

IN obedience to the verbal commands of the President of the United States, the subscriber has the honor to submit to the Secretary of War the following REPORT, on the progress and present state of the military academy.

THIS institution was established at West-point, in the year 1801, under the direction of a private citizen, and was nothing more than a mathematical school for the few cadets that were then in service. It was soon found that the government of young military men was incompatible with the ordinary system of schools, and consequently this institution ran into disorder and the teacher into contempt. When the peace establishment was made, the corps of engineers was created, and the twenty-seventh section enacts that the corps "shall be stationed at West-point, in the state of New-York, and shall constitute a military academy, and the engineers, assistant engineers and cadets, shall be subject to do duty at such places and on such service as the President of the United States may direct."

It was not probably foreseen that although the head quarters of the corps might be at West-point, yet the duties of the individual officers necessarily spread them along our coast from one extremity of the United States to the other, and as the whole number of officers can be no more than sixteen, they could not in their dispersed state constitute a military academy. The incongruity of a stationary and errant existence in the same corps has been amply exemplified by experience. Indeed it never can be supposed that engineers, as such, could be sufficient elementary teachers; their capability, consistent with other duties, is confined to *practical* teaching, by combining example with precept and carrying the rudiments of the art into practical execution; in the same manner that other professional men generally have youth under their tuition, *after* they have gone through every branch of elementary learning relating to their profession.

A part only of the officers were appointed soon after the passage of the act, of whom the major, who was ex-officio the chief engineer, and two captains, took charge of the academy, the students of which were the cadets belonging to the regiment of artillery. The major occasionally read the lectures on fortification, gave practical lessons in the field, and taught the use of instruments generally. The two captains taught mathematics, the one in the line of geometrical, the other in that of algebraical demonstrations.

As the corps was small, as it had little or nothing to do in its more appropriate progressional duties, and as the students were few, the institution went on producing all the effect in its power, and all that could be expected on its limited scale. It was soon discovered that mere mathematics would not make either an artillerist or an engineer, and a power was given by law to appoint a teacher of drawing and of the French language. Had this law, instead of absolutely limiting the number of teachers and designating their duties, left it general in the discretion of the President to appoint such and so many as he might find requisite to produce the effect contemplated by the establishment, and left the internal organization to him, who from constant observation could judge of the most expedient one, with a reasonable but ample appropriation, we should at this day have a greater number of well instructed young officers than we can boast of. From that time to this, however, the academy has progressed beyond what could have been expected from its means; but now the first mathematical teacher has resigned, and the second has for several years been employed as surveyor general of the United States, in the western country.

During the last year a citizen of eminent talents as a mathematician has been employed as principal teacher, and a first lieutenant of engineers performed the duties of assistant teacher, while the professor of French and drawing confined his abilities to these branches. So far as talents can go, nothing is wanting as to these teachers. They are all capable in the highest degree. The subscriber is only apprehensive that he shall not be able to retain them. Mr. Hasler, the chief mathematician, is already designated for a survey of the coast, when circumstances shall permit that business to be undertaken, and it could not be committed to more able hands. Mr. Masson, the professor of French and drawing, is a man of too great and too extensive abilities to be kept in a situation so much below his merit; this gentleman being perfect master of the French and English languages, fully acquainted with all that has been written on the art of fortification, and eminently distinguished in science and general erudition, ought in the opinion of the subscriber to be placed at the head of what the French call *le genie*, which cannot be literally translated in its extensive sense: it signifies the art of an engineer generally in all its branches. Mr. Masson being the only teacher designated by the law, he is the only one that, exclusive of the corps of engineers, can be said to belong to the institution.

In short the military academy, as it now stands, is like a foundling barely existing among the mountains, and nurtured at a distance out of sight, and almost unknown to its legitimate parents. The questions that have frequently been put to the subscriber by members of Congress, evidently show, that the little interest the institution has excited, arises solely from its being unknown to those, who ought to be and doubtless would willingly become its generous guardians and powerful protectors. Had it been so attached to the government (its real and only parent) as to be always with it, always in sight, and always in the way of its fostering care, it would propably have flourished and have become an honorable and interesting appendage to the national family.

The question recurs; what ought to be done?

The subscriber would wish the answer to arise out of the nature of the case, and carry with it a demonstration of its being founded in the most pure though zealous regard for the public good. Actuated only by such motives, and without the stimulus of either ambition or interest, he begs leave to state in the form of a proposition what appears to him to be the natural and proper remedies.

I. Let the military academy be placed under the direction of the President of the U. States, in all that does or can relate to it, any thing contained in any former law to the contrary notwithstanding.

II. Let an academical staff be created in manner following, and as the regulations must necessarily be military, let the professors when not of army rank, take that of their denominations (as relates to the academy only) in the manner of brevets.

1. The commanding officer of the corps of engineers to be ex-officio, superintendant of the institution with the power of appointing one of the officers or professors to do the duties of superintendent in his absence.

2. Let there be a professor of natural and experimental philosophy in all its branches: if taken from the corps of engineers and of lesser grade, let him have as much in addition to his pay and emoluments as will equal those of a lieutenant colonel; and if not of the corps, let *these* be his emoluments and *that* his denomination, without similar rank in the army.

3. Let there be a professor of mathematics generally, with the pay, emoluments and denomination of a major, and allowed to have two teachers under him, with the pay, emoluments and denominations of captains; to this branch will expressly belong nautical astronomy, geography, and navigation.

4. Let there be a professor of the art of an engineer in all its branches, expressly to include fortification, attack and defence, gunnery and castrametation, with the pay, emoluments and denomination of a major, and allowed to have a drawing teacher, with a French teacher and a German teacher under him, with the pay, emoluments and denomination of captains.

To this academical staff he begs leave to suggest the addition of the following professors: they are thus separately named, because they are supposed to be citizens engaged in other pursuits, and could only give a portion of their professional labors to this institution.

5. A professor of architecture to be occasionally at the academy and give lectures, accompanied with demonstrations by models, and specimens of the nature of the materials of cements, of the composition of works, bridges, causeways, canals, &c. &c. to be paid per diem when on duty, and to be allowed quarters in the academy.

6. A professor of chemistry and mineralogy, on the same terms and conditions.

7. A riding master and teacher of the small and broad sword.

III. With respect to the corps of engineers, whose functions have become extensive, let the following additions be made to it.

Two captains,
Two first lieutenants,
Two second lieutenants,
Four cadets,
Nine artificers,
Thirty-one men,

The officers to be appointed and the men to be engaged on the same conditions as those now composing the corps.

The whole will then consist of twenty-two officers, eight cadets, fifty men, and ten artificers.

It will appear necessary to make, in the first instance, an appropriation for the proper buildings, apparatus, library, &c. This being done (and it should be remembered, that being once well done, it will be but one expence, not subject to repetition) it is presumed the annual appropriation would be inconsiderable: it might, indeed, be so connected with the appropriation for the corps of engineers, that all the surplusage of one would fall into the other, and the extension of the sum would not be felt.

It would be well to make the plan on such a scale as not only to take in the minor officers of the navy, but also any youths from any of the states, who might wish for such an education, whether designed for the army or navy, or neither; and to let these be assessed to the value of their education, which might form a fund for extra or contingent expences. On this plan, it might be proper to suppress the ration system, whilst the students are at the academy, and oblige all but commissioned officers to board in common, as in other universities. The citizen youth so adopted should be required to sign the articles of war, (for the time being) since it would be impossible, and improper if it were possible, to make any exceptions to the rules and regulations of the academy. As these youths grow up and take their stations in society, they would naturally become militia officers; and in a few years, in the ordinary course of events, we should see a uniformity in our militia, resulting from a spirit of emulation, which the reputation of having received a military education would naturally excite; and the same duties which have often been considered a burden, would become pleasurable privilege. There is nothing more facinating to youth than excellence in arms, and a little knowlege will create a desire to acquire more.

That Congress may have as little trouble as possible and to avoid a frequent recurrence, to its authority on matters of course, it might perhaps be expedient to pass one short act, naming the additions to be made to the corps of engineers, but placing the direction of the academy external and internal in the President of the U. States, leaving the site, the buildings, the number and kind of professors, and all other matters connected with the institution, entirely on his judgment.

All which is most respectfully submitted.

(Signed) JON. WILLIAMS,
Col. of Engineers.

A BILL

In relation to the military academy of the United States.

BE it enacted, &c. That there be added to the present corps of engineers, two captains, two first and two second lieutenants, and four cadets.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That the commanding officer of the corps of engineers be authorised to inlist for a terms not less than three years, in addition to those now authorised by law, nine artificers and thirty-one men, to receive the same pay, clothing and rations as are now allowed to the artificers and privates in the army of the United States, and the same bounty when enlisted for five years; and to be subject to the articles of war.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That the military academy be under the direction of the President of the United States, and be, together with the corps of engineers, stationed hereafter at the city of Washington. That the academical staff shall consist of one professor of natural and experimental philosophy in all its branches, with the pay, emoluments and denomination of a lieutenant colonel; one professor of mathematics generally, with the pay, emoluments and denominations of major, who shall be allowed two teachers under his authority, with the pay, emoluments and denomination of captains; one professor of the art of an engineer in all its branches, including fortification, attack and defence, gunnery and castrametation, with the pay, emoluments and denomination, of a major, who shall have under his authority, the teacher of drawing, and the teacher of the French language, already authorised by the "Act in addition to "an act for fixing the military peace establishment of the United States;" *Provided,* That nothing herein contained shall entitle the academical staff to any command in the army: *And provided also,* That where an officer of the corps of engineers shall be employed in the academical staff, he shall be entitled to as much in addition to his pay and emoluments, as will equal those of the office, in the said staff, to which he may be appointed.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That the President be, and he is hereby authorized, to select any of the public lots within the city of Washington, that he may deem proper, or to exchange any public lots, for any other lots, for the site of the said academy; and that the sum of dollars be, and the same is hereby appropriated, to be paid out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, for erecting the buildings necessary and proper for such institution.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That the cadets of the corps of engineers and army, and midshipmen of the navy, shall be admitted for instruction into this academy.

FROM THE AURORA.

THE ROBBERS AND THE FARMER,

A TALE.

There were formerly two robbers, who were the scourge of the country which they infested—one of them plundered (and often murdered) every one who was so unfortunate as to fall in his way on the roads or in the fields—The other took possession of a large lake, on the borders of which lived a number of manufacturers, such as blacksmiths, weavers, &c. near whom our freebooters resided, though they frequently plundered their nearest neighbors—on the other side of the lake lived a respectable peaceable farmer, (for whom the robbers professed great friendship) who by his industry had so improved his land from a wilderness state, that he was enabled to send many canoe loads of produce for sale to the people on the other side. Now it happened that the lake robber became jealous of the increasing prosperity of the farmer, (who by the bye was a very good customer of his children, by buying all his ploughs, scythes, coats, hats, &c. of them, who notwithstanding the bad example of their father were very expert in making those things) to such a degree that he used to fire muskets loaded with balls into the boats, and several times killed the children of the farmer. His reason for committing these friendly actions, was as he pretended, to search for old breeches, &c. which he suspected the farmer to be guilty of conveying to the land robber's people, (with whom he was at variance,) or to discover some of his sons who he alleged had entered into the service of the farmer, in doing which he frequently made slaves of the old man's sons—sometimes he said he was obliged to rob and murder them for his own preservation, according to his logic, the trade the farmer carried on with the land robber's children, was injurious to him, inasmuch as the children of his enemy, were thereby prevented from starving—this doctrine was rather too absurd to be assented to by the farmer, who though a plain old fellow, had too much spirit to submit to such notions—he therefore forbid any of the armed boats of the water robber, from coming near his house, or receiving any provisions from thence, until he behaved in a more peaceable manner—our waterman now came openly forward, and declared that he would take every canoe belonging to the farmer that he found going to the other side—he would, however, permit him, as a great favor, to send a boat to a small spot in the lake, where the farmer used to buy his sugar and coffee, and then he was only to be allowed to buy sufficient for his own family use—the land robber finding his opponent's measures began to affect himself and children, in order to counteract them, swore that if he caught the farmer's people going to or from, or even looking towards the pirate's house, or were seen talking with him, he would plunder them whenever he could meet them. These unfair proceedings the farmer perceived would, if persisted in, involve his family in the dispute, and in the end perhaps cause their ruin. He therefore determined to keep his children at home, and as they were ingenious and industrious, he knew they would be able to make for themselves, all those articles which they had formerly purchased at