

THE PAPERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON



To Thomas Cooper

DEAR SIR

Poplar Forest near Lynchburg. Sep. 1. 17.

You will recollect that I formerly troubled you on the subject of a proper course to be established in a College of general science.¹ such an establishment in my neighborhood (near Charlottesville), then in contemplation only, has lately advanced so favorably as to get into a course of execution. the single county in which it is located has contributed 30,000.D. and we expect the rest of the state will subscribe liberally, and even that the legislature will adopt it as theirs, and support it with the ample funds they are accumulating for the purposes of education. they have established it's constitution by a law, have made the Governor of the state it's patron, given him the nomination of visitors, six in number, and he has named Col^o Monroe (the Pr. of the US.) mr Madison, mr Cabell, Gen^l Cocke, mr Watson and myself the visitors, all of us within a radius of 30. miles.² we have purchased a site of 200. acres, one mile above Charlottesville. it is not proposed to erect one large building, which would exhaust our funds at once; but on each side of a lawn 200.f. wide, we shall erect separate pavilions, 220.f. apart, for each professor, & his school, two story high, filling up the space between with a range of small chambers or dormitories, of one story, for the students; the whole connected by a covered colonnade in front. the pavilions, besides the lecturing room, will have two or four rooms for the accomodation of the professor, according to his family, with necessary offices, garden E'c. one of these pavilions is now in progress, and will be ready to recieve a professor on the 1st of April next. the first called for, as first wanting, will be a professor of languages, to wit Greek & Latin essentially, history, Rhetoric, Oratory, belles letters, to which if he adds modern languages so much the better, to wit French, Spanish, Italian and German. as his school will be the most numerous, we give him only 500.D. fixed, and 20.D. tuition fees for every scholar. it is not possible to say beforehand how

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many these will be; but I have no doubt of 40. or 50. the 1st year, to be increased afterwards as his reputation may increase. if of the first order, I should not doubt their rising to one or two hundred. he would have to provide and pay his necessary ushers. now it is to find a professor of the 1st order of critical knolege in the languages, and of good character besides, that I apply to you, in the hope you may be able to recommend one. had a common school of *Yankee Latin been proposed, the present visitors would not have been associated with it, nor any application made to you for a teacher. one would have been advertized for, as for a stray horse. but you know what such a professor should be, and have had better opportunities, than we have, of knowing if such an one can be found in the US. whom you could recommend on all points, at least on all material ones. may there not be good Classics among the refugee Irish here? and what is the character of their Dublin College?

We expect the next year to compleat two other pavilions for two professors, embracing all the Mathematical & physiological sciences; & the year following a 4th for the Ideological branches. that destined for zoology, botany, mineralogy, chemistry, anatomy, which will be ready for April 1819. we have agreed to propose to yourself, adding to it Law, because that will draw to it many students & make it very profitable. to these professors 1000.D. fixed salary will be given and 20.D. a year from each student. for a first rate Mathematician I expect we must send to Europe. it is difficult to say what number of students we may count on (exclusive of the grammar school) but I should think 2. or 3. from a county, and we have 100. counties. W^m and Mary must fall down to a mere grammar school from the unhealthiness of it's climate. the situation of Charlottesville is in a mountainous, healthy, fertile country, delicious climate, good water, cheap subsistence, an independant yeomanry, many wealthy persons, good society, and free as air in religion and politics. fanaticism and Philosophy have their equal scope, on the principle that de gustibus non est disputandum. and I believe that a moral lecturer, on Sundays, would be as well attended, and paid, if he would add a rational prayer, as a brawling presbyterian or baptist. I have been thus particular, because I am very anxious you should come and give us the benefit of your aid in making this seminary the first in the Union, and drawing to it the youth of the other states. I really believe you would be pleased with the situation, and it cannot but be a recommendation that lands of the

* I mean the German Doctor's Latin, who, apologising for false quantity in his pronunciation, said 'Nos Gérmáni non obsérvamus quantítatem syllábarum.' the Yankee teachers who come among us barbarise the language in the same way.

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1st degree of fertility here, on navigation, are cheaper than anywhere else in the US. on the Atlantic waters, and of course that it is the most favorable position for the permanent establishment of a family. whatever professorships too are established will be permanent, because we shall call for no professor until, after building his pavilion, there shall be an additional sum of capital deposited in the public funds, the interest of which will pay his salary for ever. the professorships may therefore be considered as *quamdiu se bene gesserint*; of which such visitors as the governor will appoint, will be the judges. come then, my dear sir, at any rate to see the place. the Fredericksbg & Charlottesville stage will set you down at my door, where you will find a welcome home as long as you can let us possess you. but I wish your visit could be in autumn and between the 25th inst. & the 25th³ of October, because I make frequent and long visits at this place, and shall be particularly here all November. mr Correa too will be at Monticello in October. he knows our part of the country well, & can tell you if it is worth a visit. let me hear from you immediately, if you please, on the subject of a professor of languages, and add the degree of hope I may entertain of seeing you at Monticello. I salute you with great friendship and respect.

TH: JEFFERSON

PoC (ViU: TJP); at foot of first page: "D^r Tho^s Cooper"; endorsed by TJ.

¹Omitted period at right margin editorially supplied.

NOS GÉRMANI . . . SYLLÁBARUM: "We Germans do not observe syllabic quantity." QUAMDIU SE BENE GESSERINT: "as long as they shall conduct themselves properly" (*Black's Law Dictionary*).

²Omitted period at right margin editorially supplied.

³Word interlined in place of "last."

From Joseph Coppinger

SIR

New York 2^d Septem^r 1817

Permit me to pray your acceptance of a Copy of the inclosed little tract which I lately caused to be publishd here entitled Catholic doctrine and Catholic principles explained in the hope (As I state in the preface) that it may tend to remove some of the prejudices which are but too generally prevailing against the Catholic Religion in this Country. Your liberal and distinguished protection so Promptly afforded, the Catholic religious Society of Ursulins, at New Orleans in protecting them in their rights, and Priviledges when both were threatened gives me to hope you will not be offended with the freedom of this communication and that you will have the goodness to receive it as it

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is ment accompanied with my best wishes for your happiness, remaining very Respectfully

Sir Your most ob^t Serv^t

JOSEPH COPPINGER

RC (DLC); at head of text: “The Honorable Thomas Jefferson”; addressed (trimmed): “[. . .]as Jefferson Monticello Verginia”; franked; endorsed by TJ as received 21 Sept. 1817 and so recorded in SJL. Enclosure: Coppinger, *Catholic Doctrine and Catholic Principles Explained* (New York, 1817; Poor, *Jefferson’s Library*, 9 [no. 523]).

When nuns of the Ursuline order at NEW ORLEANS wrote to TJ in 1804 expressing fears about the security of their property holdings following the Louisi-

ana Purchase, he assured them that “the principles of the constitution and government of the United states are a sure guarantee to you that it will be preserved to you sacred and inviolate, and that your institution will be permitted to govern itself according to it’s own voluntary rules, without interference from the civil authority” (TJ to Therese de St. Xavier and the Ursuline Nuns at New Orleans, [13 or 14 July 1804] [DLC: TJ Papers, 142:24602]; printed in *National Intelligencer, and Washington Advertiser*, 26 Oct. 1804, and elsewhere).

From Hezekiah Niles

SIR,

Balt. Sept. 2. 1817

I thankfully acknowledge your letter of the 22nd. enclosing 5\$ in payment for the Register to Sept 1818.

I have hopes that this work will survive the fate of most things of the sort. The present prospect is cheering. I find an interest for its welfare that I hardly dared to hope for, & think it will prosper by the arrangement lately adopted.

“From the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Those that feel the present safe repose of the United States—the perfect peace & general prosperity, cannot forget the author of the order Of things that brought these matters about—&, with gratitude, I offer you my humble thanks for the blessings that have fallen on my country, through that system.

With great respect, your ob^t S^t

H NILES

RC (DLC); endorsed by TJ as a letter from “Niles Henry” received 21 Sept. 1817 and so recorded in SJL. RC (MHi); address cover only; with PoC of TJ to Bernard Peyton, 3 Nov. 1817, on verso; addressed: “Tho^s Jefferson, esquire Late President US. Poplar Forest near Lynchburg, Va”; franked; postmarked Baltimore, 2 Sept.

TJ’s letter OF THE 22ND is printed above at 23 Aug. 1817. FROM THE FULLNESS OF THE HEART THE MOUTH SPEAKETH is from the Bible (Matthew 12.34; Luke 6.45).

From Thomas Branagan

SIR

Philad^a Sep 3 1817

Your goodness will no doubt excuse the liberty I take in Sending You a copy of my last Book My motives Are disinterested & pure namely to Stimulate you to use your venerable influence & pen in exposing the errors & re-exhibiting the truths particularized in my book That God may render your last day the most happy & useful of your long & useful life is the prayr of your disinterested friend & real Well Wisher

THO BRANAGAN

RC (DLC); addressed: "His Excellency the Hon T. Jefferson"; endorsed by TJ as received 21 Sept. 1817 and so recorded in SJL. Enclosure: [Branagan], *The Pleasures of Contemplation, being A desultory investigation of the Harmonies, Beauties, and Benefits of Nature: including a Justification of the Ways of God to Man, and a Glimpse of His Sovereign Beauty. . . . to*

which is added. some Causes of Popular Poverty, Arising from the Enriching Nature of Interests, Rents, Duties, Inheritances, and Church Establishments. Investigated in their principles and consequences. By Dr. Blatchly, of New York (Philadelphia, 1817; Poor, Jefferson's Library, 9 [no. 528]).

From John Wayles Eppes

DEAR SIR.

Mill Brook Sep: 3. 1817.

Your letter of aug. the 6th arrived here when my house was filled with my own and M^{rs} Eppes's connections—M^r Burton and his family left us on Saturday—my sister and M^r Lane on Tuesday—I could not conveniently leave them here and the season is now so far advanced that you will I presume soon return to Monticello—We are begining to experience the inconveniences of the wet and cold & our invalid list is increasing with the pressure of the Tob^o crop—Under all these circumstances I have determined to postpone my visit for some more favorable opportunity and to send up Francis—

I am delighted to hear of the prospects of the central school—I will certainly subscribe and as far as I am able endeavour to procure subscriptions from others—During the present winter I propose having Francis with me in washington. He shall however be ready to obey the summons and commence with the school in spring. The climate and situation and above all its being near enough for Francis to have the benefit of your superintending care would with me give it a preference to any other seminary even if the professors were not of the first order which I am certain they will be—

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My health is very much improved—I have recovered my strength but still feel occasionally very much oppressed with the pain in my head and eyes—It has been now more than 12. months since I have had my limbs affected—I think the disease will gradually pass off. I feel at present most inconvenience from my eyes which reading for a few hours at a time will inflame and render almost useless for weeks—I have been compelled to abandon the use of wine spirit and even malt liquor and to live principally on milk and vegetable diet—Whenever an opportunity offers I think I shall get spectacles which I never have used—

I feel great pleasure in hearing that you still continue to enjoy good health—May you still continue to possess this first of blessings & see completed the first and last of the new pillars erected to your fame in the central College—

Present me affectionately to Miss Ellen and Cornelia to M^{rs} Randolph on your return to Monticelo & accept assurances of my sincere and affectionate attachment—

Yours sincerely

JNO: W: EPPES

RC (ViU: TJP-ER); endorsed by TJ as received 3 Sept. 1817 and so recorded in SJL.

To John Adams

DEAR SIR

Poplar Forest, near Lynchburg. Sep. 8. 17.

A month's absence from Monticello has added to the delay of acknowledging your last letters; and indeed for a month before I left it our projected College gave me constant employment; for being the only Visitor in it's immediate neighborhood, all it's administrative business falls on me, and that, where building is going on, is not a little. in yours of July 15. you express a wish to see our plan. but the present visitors have sanctioned no plan as yet. our predecessors, the first trustees, had desired me to propose one to them, and it was on that occasion I asked and recieved the benefit of your ideas on the subject. digesting these with such other schemes as I had been able to collect, I made out a Prospectus, the looser & less satisfactory, from the uncertain amount of the funds to which it was to be adapted. this I addressed, in the form of a letter to their President Peter Carr; which going before the legislature, when a change in the constitution of the College was asked, got into the public papers, and, among others, I think you will find it in Niles's register, in the early part of 1815. this

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however is to be considered but as a premiere ebauche, for the consideration & amendment of the present visitors, and to be accomodated to one of two conditions of things. if the institution is to depend on private donations alone, we shall be forced to accumulate on the shoulders of 4. professors a mass of sciences which, if the legislature adopts it, should be distributed among ten. we shall be ready for a professor of languages in April next; for two others the following year, and a 4th a year after. how happy should we be if we could have a Ticknor for our first. a critical classic is scarcely to be found in the US. to this professor a fixed salary of 500.D. with liberal tuition fees from the pupils will probably give 2000.D. a year. we are now on the look-out for a professor, meaning to accept of none but of the very first order.

You ask if I have seen Buchanan's, M^cAfee's, or Wilkinson's books? I have seen none of them; but have lately read with great pleasure,¹ Reid & Eaton's life of Jackson, if life may be called what is merely a history of his campaign of 1814. Reid's part is well written: Eaton's continuation is better for it's matter than style. the whole however is valuable.

I have lately recieved a pamphlet of extreme interest from France. it is De Pradt's historical recital of the first return of Louis XVIII to Paris. it is precious for the minutiae of the proceedings which it details, and for their authenticity, as from an eye witness. being but a pamphlet, I inclose it for your perusal, assured, if you have not seen it, that it will give you pleasure. I will ask it's return, because I value it as a morsel of genuine history, a thing so rare as to be always valuable. I have recieved some information, from an eye witness also, of what passed on the occasion of the 2^d return of Louis XVIII. the Emperor Alexander it seems was solidly opposed to this. in the consultation of the allied sovereigns & their representatives, with the Executive council at Paris, he insisted that the Bourbons were too incapable & unworthy of being placed at the head of the nation, declared he would support any other choice, they should freely make, and continued to urge most strenuously that some other choice should be made. the debates run high & warm, & broke off after midnight, every one retaining his own opinion. he lodged, as you know, at Talleyrand's. when they returned into council the next day, his host had overcome his firmness. Louis XVIII. was accepted, & thro' the management of Talleyrand, accepted without any capitulation, altho' the sovereigns would have consented that he should be first required to subscribe & swear to the constitution prepared, before permission to enter the kingdom. it would seem as if Talleyrand had been afraid to admit the

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smallest interval of time, lest a change of wind should bring back Bonaparte on them. but I observe that the friends of a limited monarchy there consider the popular representation as much improved by the late alteration, and confident it will in the end produce a fixed government in which an elective body, fairly representative of the people will be an efficient element.

I congratulate mrs Adams & yourself on the return of your excellent & distinguished son, and our country still more on such a minister of their foreign affairs, and I renew to both the assurance of my high & friendly respect & esteem

TH: JEFFERSON

RC (MHi: Adams Papers); at foot of first page: "M^r Adams"; endorsed by Adams as answered 10 Oct. 1817. PoC (DLC); edge trimmed. Enclosure: Dominique Dufour, baron de Pradt, *Récit Historique sur la Restauration de la Royauté en France, le 31 Mars 1814* (Paris, 1816).

TJ's letter to PETER CARR of 7 Sept. 1814 was printed in the Baltimore *Niles' Weekly Register*, 16 Mar. 1816. PREMIERE EBAUCHE: "first draft." The LIFE

OF JACKSON was John Reid and John Henry Eaton, *The Life of Andrew Jackson, Major General in the service of the United States: comprising A History of the War in the South, from the commencement of the Creek Campaign, to the termination of hostilities before New Orleans* (Philadelphia, 1817). TJ probably received eyewitness INFORMATION on French events verbally from Quinette de Rochemont.

¹Preceding three words interlined.

Bill for Establishing Elementary Schools

[ca. 9 Sept. 1817]

Notes

<§.1. Ministers of the gospel are excluded to avoid jealousy from the other sects, were the public education committed to the ministers of a particular one; & with more reason than in the case of their exclusion from the legislative and executive functions.>

An Act for establishing Elementary Schools

1. Be it enacted by the General assembly of Virginia that, at the first session of the Superior court in every county within this Commonwealth next ensuing the passage of this act, the judge thereof shall appoint three discreet and well-informed persons residents of the county, <and not being ministers of the gospel of any denomination> to serve as visitors of the Elementary schools in the sd county; of which appointment the Sheriff shall, within 15. days thereafter, deliver a Certificate under the hand of the Clerk of the sd court, to each of the persons so appointed.

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§.2. this designation of the size of a ward is founded on these considerations.

1. that the population which furnishes a company of militia will generally about furnish children enough for a school.

2. that in most instances at present the militia Captaincies being laid off compactly by known & convenient metes and bounds, many will be adopted without change, and others will furnish a canvas to work on & to reform.

3. that these wards, once established, will be found convenient, and salutary aids in the administration of government,¹ of which they will constitute the organic elements, & the first integral members in the composition of the military.

The prohibition to parcel among different wards the lands of a single individual, held in a body is 1. to save the proprietor from the perplexity of multiplied responsibilities, & 2. to prevent arbitrary & inconsistent apportionments, by different wardens, of the comparative values of the different portions of his lands in their respective wards.

2. The sd Visitors shall meet at the courthouse of their county on the first county court day after they shall have received notice of their appointment, & afterwards at such times & places as they or any two of them, with reasonable notice to the third, shall have agreed; and shall proceed to divide their county into Wards, by metes and bounds so designated as to comprehend each about the number of militia sufficient for a company, and so also as not to divide, and throw into different wards the lands of any one person held in one body: which division into wards shall, within 6. months from the date of their appointment, be completely designated, published, and reported, by their metes & bounds to the office of the Clerk of the Superior court, there to be recorded, subject however to such alterations, from time to time afterwards, as changes of circumstances shall, in the opinion of the sd visitors or their successors, with the approbation of the sd court render expedient.

3. The sd original division into wards being made, the visitors shall appoint days for the first meeting of every ward, at such place as they shall name within the same, of which appointment notice shall be given at least two weeks before the day of meeting, by advertisement at some public place within the ward, requiring every free, white, male citizen, of full age, resident within the ward, to meet at the place, and by the hour of twelve of the day so appointed; at which meeting some one of the visitors shall also attend: and a majority of the sd warders being in attendance, the visitor present shall propose to them to decide by a majority of their votes 1. the location of a schoolhouse for the ward, and a dwelling house for the teacher, (the owner of the ground consenting thereto) 2. the size & structure of the said houses, and 3. whether the

same shall be built by the joint labor of the warders, or by their pecuniary contributions, and also 4. to elect by a plurality of their votes a Warden, resident, who shall direct & superintend the said buildings, and be charged with their future care.

§.4. it is presumed that the wards will generally build such log-houses for the school & teacher as they now do, & will join force & build them themselves, experience proving them to be as comfortable as they are cheap. nor would it be advisable to build expensive houses in the country wards, which, from changes in their population, will be liable to changes of their boundaries & consequent displacements of their center, drawing with it a removal of their school-house. in towns better houses may be more safely built, or rented, for both purposes.

4. And if they decide that the sd buildings shall be erected by the joint labor of the warders, then all persons within the sd ward liable to work on the highways shall attend at the order of the Warden, and, under his direction, shall labor thereon until completed, under the same penalties as provided by law to enforce labor on the highways. And if they decide on erection by pecuniary contributions, the residents and owners of property within the ward shall contribute towards the cost each in proportion to the taxes they last paid to the state for their persons & for the same property; of which the sheriff or Comm^{rs}2 shall furnish a statement to the Warden, who, according to the ratio of that statement, shall apportion and assess the quota of contribution for each, & be authorised to demand, receive, and apply the same to the purposes of the contribution, and to render account thereof, as in all other his pecuniary transactions for the school to the visitors: and on failure of payment by any contributor, the sheriff, on the order of the Warden, shall collect and render the same under like powers & regulations as provided for the collection of the public taxes. and in every case it shall be the duty of the Warden to have the buildings completed within 6. months from the date of his election.

§ 5. Estimating 800. militia to a county, there will be 12 captaincies or wards in a county on an average. suppose each of these, three years in

5. It shall be the duty of the sd visitors to seek & to employ for every ward, whenever the number and ages of it's children require it, a person of good moral character, qualified to teach reading, writing, numeral arithmetic

every six, to have children enough for a school, who have not yet had 3. years schooling. such a county will employ 6 teachers, each serving two wards by alternate terms. these teachers will be taken from the laboring class, as they are now, to wit, from that which furnishes mechanics, overseers, & tillers of the earth; & they will chiefly be the cripples, the weakly & the old of that class, who will have been qualified for these functions by the ward schools themselves. if put on a footing then, for wages & subsistence, with the young & the able of their class, they will be liberally compensated, say with 150.D. wages & the usual allowance of meat and bread. the subsistence will probably be contributed in kind by the warders, out of their family stock; the wages alone will be a pecuniary tax of about 900.D. to a county. this addition would be of about $\frac{1}{5}$ of the taxes we now pay to the state, or about $\frac{1}{5}$ of one percent on every man's taxable property; if tax can be called that which we give to our children in the most valuable of all forms, that of instruction. were these schools to be established on the public funds, & to be managed by the Gov^t & council, or the Comm^{rs} of the literary fund, brick houses to be built for the schools & teachers, high wages & subsistence

& geography, whose subsistence shall be furnished by the residents & proprietors of the ward, either in money or in kind, at the choice of each contributor, and in the ratio of their public taxes, to be apportioned and levied as on the failures before provided for. the teacher shall also have the use of the house and accommodations provided for him, & shall moreover receive annually such standing wages as the visitors shall have determined, to be proportioned on the residents & proprietors of the ward, and to be paid, levied & applied as before provided in other cases of pecuniary contribution. at this school shall be received and instructed gratis every infant of competent age who has not already had 3. years schooling: *<And it is declared and enacted that no person unborn or under the age of 12.³ years at the passing of this act, and who is compos mentis, shall, after the age of 15. years, be a citizen of this commonwealth until he or she can read readily in some tongue native or acquired.>*

6. To keep up a constant succession of Visitors, the judge of the Superior court of every county shall at his first session in every bissextile year, appoint visitors as before characterised, either the same or others, at his discretion. and in case of the death or resignation of any visitor during the term of his appointment or of his removal by the sd judge for good cause moral or physical, he shall appoint another to serve until the next bissextile appointment; which visitors shall have their 1st meeting at their courthouse on the county court day next ensuing their appointment, and afterwards at such times & places as themselves, or any two of them with reasonable notice to the third shall agree. but the election of Wardens shall be annually at the first meeting of the ward after the month of

given them, they would be badly managed, de- praved by abuses, & would exhaust the whole literary fund: while under the eye & animad- version of y^e wards, & the controul of the Warden & visitors, economy, diligence, & correctness of conduct will be enforced, the whole literary fund will be spared to complet the general system of edu- cation by colleges in every district for instruc- tion in the languages, & an University for the whole of the higher sciences: & this by an addition to our contri- butions almost insen- sible, & which in fact will not be felt as a burthen, because applied immediately & visibly to the good of our children.

<A question of some doubt might be raised on the latter part of this section, as to the rights & duties of society towards it's members infant & adult. is it a right or a duty in society to take care of their infant members, in opposition to the will of the parent? how far does this right & duty extend? to guard the life of the infant, his prop- erty, his instruction, his morals? the Roman father was supreme in all these; we draw a line, but where? public sentiment does not seem to have traced it precisely, nor is it necessary in the present case. it is better to tolerate the rare instance of a parent refusing to let his child be educated, than to

March; until which election the warden last elected shall continue in office.

7. All ward meetings shall be at their schoolhouse; & on failure of the meeting of a majority of the warders, on the call of a visi- tor, or of their warden, such visitor or warden may call another meeting.

8. At all times when repairs or alterations of the buildings before provided for shall be wanting, it shall be the duty of the Warden, or of a visitor, to call a ward meeting and to take the same measures towards such repairs or alterations as are herein before authorised for the original buildings.

9. Where, on the application of any War- den, authorised thereto by the vote of his ward, the judge of the Superior court shall be of opinion that the Contributors of any particular ward are disproportionably, and oppressively over-burthened with an unusual number of children of non-contributors of their ward, he may direct an order to the county-court to assess in their next county levy the whole or such part of the extra bur- then as he shall think excessive & unreason- able, to be paid to the warden for it's proper use, to which order the sd county court is re- quired to conform.

10. The sd teachers shall in all things relat- ing to the education & government of their pupils, be under the direction & controul of the Visitors<: *but no religious reading, instruc- tion or exercise, shall be prescribed or practised inconsistent with the tenets of any religious sect or denomination.*>

11. Some one of the visitors, once in every year at least, shall visit the several schools, shall enquire into the proceedings & practices thereat, shall examine the progress of the pupils, & give to those who excel in reading, in writing, in arithmetic or in geography,

shock the common feelings & ideas by the forcible asportation & education of the infant against the will of the father. what is proposed here is to remove the objection of expense, by offering education gratis, and to strengthen parental excitement by the disfranchisement of his child while uneducated. society has certainly a right to disavow him whom they offer, & are not permitted to qualify⁴ for the duties of a citizen. if we do not force instruction, let us at least strengthen the motives to receive it when offered.>

MS (ViU: TJP-Ca); in TJ's hand, with his notes in wide left margins of rectos and right margins of versos, with passages canceled by Joseph C. Cabell about 29 Dec. 1817 (see Cabell to TJ, 29 Dec. 1817, and first enclosure described there) retained above in angle brackets and italics; undated. PoC (DLC: TJ Papers, 211:37636-7); lacking Cabell's revisions. Enclosed in TJ to Cabell, 9 Sept. 1817.

such honorary marks & testimonies of approbation as may encourage & excite to industry & emulation.

12. All decisions & proceedings of the Visitors relative to the original designation of wards, at any time before the buildings are begun, or changes of wards at any time after, to the quantum of subsistence, or wages allowed to the teacher, & to the rules prescribed to him for the education & government of his pupils, shall be subject to be controuled & corrected by the judge of the Superior court of the county on the complaint of any individual aggrieved or interested.

BISSEXTILE YEAR: "leap year." AS-
PORTATION: "the action of carrying off"
(*OED*).

¹TJ here canceled "within themselves."

²Preceding two words interlined.

³Number interlined in place of "15."

⁴TJ here canceled "as a citizen."

To Joseph C. Cabell

DEAR SIR

Poplar Forest. Sep. 9. 17.

I promised you that I would put into the form of a bill my plan of establishing the elementary schools, without taking a cent from the literary fund. I have had leisure at this place to do this, & now send you the result. if 12. or 1500. schools are to be placed under one general administration, an attention so divided will amount to a dereliction of them to themselves. it is surely better then to place each school at once under the care of those most interested in it's conduct. in this way the literary fund is left untouched to compleat at once the whole system of education, by establishing a college in every district of about 80. miles square, for the 2^d grade of education, to wit, languages

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antient and modern, and for the 3^d grade a single university, in which the sciences shall be taught in their highest degree.

I should apologise perhaps for the style of this bill. I dislike the verbose & intricate style of the modern English statutes, and in our revised code I endeavored to restore it to the simple one of the antient statutes, in such original bills as I drew in that work. I suppose the reformation has not been acceptable, as it has been little followed. you however can easily correct this bill to the taste of my brother lawyers, by making every other word a 'said' or 'aforesaid,' and saying every thing over 2. or 3. times, so as that nobody but we of the craft can untwist the diction, and find out what it means; and that too not so plainly but that we may conscientiously divide, one half on each side. mend it therefore in form and substance to the orthodox taste, & make it what it should be; or, if you think it radically wrong, try something else, & let us make a beginning in some way. no matter how wrong; experience will amend it as we go along, and make it effectual in the end.

I shall see you of course at our stated Visitation, and hope all the gentlemen will consider Monticello as the rendezvous of the preceding day or evening. I salute you with friendship and respect.

TH: JEFFERSON

RC (ViU: TJP); addressed: "Joseph C. Cabell Edgewood near Warminster"; franked; endorsed by Cabell as received 26 Sept. 1817, with his parenthetical description of it as "Enclosing a Bill for <General education> the establishm^t of

Elementary schools." PoC (DLC). Printed without closing paragraph in *Richmond Enquirer*, 3 Feb. 1825. Enclosure: TJ's Bill for Establishing Elementary Schools, [ca. 9 Sept. 1817].

To Eleuthère I. du Pont de Nemours

DEAR SIR

Poplar Forest near Lynchburg, Sep. 9. 17.

Your letter of the 11th of Aug. after a long detention at Monticello, is recieved at this place, where I have now been upwards of a month. I had seen in the publick papers the unwelcome event it announced, & also the obituary notice to which your letter refers. it was but a modest sketch of the worth of M. Dupont: for of no man who has lived could more good have been said with more truth. I had been happy in his friendship upwards of 30. years, for he was one of my early intimates in France. I had witnessed his steady virtue, and disinterested patriotism thro' all the varying scenes, regular and revolu-

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tionary, thro which that unhappy country has been doomed to pass. in these, his object never varied, that of the general good. for this no man ever labored more zealously or honestly; of which he has left abundant monuments. altho' at the age he had attained we were aware that his close could not be very distant, yet the moment of it's arrival could not fail to afflict us with those sentiments of regret which the loss of a beloved friend, a patriot, and an honest man, must ever excite. I sincerely condole with yourself and his family on the great void in their society produced by his loss, of which they will be long & deeply¹ sensible.

I duly recieved the pamphlet of M. Jullien on education, to whom I had been indebted some years before for a valuable work on the same subject. of this I expressed to him my high estimation in a letter of thanks which I trust he recieved. the present pamphlet is an additional proof of his useful assiduities on this interesting subject, which, if the condition of man is to be progressively ameliorated, as we fondly hope and believe, is to be the chief instrument in effecting it. I salute you with sentiments of great esteem and respect.

TH: JEFFERSON

RC (DeGH: Eleuthère I. du Pont Papers, Winterthur Manuscripts); addressed: "M^r E. I. Dupont Brandywine near Wilmington Del."; franked; post-

marked Lynchburg, 14 Sept.; endorsed by du Pont de Nemours. PoC (DLC).

¹Word interlined in place of "constantly."

From William Wirt

DEAR SIR.

Richmond. Sept^r 9. 1817.

The rev^d John H. Rice, of this place, a gentleman of great erudition, is about to publish a magazine, in which he proposes to give a view of the literature and literary men of Virginia. To this end, he is anxious to procure a complete catalogue of all the works, of any merit, which have been published, by Virginians, since the first foundation of the colony—the names of the respective authors—the times of their publication—and a brief account of the works.—Being extremely desirous to gain the valuable information which he naturally supposes you to possess on this subject and not having the advantage of a personal acquaintance with you, he has requested me to make this application, which I do with the less reluctance because I know the lively interest you take in whatever concerns the honor of Virginia. May I hope to hear whether it will be convenient to you to grant this

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request?—But whether it be or not I beg you to be assured that I shall not be the less your much obliged friend and servant,

W^M WIRT

RC (DLC); endorsed by TJ as received 21 Sept. 1817 and so recorded in SJJL. RC (DLC); address cover only; with PoC of TJ to Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 1 Nov. 1817, on verso; addressed: “Thomas Jefferson esq^r Monticello Albemarle County” by “mail”; stamp canceled; franked; postmarked Richmond, 10 Sept. Tr (MdHi: Wirt Papers).

John Holt Rice (1777–1831), Presbyterian clergyman, author, and educator, was born in a part of Bedford County that became Campbell County in 1781. He attended Liberty Hall Academy (later Washington and Lee University) in Lexington and George A. Baxter’s academy in New London. From 1796 to 1799 Rice worked as a tutor at Hampden-Sydney College. After privately studying theology, he was licensed as a minister in 1803, and he

served successively as pastor of a Charlotte County church, 1804–12, and First Presbyterian Church of Richmond, 1812–23. Rice founded the Virginia Bible Society in 1813. He regularly published sermons and religious essays and edited the *Christian Monitor*, 1815–17, and its successor, the *Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine*, 1818–28. In 1823 Rice declined the presidency of the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University), instead accepting the professorship of theology at Hampden-Sydney, where he helped transform the theology department into the separate but affiliated Union Theological Seminary. He died at Hampden-Sydney (ANB; DAB; Sprague, *American Pulpit*, 4:325–41; William Maxwell, *A Memoir of the Rev. John H. Rice, D.D.* [1835]; *Richmond Enquirer*, 16 Sept. 1831).

To Joseph C. Cabell

DEAR SIR

Pop. For. Sep. 10. 17.

I omitted in my letter of yesterday to return Barrois’ catalogue with thanks for the use of it. I omitted also to observe that it would be better that the bill for the elementary schools should not be known as coming from me. not knowing the present pulse of the public, should there be any thing unpalatable in it, it may injure our college as coming from one of it’s visitors. I wish it to be understood also that I do not intermeddle with public affairs. it is my duty, and equally my wish to leave them to those who are to feel the benefits & burthens of measures. the interest I feel in the system of education and wards, has seduced me into the part I have taken as to them, and still attaches me to their success.

I sent subscription papers with a letter of explanation to the counties allotted to me. I have given one to Charles Johnston who is zealous, & I shall send one to Christopher Clarke on his return home. but I doubt their effect. the difficulty I find is to eradicate the idea that it is a local thing, a mere Albemarle academy. I endeavor to convince them it is a general seminary of the sciences meant for the use of the state. in this view all approve of the situation,

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and rally to the object. but time seems necessary to plant this idea firmly in their minds. Doct^r Knox has retired from business, and I have written to Cooper. affectionately yours TH: JEFFERSON

RC (ViU: TJP); addressed: "Joseph C. Cabell esq. Edgewood near Warminster"; franked; postmarked Lynchburg, 14 Sept.; endorsed by Cabell as received 26 Sept.

1817. PoC (DLC); on verso of a reused address cover from A. F. De Laage to TJ; endorsed by TJ. Enclosure: enclosure to Cabell to TJ, 18 Aug. 1817.

To George Flower

DEAR SIR

Poplar Forest Sep. 12. 17.

Your favor of Aug. 12. was yesterday recieved at this place; and I learn from it with pleasure that you have found a tract of country which will suit you for settlement. to us, your first purchase would have been more gratifying, by adding yourself and your friends to our society; but the overruling consideration, with us as with you, is your own advantage: and as it would doubtless be a great comfort to you to have your antient neighbors and friends settled around you, I sincerely wish that your proposition to 'purchase a tract of land in the Illinois on favorable terms, for introducing a colony of English farmers,' may encounter no difficulties from the established rules of our land department. the general law prescribes an open sale, where all citizens may compete, on an equal footing for any lot of land which attracts their choice. to dispense with this in any particular case, requires a special law of Congress, & to special legislation we are generally averse, lest a principle of favoritism should creep in, and pervert that of equal rights. it has however been done, on some occasions, where a special national advantage has been expected to outweigh that of adherence to the general rule. the promised introduction of the culture of the vine procured a special law in favor of the Swiss settlement on the Ohio. that of the culture of oil, wine & other Southern productions did the same lately for the French settlement on the Tombigbee. it remains to be tried whether that of an improved system of farming, interesting to so great a proportion of our citizens, may not also be thought worth a dispensation with the general rule. this I suppose is the principal ground on which your proposition will be questioned. for altho', as to other foreigners, it is thought better to discourage their settling together, in large masses, wherein, as in our German settlements, they preserve for a long time their own languages, habits and principles of government, & that they should distribute themselves sparsely among the natives for quicker amalgamation, yet

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English emigrants are without this inconvenience. they differ from us little but in their principles of government; and most of those (merchants excepted) who come here, are sufficiently disposed to adopt ours. what the issue however¹ of your proposition may probably be, I am less able to advise you than many others; for during the last 8. or 10. years I have no knolege of the administration of the land office or the principles of it's government. even the persons on whom it will depend are all changed within that interval, so as to leave me small means of being useful to you. whatever they may be however, they shall be freely exercised for your advantage: and that, not on the selfish² principle of increasing our own population at the expense of other nations; for the additions to that from emigration are but as a drop in a bucket to those by natural procreation; but to consecrate a sanctuary for those whom the misrule of Europe may compel to seek happiness in other climes. this refuge, once known, will produce reaction on the happiness even of those who remain there, by warning their taskmasters that when the evils of Egyptian oppression become heavier than those of the abandonment of country, another Canaan is open where their subjects will be recieved as brothers, and secured against like oppressions by a participation in the right of self-government. if additional motives could be wanting with us to the maintenance of this right, they would be found in the animating consideration that a single good government becomes thus a blessing to the whole earth; it's welcome to the oppressed restraining within certain limits the measure of their oppressions. but should even this be counteracted by violence on the right of expatriation, the other branch of our example then presents itself for imitation, to rise on their rulers, & do as we have done. you have set to your own country a good example, by shewing them a peaceable mode of reducing their rulers to the necessity of becoming more wise, more moderate, and more honest; and I sincerely pray that the example³ may work for the benefit of those who cannot follow it, as it will for your own.

With mr Burkbeck, the associate of your late exploratory journeyings I have not the happiness of personal acquaintance; but I know him thro' his Narrative of your journeyings together thro' France. the impressions recieved from that give me confidence that a participation with yourself in assurances of the esteem & respect of a stranger will not be unacceptable to him, and the less when given thro' you, & associated with those to yourself.

TH: JEFFERSON

RC (ICHi: Flower Family Papers); endorsed by Flower, in part: "My last letter from Thomas Jefferson." PoC (DLC); at foot of first page: "George Flower."

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The United States Congress agreed to sell public lands for a SWISS SETTLEMENT on 1 May 1802 under “An Act to empower John James Dufour, and his associates, to purchase certain lands,” and for a FRENCH SETTLEMENT on 3 Mar. 1817 under “An Act to set apart and dispose of certain public lands, for the encouragement of the cultivation of the vine and olive” (*U.S. Statutes at Large*, 3:374, 6:47–8).

The biblical book of Exodus describes the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery into the land of CANAAN. MR BURKBECK: Morris Birkbeck.

¹Word interlined in place of “therefore.”

²Word interlined in place of “interested.”

³Word interlined in place of “lesson.”

From John Woodson

DEAR SIR.

Cartersville Sept^r 12. 1817

It may be presumption in me to ask your Opinion, on a Subject near my heart; and one which I think the whole human race are interested in. but when you hear my reason for intrudeing upon your useful time; I hope your goodness will pardon the liberty I take. Being in company¹ with a Divine a few weeks past the Centr^l college was the topic. it was observd that it was patronizd by M^r Jefferson it was suggested whether you woud listen to a lecture on Theolojy, for it was the Opinion of many you did not believe in Reveald Religion, neither did you believe in the divinity of our Saviour, often have I heard the same Opinion advanced, but never could be braught to believe that a man of your understanging and advanced stage of life had not² thought Seriously what was to become of him after death. I believe there is a God³ we are accountable to him for all our actions, that there is rewards and punishments, & I believe in the Immortality of the soul. The incarnation of our Saviour and predistinations is a Subject involvd in mistery & there are Misterys in our natures and evey thing around us equally incomprehesible, yet it is our duty to believe & tremble and look up to the Majesty of heaven with wonder & delight. Please to give me your Opini[on] upon this—I consider all important Subject, not that I intend to make it public, but to stop the mouth of Censure & to have the Opinion of the great & Good to strengthen me in the pursuit of heaven. My dear Sir your great age & your reflectng mind must have markd a course to meet death, & we have as good ground to believe the Bible & the characters there expressd—as to believe in Antient history and that such men as Ceasar Pompy & the long list given in Prophane history. Yet we are hard to believe in a book that teaches the best Morals ever pen'd. I

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dont recollect a Martyr for Infidelity, numbers have died for the pure religion handed down in the bible.

I am no enthusiast, but a plain planter, have spent some happy moments under your hospitable roof; but perhaps forgotten by you, depend upon it my friend it is time to know the truth; there is a life beyond the grave, happiness or misery awaits us there. if the former cha[nces to] be our happy lott; we shall live imm[or]tal in a better world than this. May your good sence teach you, & may the finger of god point you to a seat in heaven

Yrs Sincerely & Respectfully

JN^o WOODSON

NB A letter by post will be thankfully Rec^d

JW.

RC (DLC); edge trimmed and torn at seal; addressed: "M^r Thomas Jefferson Monticello near Charlottsville" by "Mail"; franked; postmarked Cartersville, 14 Sept. 1817; endorsed by TJ as received 23 Sept. 1817 and so recorded in SJL.

¹Manuscript: "compay."

²Word interlined.

³Preceding four words interlined.

To John Martin Baker

DEAR SIR

Poplar Forest Sep. 14. 17.

your favor of Aug. 29. is delivered to me here, within 4. or 5 days of my departure for Monticello. by a letter from the President I have reason to expect to find him then at his seat in my neighborhood, and consequently sooner than a letter addressed to him and sent to you, as you have desired, could possibly get to his hands. I reserve myself therefore for a personal application, more early and more effective. in the mean time the favorable dispositions of mr Adams, the new Secretary of state, would be of first rate importance to you. his opinion as to the Consulate at Amsterdam will have peculiar weight as having been educated there, lived there, & the particular friend of the late Consul Bourne. as you have been with mr Madison lately I have no doubt he apprised you of this circumstance, and no one in the US. would have more weight than himself as an advocate for you to mr Adams. Accept my best wishes for your success and welfare with the assurances of my esteem & respect

TH: JEFFERSON

PoC (DLC); at foot of text: "J. M. Baker esq.;" endorsed by TJ.