

2) PHILIP DODDRIDGE'S SHORTER DESCRIPTION OF JENNINGS'S ACADEMY,  
1725 (nineteenth century copy). See Nuttal *Cal* 190

Harborough. Nov: 16. 1725.

Rev<sup>d</sup>. Sir

Mr Some informed me some time ago that you desired an Account of Mr. Jennings's method of Academical Education & as I was one of the last Pupils my dear Tutor sent out I suppose he thought I might have his scheme pretty fresh in my memory, which is the only reason I can give for his applying to me to write to you upon this occasion. I am ashamed to think how long I have delayed it. The best excuse I can make is that I have been engaged in a Journey to London & since that in a Remove to Harborough where I have been settled but a few Days. Upon the whole I cannot repent my staying till my Return from London before I wrote, for at St. Alban's I met with a Copy of a Letter which Mr. Jennings wrote to Mr. Clarke on the same subject you are now enquiring after, by the Review of which I am something better furnished and prepared to answer your demands than I formerly was.

Our Course of Education at Kibworth was the Employment of 4 years, & every half year we entered upon a new set of Studies, or at least changed the time and the Order of our Lectures.

The first Half year we read Geometry or Algebra thrice a week. Hebrew twice. Geography once. French once. Latin Prose Authors once. Classical Exercises once. For Geometry we read Barrow's Euclid's Elements, when we had gone through the first Book we entered upon Algebra & read over a System of Mr. Jennings's drawing up for our use, in 2 Books: the first treating of the Fundamental Operations of Arithmetick, the 2<sup>d</sup>. of the Reduction of Equations: under every head we had Demonstrations as well as practical Rules. when we had ended this system we went over most of 2<sup>d</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Books of Euclid's Elements with Algebraic Demonstrations which Mr. Jennings had drawn up, & which were not near so difficult as Barrow's Geometrical Demonstrations of the same propositions. We likewise went thro' the 3<sup>d</sup>. 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Books of Euclid, but this was part of the business of the 2<sup>d</sup> half year. We read Gordon's Geography in our closets, & the Lecture was only an Examination of the account we could give of the most remarkable passages in it. For French we learnt Boyer's Grammar. & read the familiar Phrases and Dialogues from French into English without regarding the Pronunciation which Mr. Jennings was not acquainted with. One Hour in the week was employed in reading some select passages out of Suetonius. Tacitus. Seneca. Caesar &c. especially Cicero. Our method was first to read the Latin I think according to the Grammatical Order of the words and then to render it into as elegant English as we could. The same way we used in reading the Classicks together the 2 next half years. Our Academical Exercises were Translations from some of those Latin Authors into English or from English into Latin. Many passages in the Spectators and Tatlers both serious & humourous were assign'd to us upon these occasions. For Hebrew we read Bythner's Grammar.

The second Half year we ended Geometry and Algebra which we read twice a week We read Logick twice, Civil History once French twice, Hebrew once, Latin Poets once. Exercises once. Oratory once. Exercises of Reading and Delivery once. For Logick we first skimmed over Burgesdicius in about 6 Lectures & then entered on a system composed by Mr. Jennings, a great deal of it was taken from Mr. Locke & we had large References to him & other celebrated Authors. almost under every Head.

This was the method Mr. Jennings us'd in almost all the Lectures he drew up himself, he made the best writers his Commentators. We had a Collection of excellent Reading on the Subject of every Lecture, which frequently employ'd us two or 3 Hours in our Closets. & were obliged to give an account of the Substance of these References at our next Lecture. The 3<sup>d</sup>. Book of this Logick is practical, and contains many admirable rules for the proper methods of Study. under it we had many references to Locke's conduct of the Understanding and Langius's *Medicina Mentis*. This and the other systems that Mr Jennings himself composed of Pneumatology. Ethicks, and Divinity were very [f.1<sup>v</sup>] accurate and elaborate performances. They contained many admirable thoughts ranged with great regularity, and expressed with happy conciseness, perspicuity and propriety. They were thrown into as Mathematical a Form as their respective subjects would admit & consisted of Definitions, Propositions, Demonstrations, Corollaries and Scholia. For Civil History we read Puffendorf's Introduction to the History of Europe with Crull's continuation & his History of Asia, Africa & America. We read these (and afterwards the History of England, Dupin's Compendium, Spanheim's *Elenctius*. King's Constitution). & some other printed Books just as we did Gordon. Mr. Jennings assigned us what number of Pages he thought fit, which we carefully perused in our Closets, & gave an account of at Lecture & with our Examination he intermixed discourses of his own which illustrated what we had read. For French we read *Telemachus* from the original into English & sometimes select passages from Bourdeleau's Sermons. Perhaps if we had tasted a greater variety of Authors it had answered our end better. The Latin Poets we made the most frequent use of were Virgil & Horace & Terence, but we sometimes spent an Hour in Lucretius. Juvenal. Plautus. Lucan &c. with these we generally read a Translation. Our Oratory was drawn up by Mr. Jennings, and made part of a Volume of Miscellanies which are now printed. Our Exercises were principally Orations of which the materials were suggested either by Mr Jennings himself or some Books we were referred to. Bacon's Essays were often used on this Occasion, & our Exercises were a kind of Comment upon some remarkable Sentences of them. We were often set to Translate not only from one Language but from one Style into another. v.g. A passage of Tillotson into Sprat's Style and vice versa. At other times we used to reduce Arguments into a kind of Algebraic Form which were delivered in a looser and perhaps a more confused manner, by which the weakness of many plausible Harangues would very evidently appear at the first glance. For Hebrew we read Bythner's *Lyra* and were pretty curious in the Grammatical Resolution of each word according to His rules. On Tuesday nights we used to spend an Hour in reading the Bible. Sermons. or Poems. purely to form ourselves to a just accent & Pronunciation. One would hardly imagine if one had not heard the Alteration that 3 or 4 of these Readings Evenings had made in a Lad's Reading.

The Third Half Year we read Mechanics, Hydrostaticks & Physicks twice, Greek Poets once, History of England once. Anatomy once. Astronomy, Globes & Chronology once. Miscellanies once. & had one Logical Disputation in a week. For Mechanics we read a short but very pretty system of them demonstrating the Forces of the most simple Engines Levers. Screws-wedge. Pulley &c drawn up by Mr. Jennings; & for Hydrostaticks a contraction of some of Mr. Eames's Lectures. For Physicks we read Leclerc's System, exclusive of his first Book (of Astronomy) & of the latter part of the fourth (of Anatomy). Mr. Jennings marked the most observable passages good or bad & Lectured from them, by the way. for Illustration we used to consult Harris's *Lexicon Technicum*, Neiuwentyt's *Religious Philosopher*. Derham's *Physico- & Astro-theology*, Rohault, Varenus &c. But we found so many Defects & so many Mistakes in Leclerc himself that we frequently wish'd that Mr. Jennings

would have drawn up a system of that as he did of the other Sciences, or at least have interleaved LeClerc, written some annotations upon him & made proper References to greater Philosophers under every Head. I have reason to believe that he intended the latter, & might in time have undertaken the former if he could <sup>^have^</sup> found Leisure as he had certainly a Capacity for it. The Greek Poets which gave us the most employment were Theocritus, Homer & Pindar: I don't remember that we ever meddled with Sophocles which I have been something surprized at, we generally read Translations with these and indeed with most of the other Classicks. I don't [f.2] remember that we ever read in our publick course any Greek History, Oratory, or Philosophy. The Variety of our other Business might be some excuse for it, but had Mr. Jennings either himself or by Proxy review'd the most celebrated of the Classicks both Greek and Latin, drawn a Catalogue of the finest and most improving passages & assigned to each of us some Lessons out of them once a week (which might have employ'd us in our Closets about an Hour a Day, directing us to make critical Observations upon them, & to communicate them to one another in the intervals of ~~our~~ other Business, & to himself if he should think fit to require it) it would certainly have been a charming entertainment to us & would probably have turned to very valuable account. And by the way, if you, Sir, would take a Review of the most considerable Classicks (and I may add the Fathers too) with which it is universally known you have form'd a very intimate and happy Acquaintance; & draw up such a Catalogue as I have now mention'd, it may be of great use to many young Students whose Time and Circumstances will not allow the full perusal of them & who are afraid of being lost in that Paradise if they should venture into it without a Guide. If you should ever think fit at some Leisure to comply with this motion, I desire you would send me the Paper which I will thankfully transcribe and carefully return. You will please Sir to pardon this Digression, and I will pursue my Story, without staying to make an Apology for it. For the History of England we read Browne's in 2 vols. 8.vo which we found in the Main very good. For Anatomy a system of Mr. Eames's in English contracted, & in some places we took in the Collateral Assistance of Neiuwentyt, Keil, Cheselden & Drake. We read Jones on the use of the Globes. Our Astronomy & Chronology were both Mr Jennings's & are printed amongst his Miscellanies. These Miscellanies are very short sketches of Fortification, Heraldry, Architecture, Psalmody, Physiognomy, Metaphysicks &c. Our Logical Disputations were in English, our Theses in Latin, neither the one nor the other in Syllogistick Form. One of the class made the Thesis, each of the rest read an Exercise which was either in Prose or in Verse, in English or Latin as we ourselves chose. I think English Orations were most common and I belive turn'd to the best Account.

The FOURTH Half-year we read Pneumatology twice a week. The Remainder of Physicks and Miscellanies once, Jewish Antiquities twice. Our Pnuematology was drawn up by Mr. Jennings pretty much in the same method with our Logick. It contained an Enquiry into the Existence and Nature of God & the nature, Operations, & Immortality of the humane Soul. On the principles of natural Reason there was a fine collection of Reading in the References of almost every Head. This, with our Divinity which was a Continuation of it was by far the most valuable part of the Course. Mr. Jennings had bestow'd a vast deal of thought upon them, and his Discourses from them in the Lecture Room were admirable. For Jewish Antiquities we read an Abridgment of Mr Jones's Notes on Godwyn with some very curious and Important Additions.

The FIFTH Half-Year we read Ethicks twice a week. Criticks once & had one Pneumatological Disputation. Our Ethicks were a part of Pneumatology. The principal Authors which Mr. Jennings referred to were Grotius & Puffendorf. But upon the whole I know no Book which resembles it so much both in Matter and Method as Wollaston's Religion of Nature deline- [f.2v] ated. Our Critical Lectures were abridgement of Mr. Jones's. They are not criticisms on particular Texts but general observations relating to the most noted versions and Editions of the Bible. Our Pneumatological and Theological Disputations were of very considerable service to us. Mr. Jennings was Moderator & many thoughts were often stated in them by which our Lectures themselves were improv'd.

The SIXTH Half-year we read Divinity thrice a week. Christian Antiquities once Miscellanies once & had one Homily of a Thursday night. Our Divinity was in the method of our Pneumatology: we had here references to writers of all Opinions, but Scripture was our only Rule & we had in our written Lectures and Admirable collection of Texts upon almost every Head. Our Homily's were discourses from the Pulpit, they were confined to subjects of Natural Religion. We had no Quotation from the Scriptures otherwise than for Illustration. Most of our citations were taken from ancient poets & Philosophers They cost us an abundance of pains & were review'd by Mr. Jennings before they were deliver'd. For Christian Antiquities we read Sir Peter King's Constitution of the Primitive Church with the original Draught in answer to it, in which we found many remarkable things. We consulted Bingham's Origines Ecclesiasticae for Illustration & had recourse sometimes to Suicer's Thesaurus.

The SEVENTH Half-Year we read Divinity thrice. Ecclesiastical History once, had one Sermon & had one Theological Disputation. Our Ecclesiastical History was Dupin's Compendium which we found in many places very Defective. I believe if Mr. Jennings had lived a few years longer he would have look'd over some other Historians & have made References of the most valuable pieces from them, which would in a great measure have supplied what was wanting in time. Mr Jennings Examined our Sermons himself, then we preach'd them to our own Family & sometimes to the People in his Hearing.

The last Half-year we read Divinity once a week. Hist: of Controversies once. Miscellanies once & had one Theological Disputation. For the History of Controv: we read Spanheim's Elenchus. These Miscellanies were a second Volume which indeed we entered upon the last Half-Year. They contain'd a brief Historical Account of y<sup>e</sup> Ancient Philosophy, the Art of Preaching & Pastoral Care on which Heads Mr. Jennings gave us very excellent Advice, & some very valuable Hints on the Head of Nonconformity. We preach'd this last Half Year either at Home or abroad as occasion required & towards the Beginning of it were examined by a Committee of neighbouring ministers to whom that Office was assign'd at a preceeding general meeting.

Mr. Jennings never admitted any into his Academy till he had Examined them as to their Improvement in school Learning & Capacity for entering on the course of Studies which he proposed. He likewise insisted on satisfaction as to their Moral Character, & the Marks of a Serious Disposition.

The first two years of our course we read the Scriptures in the Family from Hebrew, Greek or French into English. He drew up a scheme which comprehended the whole

New Testament and the most useful parts of the Old. by which we proceeded. He expounded about Ten Lessons in a week, sometimes in the Morning and sometimes in the Evening; on those days when he did not expound we read Lessons over again which had been formerly expounded, & so went over the most important parts of the Scripture twice at a Convenient distance of time. These Expositions were all Extempore, but very Edifying, & 'tis with a great deal of satisfaction that I often review some Hints which I sometimes took of them.

Every Wednesday night we had an Entertainment which we call'd a Drama. [f.3] Our groundwork was some diverting Story (the hints of which were often taken from the Spectator, Don Quixote &c. or some other humorous book, at other times from Conversation, & sometimes it was a Plot of our own Invention. A variety of Persons were introduced, each had his particular Business in the conduct of the Affair, & a distinct Character which he was to support. We spoke extempore, & when we were a little us'd to it we seldom wanted something to say. Mr. Jennings intended this not merely for an Amusement, but as a means of forming us to an early Acquaintance with the world of wearing off that ungraceful Bashfulness with which young People are frequently oppress'd when they first come out of the Study & the Lecture Room. Between the scenes of these Dramas Poems were repeated which we had studied the Pronunciation of.

Once a month. i.e. of a Friday before the Sacrament we laid aside our Secular Business to attend to Devotion. Those who thought proper as several did observ'd it as a Fast. About Ten in the morning we all met and Mr Jennings gave us a Lecture which he had carefully prepared on purpose for us. He wrote it out in long Hand & allow'd us to transcribe it if we thought fit. I have copies of all of them which I set a great value upon.

His two discourses of the preaching Christ & Experimental Preaching were composed & deliver'd on such an Occasion. And the subjects of the Texts were accommodated to our characters and our circumstances of Life.

Every evening an Account was taken of our private Studies. We repeated to him immediately after prayer something which we had met with which we judg'd most remarkable, by this means all enjoyed some benefit by the Studies of each, it engaged us to read with attention, and the Reflections our Tutor made & the Advice he gave were well worth our observation and remembrance. We were oblig'd to talk Latin within some certain Bounds of Time and Place. We had Laws relating to that affair which were contrived so as to leave Room for some Dispute. If any case of Difficulty happen'd we examined into it, we had often long pleadings on both sides and at last the ~~affair~~ Cause was determined by the Votes of the Majority. The Time of these Debates was immediately after we had given an Account of our Private Studies. We had also another set of Laws relating to the Library & the care of the Books which gave occasion to some Debates though not many.

Every Lord's Day Evening Mr. Jennings us'd to send for some of us into the Lecture Room, and discourse with each apart about inward Religion. The discourse was generally introduced by asking us what we observ'd as most remarkable in the Sermon. He took this opportunity of admonishing us of any Thing he observ'd amiss in our Conduct, & he always did it in a most ingaging manner.

After this we met about 7 in the Evening for Family Prayer, before Prayer one of us either repeated the Sermon we had heard, or read some part of a practical writer which we ourselves chose. About three Quarters of an Hour were spent in this and then after singing (which was a constant part of our Morning and Evening worship) & Prayer, Mr. Jennings examined those of the first class in the Assemblies larger Catechism, in which he gave us an Historical Account of the Belief of other Parties of Christians relating to the several articles which are matters of Controversy.

Mr. Jennings allowed us the free use of his Library which was divided into two parts. The first was common to all, the second was for the use of the Seniors only consisting principally of Books of Philosophical and Polemical Divinity with which the Juniors would have been confounded rather than [f.3v] Edified. At our first entrance on each we had a Lecture in which Mr. Jennings gave us the general character of each Book and some hints as to the Time and manner of Perusing it.

We had fix'd Hours of Business and Recreation. The Bell rung for Family Prayer at Half an Hour past 6 in the Summer. i.e. from March to Sept: & as much past 7 in the Winter Half-Year. After reading, expounding and singing one of the Pupils went to Prayer. Immediately after Prayer we went to Breakfast; then the first Class went in to Lecture & the rest Afterwards in their Turns. Each lecture began with Examination by which Mr Jennings could easily judge of our care or negligence in studying for it. Our Lecturing generally employ'd Mr. Jennings the greatest part of the Forenoon, & immediately after Lecture we went into our Studies, where the lower Classes us'd to wait the Time of their being called. At twelve we dined at 2 we generally retir'd into our Closets again. (but were not confin'd to it for the Times of private Study were left to our own choice) at seven we were call'd to Supper immediately after which one of the Classes had a Lecture. At half an Hour past Eight we were call'd to reading, Exposition, and Singing after which Mr. Jennings himself pray'd in the Family.

Account of private Studies, Causes & Conversation employ'd until about ten & then we generally retir'd for Bed. Thursday Morning was always vacant. We had a fortnight's Vacation at Christmas. & six weeks at Whitsuntide at which we us'd to visit our Friends & had our Academical Business assign'd us.

This, Sir, is such an account of Mr. Jennings's method of Education as at present occurs to my Thoughts; I shall heartily rejoice if it be in any degree agreeable and serviceable to you & I beg that you will please to accept of it as a small Token of that Sincerity and Respect with which I am

Rev<sup>d</sup>. Sir

Your most obedient

& most humble Servant

Philip Doddridge.