

West Point Feb^y 1st 1829

My dear Father.

I have this moment received your letter of the 26th inst. May I be permitted to say that it seems to me that you have not taken my assertion, that I was not treated quite right at the late examination, in the proper light. To judge correctly of it, you must know my situation in regard to the different members of the class and the Academic Board. In the first place I see plainly that it will be impossible for me to rise above second in my class: The Gentleman who holds the 1st rank arrived on the Point with a knowledge of most of his course; that time which I spent in thoughtless indulgencies, he devoted to those studies which would best second the exertions which he intended to make at this place: Moreover he is at this time preparing himself to become a prof^t of the sciences which are taught here. With all these advantages, you must perceive then, that he will have a corresponding success.

Should a standing be made out at this moment, I would be 2^d without a doubt; This I have from Col Thayer and it will be evident to you when you know that the Gentleman immediately below me is 2^d in Math, 4th in French and 15th in drawing, whereas I am 3^d in Math, 1st in French and 7th in drawing. These things being considered you see that the inconsiderate expression of dissatisfaction which escaped me did not arise from any feeling of jealousy.

I believe that the Superintendant entertains some friendship for me, for though my imprudent and criminal conduct before I entered the Acad^y gave him no reason to like me, but on the contrary, full cause to dislike me; Yet my exertions