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SEP 24, 2015

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Summary of Thomas Jefferson's Aug 27, 1786  
letter to Thomas Mann Randolph, Jr.  
(age 18, future son-in-law of Jefferson)

Overview

Thomas Jefferson wrote this letter to then 18-year-old Thomas Mann Randolph, Jr. who was Jefferson's second cousin, once removed, and who was also Jefferson's future son-in-law. Randolph, Jr. was living in Paris at the time and he planned to move back to the United States. In the letter, Jefferson offers advice to Randolph, Jr. about the pursuit of education and the importance of a healthy body.

Summary

an advantage.

Having the foundation of language and mathematics from which to build adds further knowledge on is ~~important~~. Learning about language at an early age strengthens our mind & memory, while mathematics strengthens our reasoning skills. An extra benefit of mathematics is that it is applicable to many other branches of study. Build on top of this foundation <sup>an extensive</sup> ~~your~~ knowledge of Astronomy, Natural Philosophy, Natural history, Anatomy, Botany, and chemistry. Don't attempt to master all of these subjects, as your lifetime won't allow it ~~for~~ for anyone. Instead, find one subject that interests you the most and master it, ~~but~~ while still maintaining a general knowledge of the other areas. While you have the opportunity to attend college, make full advantage of it while you can.

Supplement your formal classroom education by self-educating yourself outside of the classroom. Choose books that ~~can~~ will help you to fill-in any knowledge gaps that you may ~~have~~ have.

Slow down the intensity of your studying during evening hours. Studying history is best during the evening because much of it ~~requires~~ exercises memory. Read the books in each area of study in the chronological order in which they were written. Reading Greek and Roman histories in their original languages of Greek and Latin, respectively, is recommended ~~over~~ <sup>interpretations/</sup> reading ~~derived~~ <sup>derived</sup> compiled ~~versions~~ and second source ~~versions~~ of the original source material.

Whenever the opportunity presents itself, learn experience living in other cultures and learn to how to speak another language.

Take your books with you wherever you go and read ~~when you can~~ whenever time allows ~~for it~~.

Building a healthy body is just as important or more, as building your knowledge.

Walking is the best exercise. Start ~~at~~ walking short distances at the beginning, increase if you're new to exercise, and slowly ~~build up~~ <sup>increase</sup> the number of miles that you walk.

Build up your resistance to sickness by taking cold showers, eating a simple diet, and getting lots of sun and fresh air regularly. by

## Reactions to Summary

Thomas Mann Randolph, Jr. was fortunate to have Thomas Jefferson give him solid advice on how to pursue his academics and on how to maintain a strong and healthy body. I liked that Jefferson promoted the importance of ~~proving~~ ~~self-education~~ self-education outside of formal classroom ~~studies~~ studies in order to fill in any knowledge gaps.

"While you are attending these courses you can proceed by yourself in a regular series of historical reading... It is to be acquired from books and ~~if you~~ ... you can accommodate it to your other reading so as to fill up those chasms of time not otherwise appropriated!"

~~Jefferson states~~ I will practice Jefferson's recommendation of ~~keeping the night studying~~ keeping the studying effort light down less during the evening hours makes sense. because it helps relax the mind for sleep and ~~help~~ the last thing(s) read before sleeping supposedly is better retained in memory.

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~~Finally~~. I ~~ag~~ agree with Jefferson that exercising the body and living a simple lifestyle is equally, if not more, important as to developing a strong mind of knowledge.

I think it is true that the more a person is exposed to different types of weather or environments (especially if at an early age) the more ~~se~~ resistant they are to getting sick. In today's age of the internet and videogames, ~~more~~ kids spend less time outdoors and thus become physically unhealthy.

Finally, one of my life's "to do's" is to to live outside of the United States for several years to immerse myself in a different culture and to live in a different language. ~~It's amazing...~~ Just as Jefferson recommended to Randolph, Jr. ~~to~~

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