

ТОМАС ДЖЕФФЕРСОН

**MEMOIR,  
CORRESPONDENCE,  
AND MISCELLANIES,  
FROM THE PAPERS OF  
THOMAS JEFFERSON,  
VOLUME 4**

Томас Джефферсон

**Memoir, Correspondence, And  
Miscellanies, From The Papers  
Of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 4**

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**Джефферсон Т.**

Memoir, Correspondence, And Miscellanies, From The Papers Of  
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# **Thomas Jefferson**

## **Memoir, Correspondence, And Miscellanies, From The Papers Of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 4**

### **LETTER I.—TO LEVI LINCOLN, August 30, 1803**

TO LEVI LINCOLN.

Monticello, August 30, 1803.

Deak. Sir,

The enclosed letter came to hand by yesterday's post. You will be sensible of the circumstances which make it improper that I should hazard a formal answer, as well as of the desire its friendly aspect naturally excites, that those concerned in it should understand that the spirit they express is friendly viewed. You can judge also from your knowledge of the ground, whether it may be usefully encouraged. I take the liberty, therefore, of availing myself of your neighborhood to Boston, and of your friendship to me, to request you to say to the Captain and others verbally whatever you think would be proper, as expressive of my sentiments on the subject. With respect to the day on which they wish to fix their anniversary, they may be told, that disapproving myself of transferring the honors and veneration for the great birthday of our republic to any individual, or of dividing them with individuals, I have declined letting my own birthday be known, and have engaged my family not to communicate it. This has been the uniform answer to every application of the kind.

On further consideration as to the amendment to our constitution respecting Louisiana, I have thought it better, instead of enumerating the powers which Congress may exercise, to give them the same powers they have as to other portions of the Union generally, and to enumerate the special exceptions, in some such form as the following.

'Louisiana, as ceded by France to the United States, is made a part of the United States, its white inhabitants shall be citizens, and stand, as to their rights and obligations, on the same footing with other citizens of the United States, in analogous situations. Save only that as to the portion thereof lying north of an east and west line drawn through the mouth of Arkansas river, no new State shall be established, nor any grants of land made, other than to Indians, in exchange for equivalent portions of land occupied by them, until an amendment of the constitution shall be made for these purposes.

'Florida also, whensoever it may be rightfully obtained, shall become a part of the United States, its white inhabitants shall thereupon be citizens, and shall stand, as to their rights and obligations, on the same footing with other citizens of the United States, in analogous situations.'

I quote this for your consideration, observing that the less that is said about any constitutional difficulty, the better: and that it will be desirable for Congress to do what is necessary, in silence. I find but one opinion as to the necessity of shutting up the country for some time. We meet in Washington the 25th of September to prepare for Congress. Accept my affectionate salutations, and great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.



## LETTER II.—TO WILSON C NICHOLAS, September 7, 1803

TO WILSON C NICHOLAS.

Monticello, September 7, 1803.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of the 3rd was delivered me at court; but we were much disappointed at not seeing you here, Mr. Madison and the Governor being here at the time. I enclose you a letter from Monroe on the subject of the late treaty. You will observe a hint in it, to do without delay what we are bound to do. There is reason, in the opinion of our ministers, to believe, that if the thing were to do over again, it could not be obtained, and that if we give the least opening, they will declare the treaty void. A warning amounting to that has been given to them, and an unusual kind of letter written by their minister to our Secretary of State, direct. Whatever Congress shall think it necessary to do, should be done with as little debate as possible, and particularly so far as respects the constitutional difficulty. I am aware of the force of the observations you make on the power given by the constitution to Congress, to admit new States into the Union, without restraining the subject to the territory then constituting the United States. But when I consider that the limits of the United States are precisely fixed by the treaty of 1783, that the constitution expressly declares itself to be made for the United States, I cannot help believing the intention was not to permit Congress to admit into the Union new States, which should be formed out of the territory for which, and under whose authority alone, they were then acting. I do not believe it was meant that they might receive England, Ireland, Holland, &c. into it, which would be the case on your construction. When an instrument admits two constructions, the one safe, the other dangerous, the one precise, the other indefinite, I prefer that which is safe and precise. I had rather ask an enlargement of power from the nation, where it is found necessary, than to assume it by a construction which would make our powers boundless. Our peculiar security is in the possession of a written constitution. Let us not make it a blank paper by construction. I say the same as to the opinion of those who consider the grant of the treaty-making power as boundless. If it is, then we have no constitution. If it has bounds, they can be no others than the definitions of the powers which that instrument gives. It specifies and delineates the operations permitted to the federal government, and gives all the powers necessary to carry these into execution. Whatever of these enumerated objects is proper for a law, Congress may make the law; whatever is proper to be executed by way of a treaty, the President and Senate may enter into the treaty; whatever is to be done by a judicial sentence, the judges may pass the sentence. Nothing is more likely than that their enumeration of powers is defective. This is the ordinary case of all human works. Let us go on then perfecting it, by adding, by way of amendment to the constitution, those powers which time and trial show are still wanting. But it has been taken too much for granted, that by this rigorous construction the treaty power would be reduced to nothing. I had occasion once to examine its effect on the French treaty, made by the old Congress, and found that out of thirty odd articles which that contained, there were one, two, or three only, which could not now be stipulated under our present constitution. I confess, then, I think it important, in the present case, to set an example against broad construction, by appealing for new power to the people. If, however, our friends shall think differently, certainly I shall acquiesce with satisfaction; confiding, that the good sense of our country will correct the evil of construction when it shall produce ill effects.

No apologies for writing or speaking to me freely are necessary. On the contrary, nothing my friends can do is so dear to me, and proves to me their friendship so clearly, as the information they give me of their sentiments and those of others on interesting points where I am to act, and where information and warning is so essential to excite in me that due reflection which ought to precede

action. I leave this about the 21st, and shall hope the District Court will give me an opportunity of seeing you. Accept my affectionate salutations, and assurances of cordial esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.



## **LETTER III.—TO DOCTOR BENJAMIN RUSH, October 4, 1803**

TO DOCTOR BENJAMIN RUSH.

Washington, October 4, 1803.

Dear Sir,

No one would more willingly than myself pay the just tribute due to the services of Captain Barry, by writing a letter of condolence to his widow, as you suggest. But when one undertakes to administer justice, it must be with an even hand, and by rule; what is done for one, must be done for every one in equal degree. To what a train of attentions would this draw a President? How difficult would it be to draw the line between that degree of merit entitled to such a testimonial of it, and that not so entitled? If drawn in a particular case differently from what the friends of the deceased would judge right, what offence would it give, and of the most tender kind? How much offence would be given by accidental inattentions, or want of information? The first step into such an undertaking ought to be well weighed. On the death of Dr. Franklin, the King and Convention of France went into mourning. So did the House of Representatives of the United States: the Senate refused. I proposed to General Washington that the executive departments should wear mourning; he declined it, because he said he should not know where to draw the line, if he once began that ceremony. Mr. Adams was then Vice-President, and I thought General Washington had his eye on him, whom he certainly did not love. I told him the world had drawn so broad a line between himself and Dr. Franklin, on the one side, and the residue of mankind, on the other, that we might wear mourning for them, and the question still remain new and undecided as to all others. He thought it best, however, to avoid it. On these considerations alone, however well affected to the merit of Commodore Barry, I think it prudent not to engage myself in a practice which may become embarrassing.

Tremendous times in Europe! How mighty this battle of lions and tigers? With what sensations should the common herd of cattle look on it? With no partialities certainly. If they can so far worry one another as to destroy their power of tyrannizing the one over the earth, the other the waters, the world may perhaps enjoy peace, till they recruit again.

Affectionate and respectful salutations.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER IV.—TO M. DUPONT DE NEMOURS, November 1, 1803

TO M. DUPONT DE NEMOURS.

Washington, November 1, 1803.

My Dear Sir,

Your favors of April the 6th and June the 27th were duly received, and with the welcome which every thing brings from you. The treaty which has so happily sealed the friendship of our two countries, has been received here with general acclamation. Some inflexible federalists have still ventured to brave the public opinion. It will fix their character with the world and with posterity, who, not descending to the other points of difference between us, will judge them by this fact, so palpable as to speak for itself, in all times and places. For myself and my country I thank you for the aids you have given in it; and I congratulate you on having lived to give those aids in a transaction replete with blessings to unborn millions of men, and which will mark the face of a portion on the globe so extensive as that which now composes the United States of America. It is true that at this moment a little cloud hovers in the horizon. The government of Spain has protested against the right of France to transfer; and it is possible she may refuse possession, and that this may bring on acts of force. But against such neighbors as France there, and the United States here, what she can expect from so gross a compound of folly and false faith, is not to be sought in the book of wisdom. She is afraid of her enemies in Mexico. But not more than we are. Our policy will be to form New Orleans and the country on both sides of it on the Gulf of Mexico, into a State; and, as to all above that, to transplant our Indians into it, constituting them a Marechaussee to prevent emigrants crossing the river, until we shall have filled up all the vacant country on this side. This will secure both Spain and us as to the mines of Mexico, for half a century, and we may safely trust the provisions for that time to the men who shall live in it.

I have communicated with Mr. Gallatin on the subject of using your house in any matters of consequence we may have to do at Paris. He is impressed with the same desire I feel to give this mark of our confidence in you, and the sense we entertain of your friendship and fidelity. Mr. Behring informs him that none of the money which will be due from us to him, as the assignee of France, will be wanting at Paris. Be assured that our dispositions are such as to let no occasion pass unimproved, of serving you, where occurrences will permit it.

Present my respects to Madame Dupont, and accept yourself assurances of my constant and warm friendship.

Th: Jefferson.

**LETTER V.—TO ROBERT R.  
LIVINGSTON, November 4,1803  
TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON**

Washington, November 4,1803.

Dear Sir,

A report reaches us this day from Baltimore (on probable, but not certain grounds), that Mr. Jerome Bonaparte, brother of the First Consul, was yesterday<sup>1</sup> married to Miss Patterson of that city. The effect of this measure on the mind of the First Consul, is not for me to suppose; but as it might occur to him *primâ facie*, that the executive of the United States ought to have prevented it, I have thought it advisable to mention the subject to you, that if necessary, you may by explanations set that idea to rights. You know that by our laws, all persons are free to enter into marriage, if of twenty-one years of age, no one having a power to restrain it, not even their parents; and that under that age, no one can prevent it but the parent or guardian. The lady is under age, and the parents, placed between her affections which were strongly fixed, and the considerations opposing the measure, yielded with pain and anxiety to the former.

Mr. Patterson is the President of the bank of Baltimore, the wealthiest man in Maryland, perhaps in the United States, except Mr. Carroll; a man of great virtue and respectability; the mother is the sister of the lady of General Samuel Smith; and, consequently, the station of the family in society is with the first of the United States. These circumstances fix rank in a country where there are no hereditary titles. Your treaty has obtained nearly a general approbation. The federalists spoke and voted against it, but they are now so reduced in their numbers as to be nothing. The question on its ratification in the Senate was decided by twenty-four against seven, which was ten more than enough. The vote in the House of Representatives for making provision for its execution, was carried by eighty-nine against twenty-three, which was a majority of sixty-six, and the necessary bills are going through the Houses by greater majorities. Mr. Pichon, according to instructions from his government, proposed to have added to the ratification a protestation against any failure in time or other circumstances of execution, on our part. He was told, that in that case we should annex a counter protestation, which would leave the thing exactly where it was; that this transaction had been conducted from the commencement of the negotiation to this stage of it, with a frankness and sincerity honorable to both nations, and comfortable to the heart of an honest man to review; that to annex to this last chapter of the transaction such an evidence of mutual distrust, was to change its aspect dishonorably for us both, and contrary to truth as to us; for that we had not the smallest doubt that France would punctually execute its part; and I assured Mr. Pichon that I had more confidence in the word of the First Consul than in all the parchment we could sign. He saw that we had ratified the treaty; that both branches had passed by great majorities one of the bills for execution, and would soon pass the other two; that no circumstances remained that could leave a doubt of our punctual performance; and like an able and an honest minister (which he is in the highest degree) he undertook to do, what he knew his employers would do themselves, were they here spectators of all the existing circumstances, and exchanged the ratification's purely and simply; so that this instrument goes to the world as an evidence of the candor and confidence of the nations in each other, which will have the best effects. This was the more justifiable, as Mr. Pichon knew that Spain had entered with us a protestation against our ratification of the treaty, grounded, first, on the assertion that the First Consul had not executed the conditions of the treaties of cession, and secondly, that he had broken a solemn promise not to alienate the country to any nation. We answered, that these were private questions

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<sup>1</sup> November 8. It is now said that it did not take place on the 3rd, but will this day.

between France and Spain, which they must settle together; that we derived our title from the First Consul, and did not doubt his guarantee of it: and we, four days ago, sent off orders to the Governor of the Mississippi territory and General Wilkinson, to move down with the troops at hand to New Orleans, to receive the possession from Mr. Laussat. If he is heartily disposed to carry the order of the Consul into execution, he can probably command a volunteer force at New Orleans, and will have the aid of ours also, if he desires it, to take the possession and deliver it to us. If he is not so disposed, we shall take the possession, and it will rest with the government of France, by adopting the act as their own and obtaining the confirmation of Spain, to supply the non-execution of their stipulation to deliver, and to entitle themselves to the complete execution of our part of the agreements. In the mean time, the legislature is passing the bills, and we are preparing every thing to be done on our part towards execution, and we shall not avail ourselves of the three months' delay after possession of the province, allowed by the treaty for the delivery of the stock, but shall deliver it the moment that possession is known here, which will be on the eighteenth day after it has taken place.

Accept my affectionate salutations, and assurances of my constant esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER VI.—TO DAVID WILLIAMS, November 14, 1803 TO DAVID WILLIAMS

Washington, November 14, 1803.

Sir,

I have duly received the volume on the claims of literature; which you did me the favor to send me through Mr. Monroe: and have read with satisfaction the many judicious reflections it contains, on the condition of the respectable class of literary men. The efforts for their relief, made by a society of private citizens, are truly laudable: but they are, as you justly observe, but a palliation of an evil, the cure of which calls for all the wisdom and the means of the nation. The greatest evils of populous society have ever appeared to me to spring from the vicious distribution of its members among the occupations called for. I have no doubt that those nations are essentially right, which leave this to individual choice, as a better guide to an advantageous distribution, than any other which could be devised. But when, by a blind concurrence, particular occupations are ruinously overcharged, and others left in want of hands, the national authorities can do much towards restoring the equilibrium. On the revival of letters, learning became the universal favorite. And with reason, because there was not enough of it existing to manage the affairs of a nation to the best advantage, nor to advance its individuals to the happiness of which they were susceptible, by improvements in their minds, their morals, their health, and in those conveniences which contribute to the comfort and embellishment of life. All the efforts of the society, therefore, were directed to the increase of learning, and the inducements of respect, ease, and profit were held up for its encouragement. Even the charities of the nation forgot that misery was their object, and spent themselves in founding schools to transfer to science the hardy sons of the plough. To these incitements were added the powerful fascinations of great cities. These circumstances have long since produced an overcharge in the class of competitors for learned occupation, and great distress among the supernumerary candidates; and the more, as their habits of life have disqualified them for re-entering into the laborious class. The evil cannot be suddenly, nor perhaps ever entirely cured: nor should I presume to say by what means it may be cured. Doubtless there are many engines which the nation might bring to bear on this object. Public opinion and public encouragement are among these. The class principally defective is that of agriculture. It is the first in utility, and ought to be the first in respect. The same artificial means which have been used to produce a competition in learning, may be equally successful in restoring agriculture to its primary dignity in the eyes of men. It is a science of the very first order. It counts among its handmaids the most respectable sciences, such as Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, Mechanics, Mathematics generally, Natural History, Botany. In every College and University, a professorship of agriculture, and the class of its students, might be honored as the first. Young men closing their academical education with this, as the crown of all other sciences, fascinated with its solid charms, and at a time when they are to choose an occupation, instead of crowding the other classes, would return to the farms of their fathers, their own, or those of others, and replenish and invigorate a calling, now languishing under contempt and oppression. The charitable schools, instead of storing their pupils with a lore which the present state of society does not call for, converted into schools of agriculture, might restore them to that branch, qualified to enrich and honor themselves, and to increase the productions of the nation instead of consuming them. A gradual abolition of the useless offices, so much accumulated in all governments, might close this drain also from the labors of the field, and lessen the burthens imposed on them. By these, and the better means which will occur to others, the surcharge of the learned, might in time be drawn off to recruit the laboring class of citizens: the sum of industry be increased, and that of misery diminished.

Among the ancients, the redundance of population was sometimes checked by exposing infants. To the moderns, America has offered a more humane resource. Many, who cannot find employment in Europe, accordingly come here. Those who can labor do well, for the most part. Of the learned class of emigrants, a small portion find employments analogous to their talents. But many fail, and return to complete their course of misery in the scenes where it began. Even here we find too strong a current from the country to the towns; and instances beginning to appear of that species of misery, which you are so humanely endeavoring to relieve with you. Although we have in the old countries of Europe the lesson of their experience to warn us, yet I am not satisfied we shall have the firmness and wisdom to profit by it. The general desire of men to live by their heads rather than their hands, and the strong allurements of great cities to those who have any turn for dissipation, threaten to make them here, as in Europe, the sinks of voluntary misery. I perceive, however, that I have suffered my pen to run into a disquisition, when I had taken it up only to thank you for the volume you had been so kind as to send me, and to express my approbation of it. After apologizing, therefore, for having touched on a subject so much more familiar to you, and better understood, I beg leave to assure you of my high consideration and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER VII.—TO JOHN RANDOLH, December 1, 1803 TO JOHN RANDOLH

Washington, December 1, 1803.

Dear Sir,

The explanations in your letter of yesterday were quite unnecessary to me. I have had too satisfactory proofs of your friendly regard, to be disposed to suspect any thing of a contrary aspect.

I understood perfectly the expressions stated in the newspaper to which you allude, to mean, that 'though the proposition came from the republican quarter of the House, yet you should not concur with it.' I am aware, that in parts of the Union, and even with persons to whom Mr. Eppes and Mr. Randolph are unknown, and myself little known, it will be presumed from their connection, that what comes from them comes from me. No men on earth are more independent in their sentiments than they are, nor any one less disposed than I am to influence the opinions of others. We rarely speak of politics, or of the proceedings of the House, but merely historically; and I carefully avoid expressing an opinion on them in their presence, that we may all be at our ease. With other members, I have believed that more unreserved communications would be advantageous to the public. This has been, perhaps, prevented by mutual delicacy. I have been afraid to express opinions unasked, lest I should be suspected of wishing to direct the legislative action of members. They have avoided asking communications from me, probably, lest they should be suspected of wishing to fish out executive secrets. I see too many proofs of the imperfection of human reason, to entertain wonder or intolerance at any difference of opinion on any subject; and acquiesce in that difference as easily as on a difference of feature or form: experience having long taught me the reasonableness of mutual sacrifices of opinion among those who are to act together for any common object, and the expediency of doing what good we can, when we cannot do all we would wish.

Accept my friendly salutations, and assurances of great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.



## LETTER VIII.—TO MR. GALLATIN, December 13, 1803

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO MR. GALLATIN.

The Attorney General having considered and decided, that the prescription in the law for establishing a bank, that the officers in the subordinate offices of discount and deposit, shall be appointed 'on the same terms and in the same manner practised in the principal bank,' does not extend to them the principle of rotation, established by the legislature in the body of directors in the principal bank, it follows that the extension of that principle has been merely a voluntary and prudential act of the principal bank, from which they are free to depart. I think the extension was wise and proper on their part, because the legislature having deemed rotation useful in the principal bank constituted by them, there would be the same reason for it in the subordinate banks to be established by the principal. It breaks in upon the *esprit de corps*, so apt to prevail in permanent bodies; it gives a chance for the public eye penetrating into the sanctuary of those proceedings and practices, which the avarice of the directors may introduce for their personal emolument, and which the resentments of excluded directors, or the honesty of those duly admitted, might betray to the public; and it gives an opportunity at the end of the year, or at other periods, of correcting a choice, which, on trial, proves to have been unfortunate; an evil of which themselves complain in their distant institutions. Whether, however, they have a power to alter this or not, the executive has no right to decide; and their consultation with you has been merely an act of complaisance, or from a desire to shield so important an innovation under the cover of executive sanction. But ought we to volunteer our sanction in such a case? Ought we to disarm ourselves of any fair right of animadversion, whenever that institution shall be a legitimate subject of consideration? I own I think the most proper answer would be, that we do not think ourselves authorized to give an opinion on the question.

From a passage in the letter of the President, I observe an idea of establishing a branch bank of the United States in New Orleans. This institution is one of the most deadly hostility existing, against the principles and form of our constitution. The nation is, at this time, so strong and united in its sentiments, that it cannot be shaken at this moment. But suppose a series of untoward events should occur, sufficient to bring into doubt the competency of a republican government to meet a crisis of great danger, or to unhinge the confidence of the people in the public functionaries; an institution like this, penetrating by its branches every part of the Union, acting by command and in phalanx, may, in a critical moment, upset the government. I deem no government safe which is under the vassalage of any self-constituted authorities, or any other authority than that of the nation, or its regular functionaries. What an obstruction could not this bank of the United States, with all its branch banks, be in time of war? It might dictate to us the peace we should accept, or withdraw its aids. Ought we then to give further growth to an institution so powerful, so hostile? That it is so hostile we know, 1. from a knowledge of the principles of the persons composing the body of directors in every bank, principal or branch; and those of most of the stock-holders: 2. from their opposition to the measures and principles of the government, and to the election of those friendly to them: and, 3. from the sentiments of the newspapers they support. Now, while we are strong, it is the greatest duty we owe to the safety of our constitution, to bring this powerful enemy to a perfect subordination under its authorities. The first measure would be to reduce them to an equal footing only with other banks, as to the favors of the government. But, in order to be able to meet a general combination of the banks against us, in a critical emergency, could we not make a beginning towards an independent use of our own money, towards holding our own bank in all the deposits where it is received, and letting the Treasurer give his draft or note for payment at any particular place, which, in a well conducted government, ought to have as much credit as any private draft, or bank note, or bill, and would give us the same facilities which we derive from the banks? I pray you to turn this subject in your mind,

and to give it the benefit of your knowledge of details; whereas, I have only very general views of the subject. Affectionate salutations.

Washington, December 13, 1803.

## LETTER IX.—TO DOCTOR PRIESTLEY, January 29, 1804

TO DOCTOR PRIESTLEY.

Washington, January 29, 1804.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of December the 12th came duly to hand, as did the second letter to Doctor Linn, and the treatise on Phlogiston, for which I pray you to accept my thanks. The copy for Mr. Livingston has been delivered, together with your letter to him, to Mr. Harvie, my secretary, who departs in a day or two for Paris, and will deliver them himself to Mr. Livingston, whose attention to your matter cannot be doubted. I have also to add my thanks to Mr. Priestley, your son, for the copy of your Harmony, which I have gone through with great satisfaction. It is the first I have been able to meet with, which is clear of those long repetitions of the same transaction, as if it were a different one because related with some different circumstances.

I rejoice that you have undertaken the task of comparing the moral doctrines of Jesus with those of the ancient Philosophers. You are so much in possession of the whole subject, that you will do it easier and better than any other person living. I think you cannot avoid giving, as preliminary to the comparison, a digest of his moral doctrines, extracted in his own words from the Evangelists, and leaving out every thing relative to his personal history and character. It would be short and precious. With a view to do this for my own satisfaction, I had sent to Philadelphia to get two Testaments (Greek) of the same edition, and two English, with a design to cut out the morsels of morality, and paste them on the leaves of a book, in the manner you describe as having been pursued in forming your Harmony. But I shall now get the thing done by better hands.

I very early saw that Louisiana was indeed a speck in our horizon, which was to burst in a tornado; and the public are un-apprized how near this catastrophe was. Nothing but a frank and friendly developement of causes and effects on our part, and good sense enough in Bonaparte to see that the train was unavoidable, and would change the face of the world, saved us from that storm. I did not expect he would yield till a war took place between France and England, and my hope was to palliate and endure, if Messrs. Ross, Morris, &c. did not force a premature rupture until that event. I believed the event not very distant, but acknowledge it came on sooner than I had expected. Whether, however, the good sense of Bonaparte might not see the course predicted to be necessary and unavoidable, even before a war should be imminent, was a chance which we thought it our duty to try: but the immediate prospect of rupture brought the case to immediate decision. The denouement has been happy: and I confess I look to this duplication of area for the extending a government so free and economical as ours, as a great achievement to the mass of happiness which is to ensue. Whether we remain in one confederacy, or form into Atlantic and Mississippi confederacies, I believe not very important to the happiness of either part. Those of the western confederacy will be as much our children and descendants as those of the eastern, and I feel myself as much identified with that country, in future time, as with this: and did I now foresee a separation at some future day, yet I should feel the duty and the desire to promote the western interests as zealously as the eastern, doing all the good for both portions of our future family which should fall within my power.

Have you seen the new work of Malthus on Population? It is one of the ablest I have ever seen. Although his main object is to delineate the effects of redundancy of population, and to test the poor laws of England, and other palliations for that evil, several important questions in political economy, allied to his subject incidentally, are treated with a masterly hand. It is a single octavo volume, and I have been only able to read a borrowed copy, the only one I have yet heard of. Probably our friends in England will think of you, and give you an opportunity of reading it.

Accept my affectionate salutations, and assurances of great esteem and respect.  
Th: Jefferson.

## **LETTER X.—TO ELBRIDGE GERRY, March 3, 1804 TO ELBRIDGE GERRY**

Washington, March 3, 1804.

Dear Sir,

Although it is long since I received your favor of October the 27th, yet I have not had leisure sooner to acknowledge it. In the Middle and Southern States, as great an union of sentiment has now taken place as is perhaps desirable. For as there will always be an opposition, I believe it had better be from avowed monarchists than republicans. New York seems to be in danger of republican division; Vermont is solidly with us; Rhode Island with us on anomalous grounds; New Hampshire on the verge of the republican shore; Connecticut advancing towards it very slowly, but with steady step; your State only uncertain of making port at all. I had forgotten Delaware, which will be always uncertain from the divided character of her citizens. If the amendment of the constitution passes Rhode Island (and we expect to hear in a day or two), the election for the ensuing four years seems to present nothing formidable. I sincerely regret that the unbounded calumnies of the federal party have obliged me to throw myself on the verdict of my country for trial, my great desire having been to retire at the end of the present term, to a life of tranquillity; and it was my decided purpose when I entered into office. They force my continuance. If we can keep the vessel of State as steadily in her course for another four years, my earthly purposes will be accomplished, and I shall be free to enjoy, as you are doing, my family, my farm, and my books. That your enjoyments may continue as long as you shall wish them, I sincerely pray, and tender you my friendly salutations, and assurances of great respect and esteem.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XI.—TO GIDEON GRANGER, April 16, 1804

TO GIDEON GRANGER.

Monticello, April 16, 1804.

Dear Sir,

In our last conversation you mentioned a federal scheme afloat, of forming a coalition between the federalists and republicans, of what they called the seven eastern States. The idea was new to me, and after time for reflection, I had no opportunity of conversing with you again. The federalists know that, *eo nomine*, they are gone for ever. Their object, therefore, is, how to return into power under some other form. Undoubtedly they have but one means, which is to divide the republicans, join the minority, and barter with them for the cloak of their name. I say, join the minority; because the majority of the republicans, not needing them, will not buy them. The minority, having no other means of ruling the majority, will give a price for auxiliaries, and that price must be principle. It is true that the federalists, needing their numbers also, must also give a price, and principle is the coin they must pay in. Thus a bastard system of federo-republicanism will rise on the ruins of the true principles of our revolution. And when this party is formed, who will constitute the majority of it, which majority is then to dictate? Certainly the federalists. Thus their proposition of putting themselves into gear with the republican minority, is exactly like Roger Sherman's proposition to add Connecticut to Rhode Island. The idea of forming seven eastern States is moreover clearly to form the basis of a separation of the Union. Is it possible that real republicans can be gulled by such a bait? And for what? What do they wish, that they have not? Federal measures? That is impossible. Republican measures? Have they them not? Can any one deny, that in all important questions of principle, republicanism prevails? But do they want that their individual will shall govern the majority? They may purchase the gratification of this unjust wish, for a little time, at a great price; but the federalists must not have the passions of other men, if, after getting thus into the seat of power, they suffer themselves to be governed by their minority. This minority may say, that whenever they relapse into their own principles, they will quit them, and draw the seat from under them. They may quit them, indeed, but, in the mean time, all the venal will have become associated with them, and will give them a majority sufficient to keep them in place, and to enable them to eject the heterogeneous friends by whose aid they get again into power. I cannot believe any portion of real republicans will enter into this trap; and if they do, I do not believe they can carry with them the mass of their States, advancing so steadily as we see them, to an union of principle with their brethren. It will be found in this, as in all other similar cases, that crooked schemes will end by overwhelming their authors and coadjutors in disgrace, and that he alone who walks strict and upright, and who in matters of opinion will be contented that others should be as free as himself, and acquiesce when his opinion is fairly overruled, will attain his object in the end. And that this may be the conduct of us all, I offer my sincere prayers, as well as for your health and happiness.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XII.—TO MRS. ADAMS, June 13, 1804

TO MRS. ADAMS.

Washington, June 13, 1804.

Dear Madam,

The affectionate sentiments which you have had the goodness to express in your letter of May the 20th, towards my dear departed daughter, have awakened in me sensibilities natural to the occasion, and recalled your kindnesses to her, which I shall ever remember with gratitude and friendship. I can assure you with truth, they had made an indelible impression on her mind, and that to the last, on our meetings after long separations, whether I had heard lately of you, and how you did, were among the earliest of her inquiries. In giving you this assurance, I perform a sacred duty for her, and, at the same time, am thankful for the occasion furnished me, of expressing my regret that circumstances should have arisen, which have seemed to draw a line of separation between us. The friendship with which you honored me has ever been valued, and fully reciprocated; and although events have been passing which might be trying to some minds, I never believed yours to be of that kind, nor felt that my own was. Neither my estimate of your character, nor the esteem founded in that, has ever been lessened for a single moment, although doubts whether it would be acceptable may have forbidden manifestations of it.

Mr. Adams's friendship and mine began at an earlier date. It accompanied us through long and important scenes. The different conclusions we had drawn from our political reading and reflections, were not permitted to lessen mutual esteem; each party being conscious they were the result of an honest conviction in the other. Like differences of opinion existing among our fellow citizens, attached them to the one or the other of us, and produced a rivalry in their minds which did not exist in ours. We never stood in one another's way. For if either had been withdrawn at any time, his favorers would not have gone over to the other, but would have sought for some one of homogeneous opinions. This consideration was sufficient to keep down all jealousy between us, and to guard our friendship from any disturbance by sentiments of rivalry: and I can say with truth, that one act of Mr. Adams's life, and one only, ever gave me a moment's personal displeasure. I did consider his last appointments to office as personally unkind. They were from among my most ardent political enemies, from whom no faithful co-operation could ever be expected; and laid me under the embarrassment of acting through men, whose views were to defeat mine, or to encounter the odium of putting others in their places. It seems but common justice to leave a successor free to act by instruments of his own choice. If my respect for him did not permit me to ascribe the whole blame to the influence of others, it left something for friendship to forgive, and after brooding over it for some little time, and not always resisting the expression of it, I forgave it cordially, and returned to the same state of esteem and respect for him which had so long subsisted. Having come into life a little later than Mr. Adams, his career has preceded mine, as mine is followed by some other; and it will probably be closed at the same distance after him which time originally placed between us. I maintain for him, and shall carry into private life, an uniform and high measure of respect and good will, and for yourself a sincere attachment.

I have thus, my dear Madam, opened myself to you without reserve, which I have long wished an opportunity of doing; and without knowing how it will be received, I feel[sp.] relief from being unbosomed. And I have now only to entreat your forgiveness for this transition from a subject of domestic affliction, to one which seems of a different aspect. But though connected with political events, it has been viewed by me most strongly in its unfortunate bearings on my private friendships. The injury these have sustained has been a heavy price for what has never given me equal pleasure. That you may both be favored with health, tranquillity, and long life, is the prayer of one who tenders you the assurance of his highest consideration and esteem.



Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XIII.—TO GOVERNOR PAGE, June 25, 1804

TO GOVERNOR PAGE.

Washington, June 25, 1804.

Your letter, my dear friend, of the 25th ultimo, is a new proof of the goodness of your heart, and the part you take in my loss marks an affectionate concern for the greatness of it. It is great indeed. Others may lose of their abundance, but I, of my want, have lost even the half of all I had. My evening prospects now hang on the slender thread of a single life. Perhaps I maybe destined to see even this last cord of parental affection broken! The hope with which I had looked forward to the moment, when, resigning public cares to younger hands, I was to retire to that domestic comfort from which the last great step is to be taken, is fearfully blighted. When you and I look back on the country over which we have passed, what a field of slaughter does it exhibit! Where are all the friends who entered it with us, under all the inspiring energies of health and hope? As if pursued by the havoc of war, they are strewed by the way, some earlier, some later, and scarce a few stragglers remain to count the numbers fallen, and to mark yet, by their own fall, the last footsteps of their party. Is it a desirable thing to bear up through the heat of the action to witness the death of all our companions, and merely be the last victim? I doubt it. We have, however, the traveller's consolation. Every step shortens the distance we have to go; the end of our journey is in sight, the bed wherein we are to rest, and to rise in the midst of the friends we have lost. 'We sorrow not, then, as others who have no hope'; but look forward to the day which 'joins us to the great majority.' But whatever is to be our destiny, wisdom, as well as duty, dictates that we should acquiesce in the will of Him whose it is to give and take away, and be contented in the enjoyment of those who are still permitted to be with us. Of those connected by blood, the number does not depend on us. But friends we have, if we have merited them. Those of our earliest years stand nearest in our affections. But in this too, you and I have been unlucky. Of our college friends (and they are the dearest) how few have stood with us in the great political questions which have agitated our country: and these were of a nature to justify agitation. I did not believe the Lilliputian fetters of that day strong enough to have bound so many. Will not Mrs. Page, yourself, and family, think it prudent to seek a healthier region for the months of August and September? And may we not flatter ourselves that you will cast your eye on Monticello? We have not many summers to live. While fortune places us then within striking distance, let us avail ourselves of it, to meet and talk over the tales of other times.

Present me respectfully to Mrs. Page, and accept yourself my friendly salutations, and assurances of constant affection.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER, XIV.—TO P. MAZZEI, July 18, 1804

TO P. MAZZEI.

Washington, July 18, 1804.

My Dear Sir,

It is very long, I know, since I wrote you. So constant is the pressure of business that there is never a moment, scarcely, that something of public importance is not waiting for me. I have, therefore, on a principle of conscience, thought it my duty to withdraw almost entirely from all private correspondence, and chiefly the trans-Atlantic; I scarcely write a letter a year to any friend beyond sea. Another consideration has led to this, which is the liability of my letters to miscarry, be opened, and made ill use of. Although the great body of our country are perfectly returned to their ancient principles, yet there remains a phalanx of old tories and monarchists, more envenomed, as all their hopes become more desperate. Every word of mine which they can get hold of, however innocent, however orthodox even, is twisted, tormented, perverted, and, like the words of holy writ, are made to mean every thing but what they were intended to mean. I trust little, therefore, unnecessarily in their way, and especially on political subjects. I shall not, therefore, be free to answer all the several articles of your letters.

On the subject of treaties, our system is to have none with any nation, as far as can be avoided. The treaty with England has therefore, not been renewed, and all overtures for treaty with other nations have been declined. We believe, that with nations as with individuals, dealings may be carried on as advantageously[sp.], perhaps more so, while their continuance depends on a voluntary good treatment, as if fixed by a contract, which, when it becomes injurious to either, is made, by forced constructions, to mean what suits them, and becomes a cause of war instead of a bond of peace.

We wish to be on the closest terms of friendship with Naples, and we will prove it by giving to her citizens, vessels, and goods all the privileges of the most favored nation; and while we do this voluntarily, we cannot doubt they will voluntarily do the same for us. Our interests against the Barbaresques being also the same, we have little doubt she will give us every facility to insure them, which our situation may ask and hers admit. It is not, then, from a want of friendship that we do not propose a treaty with Naples, but because it is against our system to embarrass ourselves with treaties, or to entangle ourselves at all with the affairs of Europe. The kind offices we receive from that government are more sensibly felt, as such, than they would be, if rendered only as due to us by treaty.

Five fine frigates left the Chesapeake the 1st instant for Tripoli, which, in addition to the force now there, will, I trust, recover the credit which Commodore Morris's two years' sleep lost us, and for which he has been broke. I think they will make Tripoli sensible, that they mistake their interest in choosing war with us; and Tunis also, should she have declared war, as we expect, and almost wish.

Notwithstanding this little diversion, we pay seven or eight millions of dollars annually of our public debt, and shall completely discharge it in twelve years more. That done, our annual revenue, now thirteen millions of dollars, which by that time will be twenty-five, will pay the expenses of any war we may be forced into, without new taxes or loans. The spirit of republicanism is now in almost all its ancient vigor, five sixths of the people being with us. Fourteen of the seventeen States are completely with us, and two of the other three will be in one year. We have now got back to the ground on which you left us. I should have retired at the end of the first four years, but that the immense load of tory calumnies which have been manufactured respecting me, and have filled the European market, have obliged me to appeal once more to my country for a justification. I have no fear but that I shall receive honorable testimony by their verdict on those calumnies. At the end of the next four years I shall certainly retire. Age, inclination, and principle all dictate this. My health, which at one time threatened an unfavorable turn, is now firm. The acquisition of Louisiana, besides doubling our extent, and trebling our quantity of fertile country, is of incalculable value, as relieving

us from the danger of war. It has enabled us to do a handsome thing for Fayette. He had received a grant of between eleven and twelve thousand acres north of the Ohio, worth, perhaps, a dollar an acre. We have obtained permission of Congress to locate it in Louisiana. Locations can be found adjacent to the city of New Orleans, in the island of New Orleans and in its vicinity, the value of which cannot be calculated. I hope it will induce him to come over and settle there with his family. Mr. Livingston having asked leave to return, General Armstrong, his brother-in-law, goes in his place: he is of the first order of talents.

Remarkable deaths lately, are, Samuel Adams, Edmund Pendleton, Alexander Hamilton, Stephens Thompson Mason, Mann Page, Bellini, and Parson Andrews. To these I have the inexpressible grief of adding the name of my youngest daughter, who had married a son of Mr. Eppes, and has left two children. My eldest daughter alone remains to me, and has six children. This loss has increased my anxiety to retire, while it has dreadfully lessened the comfort of doing it. Wythe, Dickinson, and Charles Thomson are all living, and are firm republicans. You informed me formerly of your marriage, and your having a daughter, but have said nothing in you late letters on that subject. Yet whatever concerns your happiness is sincerely interesting to me, and is a subject of anxiety, retaining, as I do, cordial sentiments of esteem and affection for you. Accept, I pray you, my sincere assurances of this, with my most friendly salutations.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XV.—TO MRS. ADAMS, July 22, 1804

TO MRS. ADAMS.

Washington, July 22, 1804.

Dear Madam,

Your favor of the 1st instant was duly received, and I would not again have intruded on you, but to rectify certain facts which seem not to have been presented to you under their true aspect. My charities to Callendar are considered as rewards for his calumnies. As early, I think, as 1796, I was told in Philadelphia, that Callendar, the author of the 'Political Progress of Britain,' was in that city, a fugitive from persecution for having written that book, and in distress. I had read and approved the book; I considered him as a man of genius, unjustly persecuted. I knew nothing of his private character, and immediately expressed my readiness to contribute to his relief, and to serve him. It was a considerable time after, that, on application from a person who thought of him as I did, I contributed to his relief, and afterwards repeated the contribution. Himself I did not see till long after, nor ever more than two or three times. When he first began to write, he told some useful truths in his coarse way; but nobody sooner disapproved of his writing than I did, or wished more that he would be silent. My charities to him were no more meant as encouragements to his scurrilities, than those I give to the beggar at my door are meant as rewards for the vices of his life, and to make them chargeable to myself. In truth, they would have been greater to him, had he never written a word after the work for which he fled from Britain. With respect to the calumnies and falsehoods which writers and printers at large published against Mr. Adams, I was as far from stooping to any concern or approbation of them, as Mr. Adams was respecting those of Porcupine, Fenno, or Russell, who published volumes against me for every sentence vended by their opponents against Mr. Adams. But I never supposed Mr. Adams had any participation in the atrocities of these editors, or their writers. I knew myself incapable of that base warfare, and believed him to be so. On the contrary, whatever I may have thought of the acts of the administration of that day, I have ever borne testimony to Mr. Adams's personal worth; nor was it ever impeached in my presence, without a just vindication of it on my part. I never supposed that any person who knew either of us, could believe that either of us meddled in that dirty work. But another fact is, that I 'liberated a wretch who was suffering for a libel against Mr. Adams.' I do not know who was the particular wretch alluded to; but I discharged every person under punishment or prosecution under the sedition law, because I considered, and now consider, that law to be a nullity, as absolute and as palpable as if Congress had ordered us to fall down and worship a golden image; and that it was as much my duty to arrest its execution in every stage, as it would have been to have rescued from the fiery furnace those who should have been cast into it for refusing to worship the image. It was accordingly done in every instance, without asking what the offenders had done, or against whom they had offended, but whether the pains they were suffering were inflicted under the pretended sedition law. It was certainly possible that my motives for contributing to the relief of Callendar, and liberating sufferers under the sedition law might have been to protect, encourage, and reward slander; but they may also have been those which inspire ordinary charities to objects of distress, meritorious or not, or the obligation of an oath to protect the constitution, violated by an unauthorized act of Congress. Which of these were my motives, must be decided by a regard to the general tenor of my life. On this I am not afraid to appeal to the nation at large, to posterity, and still less to that Being who sees himself our motives, who will judge us from his own knowledge of them, and not on the testimony of Porcupine or Fenno.

You observe, there has been one other act of my administration personally unkind, and suppose it will readily suggest itself to me. I declare on my honor, Madam, I have not the least conception what act is alluded to. I never did a single one with an unkind intention. My sole object in this letter being to place before your attention, that the acts imputed to me are either such as are falsely imputed, or

as might flow from good as well as bad motives, I shall make no other addition, than the assurances of my continued wishes for the health and happiness of yourself and Mr. Adams.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XVI.—TO JAMES MADISON, August 15, 1804

TO JAMES MADISON.

Monticello, August 15, 1804.

Dear Sir,

Your letter dated the 7th should probably have been of the 14th, as I received it only by that day's post. I return you Monroe's letter, which is of an awful complexion; and I do not wonder the communications it contains made some impression on him. To a person placed in Europe, surrounded by the immense resources of the nations there, and the greater wickedness of their courts, even the limits which nature imposes on their enterprises are scarcely sensible. It is impossible that France and England should combine for any purpose; their mutual distrust and deadly hatred of each other admit no co-operation. It is impossible that England should be willing to see France re-possess Louisiana, or get footing on our continent, and that France should willingly see the United States re-annexed to the British dominions. That the Bourbons should be replaced on their throne and agree to any terms of restitution, is possible: but that they and England joined, could recover us to British dominion, is impossible. If these things are not so, then human reason is of no aid in conjecturing the conduct of nations. Still, however, it is our unquestionable interest and duty to conduct ourselves with such sincere friendship and impartiality towards both nations, as that each may see unequivocally, what is unquestionably true, that we may be very possibly driven into her scale by unjust conduct in the other. I am so much impressed with the expediency of putting a termination to the right of France to patronize the rights of Louisiana, which will cease with their complete adoption as citizens of the United States, that I hope to see that take place on the meeting of Congress. I enclose you a paragraph from a newspaper respecting St. Domingo, which gives me uneasiness. Still I conceive the British insults in our harbor as more threatening. We cannot be respected by France as a neutral nation, nor by the world or ourselves as an independent one, if we do not take effectual measures to support, at every risk, our authority in our own harbors. I shall write to Mr. Wagner directly (that a post may not be lost by passing through you) to send us blank commissions for Orleans and Louisiana, ready sealed, to be filled up, signed, and forwarded by us. Affectionate salutations and constant esteem.

Th: Jefferson.



## LETTER XVII.—TO GOVERNOR CLAIBORNE, August 30, 1804

TO GOVERNOR CLAIBORNE.

Monticello, August 30, 1804.

Dear Sir,

Various circumstances of delay have prevented my forwarding till now the general arrangements of the government of the territory of Orleans. Enclosed herewith you will receive the commissions. Among these is one for yourself as Governor. With respect to this I will enter into frank explanations. This office was originally destined for a person<sup>2</sup> whose great services and established fame would have rendered him peculiarly acceptable to the nation at large. Circumstances, however, exist, which do not now permit his nomination, and perhaps may not at any time hereafter. That, therefore, being suspended, and entirely contingent, your services have been so much approved, as to leave no desire to look elsewhere to fill the office. Should the doubts you have sometimes expressed, whether it would be eligible for you to continue, still exist in your mind, the acceptance of the commission gives you time to satisfy yourself by further experience, and to make the time and manner of withdrawing, should you ultimately determine on that, agreeable to yourself. Be assured, that whether you continue or retire, it will be with every disposition on my part to be just and friendly to you.

I salute you with friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

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<sup>2</sup> In the margin is written by the author, 'La Fayette.'

## LETTER XVIII.—TO MRS. ADAMS, September 11, 1804

TO MRS. ADAMS.

Monticello, September 11, 1804,

Your letter, Madam, of the 18th of August has been some days received, but a press of business has prevented the acknowledgment of it: perhaps, indeed, I may have already trespassed too far on your attention. With those who wish to think amiss of me, I have learned to be perfectly indifferent; but where I know a mind to be ingenuous, and to need only truth to set it to rights, I cannot be as passive. The act of personal unkindness alluded to in your former letter, is said in your last to have been the removal of your eldest son from some office to which the judges had appointed him. I conclude, then, he must have been a commissioner of bankruptcy. But I declare to you, on my honor, that this is the first knowledge I have ever had that he was so. It may be thought, perhaps, that I ought to have inquired who were such, before I appointed others. But it is to be observed, that the former law permitted the judges to name commissioners occasionally only, for every case as it arose, and not to make them permanent officers. Nobody, therefore, being in office, there could be no removal. The judges, you well know, have been considered as highly federal; and it was noted that they confined their nominations exclusively to federalists. The legislature, dissatisfied with this, transferred the nomination to the President, and made the offices permanent. The very object in passing the law was, that he should correct, not confirm, what was deemed the partiality of the judges. I thought it therefore proper to inquire, not whom they had employed, but whom I ought to appoint to fulfil the intentions of the law. In making these appointments, I put in a proportion of federalists, equal, I believe, to the proportion they bear in numbers through the Union generally. Had I known that your son had acted, it would have been a real pleasure to me to have preferred him to some who were named in Boston, in what was deemed the same line of politics. To this I should have been led by my knowledge of his integrity, as well as my sincere dispositions towards yourself and Mr. Adams.

You seem to think it devolved on the judges to decide on the validity of the sedition law. But nothing in the constitution has given them a right to decide for the executive, more than to the executive to decide for them. Both magistracies are equally independent in the sphere of action assigned to them. The judges, believing the law constitutional, had a right to pass a sentence of fine and imprisonment, because the power was placed in their hands by the constitution. But the executive, believing the law to be unconstitutional, were bound to remit the execution of it; because that power has been confided to them by the constitution. That instrument meant that its co-ordinate branches should be checks on each other. But the opinion which gives to the judges the right to decide what laws are constitutional, and what not, not only for themselves in their own sphere of action, but for the legislature and executive also in their spheres, would make the judiciary a despotic branch. Nor does the opinion of the unconstitutionality, and consequent nullity of that law, remove all restraint from the overwhelming torrent of slander, which is confounding all vice and virtue, all truth and falsehood, in the United States. The power to do that is fully possessed by the several State legislatures. It was reserved to them, and was denied to the General Government, by the constitution, according to our construction of it. While we deny that Congress have a right to control the freedom of the press, we have ever asserted the right of the States, and their exclusive right, to do so. They have, accordingly, all of them made provisions for punishing slander, which those who have time and inclination resort to for the vindication of their characters. In general, the State laws appear to have made the presses responsible for slander as far as is consistent with its useful freedom. In those States where they do not admit even the truth of allegations to protect the printer, they have gone too far.

The candor manifested in your letter, and which I ever believed you to possess, has alone inspired the desire of calling your attention once more to those circumstances of fact and motive by which I claim to be judged. I hope you will see these intrusions on your time to be, what they

really are, proofs of my great, respect for you. I tolerate with the utmost latitude the right of others to differ from me in opinion, without imputing to them criminality. I know too well the weakness and uncertainty of human reason, to wonder at its different results. Both of our political parties, at least the honest part of them, agree conscientiously in the same object, the public good: but they differ essentially in what they deem the means of promoting that good. One side believes it best done by one composition of the governing powers; the other, by a different one. One fears most the ignorance of the people; the other, the selfishness of rulers independent of them. Which is right, time and experience will prove. We think that one side of this experiment has been long enough tried, and proved not to promote the good of the many: and that the other has not been fairly and sufficiently tried. Our opponents think the reverse. With whichever opinion the body of the nation concurs, that must prevail. My anxieties on this subject will never carry me beyond the use of fair and honorable means of truth and reason; nor have they ever lessened my esteem for moral worth, nor alienated my affections from a single friend, who did not first withdraw himself. Wherever this has happened, I confess I have not been insensible to it: yet have ever kept myself open to a return of their justice. I conclude with sincere prayers for your health and happiness, that yourself and Mr. Adams may long enjoy the tranquillity you desire and merit, and see in the prosperity of your family what is the consummation of the last and warmest of human wishes,

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XIX.—TO MR. NICHOLSON, January 29, 1805

TO MR. NICHOLSON.

Washington, January 29, 1805.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Eppes has this moment put into my hands your letter of yesterday, asking information on the subject of the gun-boats proposed to be built. I lose no time in communicating to you fully my whole views respecting them, premising a few words on the system of fortifications. Considering the harbors which, from their situation and importance, are entitled to defence, and the estimates we have seen of the fortifications planned for some of them, this system cannot be completed on a moderate scale for less than fifty millions of dollars, nor manned in time of war with less than fifty thousand men, and in peace, two thousand. And when done, they avail little; because all military men agree, that wherever a vessel may pass a fort without tacking under her guns, which is the case at all our sea-port towns, she may be annoyed more or less, according to the advantages of the position, but can never be prevented. Our own experience during the war proved this on different occasions. Our predecessors have, nevertheless, proposed to go into this system, and had commenced it. But, no law requiring us to proceed, we have suspended it.

If we cannot hinder vessels from entering our harbors, we should turn our attention to the putting it out of their power to lie, or come to, before a town, to injure it. Two means of doing this may be adopted in aid of each other. 1. Heavy cannon on travelling carriages, which may be moved to any point on the bank or beach most convenient for dislodging the vessel. A sufficient number of these should be lent to each sea-port town, and their militia trained to them. The executive is authorized to do this; it has been done in a smaller degree, and will now be done more competently.

2. Having cannon on floating batteries or boats, which may be so stationed as to prevent a vessel entering the harbor, or force her after entering to depart. There are about fifteen harbors in the United States, which ought to be in a state of substantial defence. The whole of these would require, according to the best opinions, two hundred and forty gun-boats. Their cost was estimated by Captain Rogers at two thousand dollars each; but we had better say four thousand dollars. The whole would cost one million of dollars. But we should allow ourselves ten years to complete it, unless circumstances should force it sooner. There are three situations in which the gun-boat may be. 1. Hauled up under a shed, in readiness to be launched and manned by the seamen and militia of the town on short notice. In this situation she costs nothing but an enclosure, or a centinel to see that no mischief is done to her. 2. Afloat, and with men enough to navigate her in harbor and take care of her, but depending on receiving her crew from the town on short warning. In this situation, her annual expense is about two thousand dollars, as by an official estimate at the end of this letter. 3. Fully manned for action. Her annual expense in this situation is about eight thousand dollars, as per estimate subjoined. 'When there is general peace, we should probably keep about six or seven afloat in the second situation; their annual expense twelve to fourteen thousand dollars; the rest all hauled up. When France and England are at war, we should keep, at the utmost, twenty-five in the second situation, their annual expense fifty thousand dollars. When we should be at war ourselves, some of them would probably be kept in the third situation, at an annual expense of eight thousand dollars; but how many, must depend on the circumstances of the war. We now possess ten, built and building. It is the opinion of those consulted, that fifteen more would enable us to put every harbor under our view into a respectable condition; and that this should limit the views of the present year. This would require an appropriation of sixty thousand dollars, and I suppose that the best way of limiting it, without declaring the number, as perhaps that sum would build more. I should think it best not to give a detailed report, which exposes our policy too much. A bill, with verbal explanations, will

suffice for the information of the House. I do not know whether General Wilkinson would approve the printing his paper. If he would, it would be useful. Accept affectionate and respectful salutations.  
Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XX.—TO MR. VOLNEY, February 8, 1805

TO MR. VOLNEY.

Washington, February 8, 1805.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of November the 26th came to hand May the 14th; the books some time after, which were all distributed according to direction. The copy for the East Indies went immediately by a safe conveyance. The letter of April the 28th, and the copy of your work accompanying that, did not come to hand till August. That copy was deposited in the Congressional library. It was not till my return here from my autumnal visit to Monticello, that I had an opportunity of reading your work. I have read it, and with great satisfaction. Of the first part I am less a judge than most people, having never travelled westward of Staunton, so as to know any thing of the face of the country; nor much indulged myself in geological inquiries, from a belief that the skin-deep scratches, which we can make or find on the surface of the earth, do not repay our time with as certain and useful deductions, as our pursuits in some other branches. The subject of our winds is more familiar to me. On that, the views you have taken are always great, supported in their outlines by your facts; and though more extensive observations, and longer continued, may produce some anomalies, yet they will probably take their place in this first great canvass which you have sketched. In no case, perhaps, does habit attach our choice or judgment more than in climate. The Canadian glows with delight in his sleigh and snow, the very idea of which gives me the shivers. The comparison of climate between Europe and North America, taking together its corresponding parts, hangs chiefly on three great points. 1. The changes between heat and cold in America are greater and more frequent, and the extremes comprehend a greater scale on the thermometer in America than in Europe. Habit, however, prevents these from affecting us more than the smaller changes of Europe affect the European. But he is greatly affected by ours. 2. Our sky is always clear; that of Europe always cloudy. Hence a greater accumulation of heat here than there, in the same parallel. 3. The changes between wet and dry are much more frequent and sudden in Europe than in America. Though we have double the rain, it falls in half the time. Taking all these together, I prefer much the climate of the United States to that of Europe. I think it a more cheerful one. It is our cloudless sky which has eradicated from our constitutions all disposition to hang ourselves, which we might otherwise have inherited from our English ancestors. During a residence of between six and seven years in Paris, I never but once saw the sun shine through a whole day, without being obscured by a cloud in any part of it: and I never saw the moment, in which, viewing the sky through its whole hemisphere, I could say there was not the smallest speck of a cloud in it. I arrived at Monticello, on my return from France, in January, and during only two months' stay there, I observed to my daughters, who had been with me to France, that twenty odd times within that term, there was not a speck of a cloud in the whole hemisphere. Still I do not wonder that an European should prefer his grey to our azure sky. Habit decides our taste in this, as in most other cases.

The account you give of the yellow fever, is entirely agreeable to what we then knew of it. Further experience has developed more and more its peculiar character. Facts appear to have established, that it is originated here by a local atmosphere, which is never generated but in the lower, closer, and dirtier parts of our large cities, in the neighborhood of the water; and that, to catch the disease, you must enter the local atmosphere. Persons having taken the disease in the infected quarter, and going into the country, are nursed and buried by their friends, without an example of communicating it. A vessel going from the infected quarter, and carrying its atmosphere in its hold into another State, has given the disease to every person who there entered her. These have died in the arms of their families, without a single communication of the disease. It is certainly, therefore, an epidemic, not a contagious disease; and calls on the chemists for some mode of purifying the vessel by a decomposition of its atmosphere, if ventilation be found insufficient. In the long scale of

bilious fevers, graduated by many shades, this is probably the last and most mortal term. It seizes the native of the place equally with strangers. It has not been long known in any part of the United States. The shade next above it, called the stranger's fever, has been coeval with the settlement of the larger cities in the southern parts, to wit, Norfolk, Charleston, New Orleans. Strangers going to these places in the months of July, August, or September, find this fever as mortal as the genuine yellow fever. But it rarely attacks those who have resided in them some time. Since we have known that kind of yellow fever which is no respecter of persons, its name has been extended to the stranger's fever, and every species of bilious fever which produces a black vomit, that is to say, a discharge of very dark bile. Hence we hear of yellow fever on the Allegany mountains, in Kentucky, &c. This is a matter of definition only: but it leads into error those who do not know how loosely and how interestedly some physicians think and speak. So far as we have yet seen, I think we are correct in saying, that the yellow fever, which seizes on all indiscriminately, is an ultimate degree of bilious fever, never known in the United States till lately, nor farther south, as yet, than Alexandria, and that what they have recently called the yellow fever in New Orleans, Charleston, and Norfolk, is what has always been known in those places as confined chiefly to strangers, and nearly as mortal to them, as the other is to all its subjects. But both grades are local: the stranger's fever less so, as it sometimes extends a little into the neighborhood; but the yellow fever rigorously so, confined within narrow and well defined limits, and not communicable out of those limits. Such a constitution of atmosphere being requisite to originate this disease as is generated only in low, close, and ill-cleansed parts of a town, I have supposed it practicable to prevent its generation by building our cities on a more open plan. Take, for instance, the chequer-board for a plan. Let the black squares only be building squares, and the white ones be left open, in turf and trees. Every square of houses will be surrounded by four open squares, and every house will front an open square. The atmosphere of such a town would be like that of the country, insusceptible of the miasmata which produce yellow fever. I have accordingly proposed that the enlargements of the city of New Orleans, which must immediately take place, shall be on this plan. But it is only in case of enlargements to be made, or of cities to be built, that his means of prevention can be employed.

The *genus irritabile vatum* could not let the author of the Ruins publish a new work, without seeking in it the means of discrediting that puzzling composition. Some one of those holy calumniators has selected from your new work every scrap of a sentence, which, detached from its context, could displease an American reader. A cento has been made of these, which has run through a particular description of newspapers, and excited a disapprobation even in friendly minds, which nothing but the reading of the book will cure. But time and truth will at length correct error.

Our countrymen are so much occupied in the busy scenes of life, that they have little time to write or invent. A good invention here, therefore, is such a rarity as it is lawful to offer to the acceptance of a friend. A Mr. Hawkins of Frankford, near Philadelphia, has invented a machine, which he calls a polygraph, and which carries two, three, or four pens. That of two pens, with which I am now writing, is best; and is so perfect that I have laid aside the copying-press, for a twelvemonth past, and write always with the polygraph. I have directed one to be made, of which I ask your acceptance. By what conveyance I shall send it while Havre is blockaded, I do not yet know. I think you will be pleased with it, and will use it habitually as I do; because it requires only that degree of mechanical attention which I know you to possess. I am glad to hear that M. Cabanis is engaged in writing on the reformation of medicine. It needs the hand of a reformer, and cannot be in better hands than his. Will you permit my respects to him and the Abbe de la Roche to find a place here.

A word now on our political state. The two parties which prevailed with so much violence when you were here, are almost wholly melted into one. At the late Presidential election I have received one hundred and sixty-two votes against fourteen only. Connecticut is still federal by a small majority; and Delaware on a poise, as she has been since 1775, and will be till Anglomany with her yields to Americanism. Connecticut will be with us in a short time. Though the people in mass have joined



us, their leaders had committed themselves too far to retract. Pride keeps them hostile; they brood over their angry passions, and give them vent in the newspapers which they maintain. They still make as much noise as if they were the whole nation. Unfortunately, these being the mercantile papers, published chiefly in the seaports, are the only ones which find their way to Europe, and make very false impressions there. I am happy to hear that the late derangement of your health is going off, and that you are reestablished. I sincerely pray for the continuance of that blessing, and with my affectionate salutations, tender you assurances of great respect and attachment.

Th: Jefferson.

P. S. The sheets which you receive are those of the copying-pen of the polygraph, not of the one with which I have written.

## LETTER XXI.—TO JUDGE TYLER, March 29, 1805

TO JUDGE TYLER.

Monticello, March 29, 1805.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of the 17th found me on a short visit to this place, and I observe in it with great pleasure a continuance of your approbation of the course we are pursuing, and particularly the satisfaction you express with the last inaugural address. The first was, from the nature of the case, all profession and promise. Performance, therefore, seemed to be the proper office of the second. But the occasion restricted me to mention only the most prominent heads, and the strongest justification of these in the fewest words possible. The crusade preached against philosophy by the modern disciples of steady habits, induced me to dwell more in showing its effect with the Indians than the subject otherwise justified.

The war with Tripoli stands on two grounds of fact. 1st. It is made known to us by our agents with the three other Barbary States, that they only wait to see the event of this, to shape their conduct accordingly. If the war is ended by additional tribute, they mean to offer us the same alternative. 2ndly. If peace was made, we should still, and shall ever, be obliged to keep a frigate in the Mediterranean to overawe rupture, or we must abandon that market. Our intention in sending Morris with a respectable force, was to try whether peace could be forced by a coercive enterprise on their town. His inexecution of orders baffled that effort. Having broke him, we try the same experiment under a better commander. If in the course of the summer they cannot produce peace, we shall recall our force, except one frigate and two small vessels, which will keep up a perpetual blockade. Such a blockade will cost us no more than a state of peace, and will save us from increased tributes, and the disgrace attached to them. There is reason to believe the example we have set, begins already to work on the dispositions of the powers of Europe to emancipate themselves from that degrading yoke. Should we produce such a revolution there, we shall be amply rewarded for what we have done. Accept my friendly salutations, and assurances of great respect and esteem.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXII.—TO DOCTOR LOGAN, May 11, 1805

TO DOCTOR LOGAN.

Washington, May 11, 1805.

Dear Sir,

I see with infinite pain the bloody schism which has taken place among our friends in Pennsylvania and New York, and will probably take place in other States. The main body of both sections mean well, but their good intentions will produce great public evil. The minority, whichever section shall be the minority, will end in coalition with the federalists, and some compromise of principle; because these will not sell their aid for nothing. Republicanism will thus lose, and royalism gain, some portion of that ground which we thought we had rescued to good government. I do not express my sense of our misfortunes from any idea that they are remediable. I know that the passions of men will take their course, that they are not to be controlled but by despotism, and that this melancholy truth is the pretext for despotism. The duty of an upright administration is to pursue its course steadily, to know nothing of these family dissensions, and to cherish the good principles of both parties. The war *ad internecionem* which we have waged against federalism, has filled our latter times with strife and unhappiness. We have met it, with pain indeed, but with firmness, because we believed it the last convulsive effort of that Hydra, which in earlier times we had conquered in the field. But if any degeneracy of principle should ever render it necessary to give ascendancy to one of the rising sections over the other, I thank my God it will fall to some other to perform that operation. The only cordial I wish to carry into my retirement, is the undivided good will of all those with whom I have acted.

Present me affectionately to Mrs. Logan, and accept my salutations, and assurances of constant friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXIII.—TO JUDGE SULLIVAN, May 21, 1805

TO JUDGE SULLIVAN.

Washington, May 21, 1805.

Dear Sir,

An accumulation of business, which I found on my return here from a short visit to Monticello, has prevented till now my acknowledgment of your favor of the 14th *ultimo*. This delay has given time to see the result of the contest in your State, and I cannot but congratulate you on the advance it manifests, and the certain prospect it offers that another year restores Massachusetts to the general body of the nation. You have indeed received the federal unction of lying and slandering. But who has not? Who will ever again come into eminent office, unanointed with this chrism? It seems to be fixed that falsehood and calumny are to be their ordinary engines of opposition; engines which will not be entirely without effect. The circle of characters equal to the first stations is not too large, and will be lessened by the voluntary retreat of those whose sensibilities are stronger than their confidence in the justice of public opinion. I certainly have known, and still know, characters eminently qualified for the most exalted trusts, who could not bear up against the brutal hackings and hewings of these heroes of Billingsgate. I may say, from intimate knowledge, that we should have lost the services of the greatest character of our country, had he been assailed with the degree of abandoned licentiousness now practised. The torture he felt under rare and slight attacks, proved that under those of which the federal bands have shown themselves capable, he would have thrown up the helm in a burst of indignation. Yet this effect of sensibility must not be yielded to. If we suffer ourselves to be frightened from our post by mere lying, surely the enemy will use that weapon; for what one so cheap to those of whose system of politics morality makes no part? The patriot, like the Christian, must learn that to bear revilings and persecutions is a part of his duty; and in proportion as the trial is severe, firmness under it becomes more requisite and praiseworthy. It requires, indeed, self-command. But that will be fortified in proportion as the calls for its exercise are repeated. In this I am persuaded we shall have the benefit of your good example. To the other falsehoods they have brought forward, should they add, as you expect, insinuations of want of confidence in you from the administration generally, or myself particularly, it will, like their other falsehoods, produce in the public mind a contrary inference.

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I tender you my friendly and respectful salutations.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXIV.—TO THOMAS PAINE, June 5, 1805

TO THOMAS PAINE.

Washington, June 5, 1805.

Dear Sir,

Your letters, Nos. 1, 2, 3, the last of them dated April the 20th, were received April the 26th. I congratulate you on your retirement to your farm, and still more that it is of a character so worthy of your attention. I much doubt whether the open room on your second story will answer your expectations. There will be a few days in the year in which it will be delightful, but not many. Nothing but trees, or Venetian blinds, can protect it from the sun. The semi-cylindrical roof you propose will have advantages. You know it has been practised on the cloth market at Paris. De Lorme, the inventor, shows many forms of roofs in his book, to which it is applicable. I have used it at home for a dome, being one hundred and twenty degrees of an oblong octagon, and in the capitol we unite two quadrants of a sphere by a semi-cylinder: all framed in De Lorme's manner. How has your planing machine answered? Has it been tried and persevered in by any workman?

France has become so jealous of our conduct as to St. Domingo (which in truth is only the conduct of our merchants), that the offer to become a mediator would only confirm her suspicions. Bonaparte, however, expressed satisfaction at the paragraph in my message to Congress on the subject of that commerce. With respect to the German redemptioners, you know I can do nothing, unless authorized by law. It would be made a question in Congress, whether any of the enumerated objects to which the constitution authorizes the money of the Union to be applied, would cover an expenditure for importing settlers to Orleans. The letter of the revolutionary sergeant was attended to by General Dearborn, who wrote to him informing him how to proceed to obtain his land.

Doctor Eustis's observation to you, that 'certain paragraphs in the National Intelligencer,' respecting my letter to you, 'supposed to be under Mr. Jefferson's direction, had embarrassed Mr. Jefferson's friends in Massachusetts; that they appeared like a half denial of the letter, or as if there was something in it not proper to be owned, or that needed an apology,' is one of those mysterious half confidences difficult to be understood. That tory printers should think it advantageous to identify me with that paper, the Aurora, &c. in order to obtain ground for abusing me, is perhaps fair warfare. But that any one who knows me personally should listen one moment to such an insinuation, is what I did not expect. I neither have, nor ever had, any more connection with those papers than our antipodes have; nor know what is to be in them until I see it in them, except proclamations and other documents sent for publication. The friends in Massachusetts who could be embarrassed by so weak a weapon as this, must be feeble friends indeed. With respect to the letter, I never hesitated to avow and to justify it in conversation. In no other way do I trouble myself to contradict any thing which is said. At that time, however, there were certain anomalies in the motions of some of our friends, which events have at length reduced to regularity.

It seems very difficult to find out what turn things are to take in Europe. I suppose it depends on Austria, which knowing it is to stand in the way of receiving the first hard blows, is cautious of entering into a coalition. As to France and England we can have but one wish, that they may disable one another from injuring others.

Accept my friendly salutations, and assurances of esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

[The following, in the hand-writing of the Author, is inserted in his MS. of this period. Whether it was published, or where, is not stated.]

Richmond, 1780, December 31. At 8 A. M. the Governor receives the first intelligence that twenty-seven sail of ships had entered Chesapeake Bay, and were in the morning of the 29th just below Willoughby's point (the southern cape of James river); their destination unknown.

1781, January 2. At 10 A. M. information received that they had entered James river, their advance being at Warrasqueak bay. Orders were immediately given for calling in the militia, one fourth from some, and one half from other counties. The members of the legislature, which rises this day, are the bearers of the orders to their respective counties. The Governor directs the removal of the records into the country, and the transportation of the military stores from Richmond to Westham (on the river seven miles above); there to be carried across the river.

January 3. At 8 P. M. the enemy are said to be a little below Jamestown; convenient for landing, if Williamsburg is their object.

January 4. At 5 A. M. information is received that they had passed Kennon's and Hood's the evening before, with a strong; easterly wind, which determines their object to be either Petersburg or Richmond. The Governor now calls in the whole militia from the adjacent counties.

At 5 P. M. information, that at 2 P. M. they were landed and drawn up at Westover (on the north side of the river, and twenty-five miles below Richmond); and consequently Richmond their destination. Orders are now given to discontinue wagoning the military stores from Richmond to Westham, and to throw them across the river directly at Richmond.

The Governor having attended to this till an hour and a half in the night, then rode up to the foundery (one mile below Westham), ordered Captains Boush and Irish, and Mr. Hylton, to continue all night wagoning to Westham the arms and stores still at the foundery, to be thrown across the river at Westham, then proceeded to Westham to urge the pressing the transportation there across the river, and thence went to Tuckahoe (eight miles above and on the same side of the river) to see after his family, which he had sent that far in the course of the day. He arrived there at 1 o'clock in the night.

January 5. Early in the morning, he carried his family across the river there, and sending them to Fine Creek (eight miles higher up) went himself to Britton's on the south side of the river, (opposite to Westham). Finding the arms, &c. in a heap near the shore, and exposed to be destroyed by cannon from the north bank, he had them removed under cover of a point of land near by. He proceeded to Manchester (opposite to Richmond). The enemy had arrived at Richmond at 1 P. M. Having found that nearly the whole arms had been got there from Richmond, he set out for Chetwood's to meet with Baron Steuben, who had appointed that place as a rendezvous and head-quarters; but not finding him there, and understanding he would be at Colonel Fleming's (six miles above Britton's), he proceeded thither. The enemy had now a detachment at Westham, and sent a deputation from the city of Richmond to the Governor, at Colonel Fleming's, to propose terms for ransoming the safety of the city, which terms he rejected.

January 6. The Governor returned to Britton's, had measures taken more effectually to secure the books and papers there. The enemy, having burnt some houses and stores, left Richmond after twenty-four hours' stay there, and encamped at Four Mile Creek (eight or ten miles below); and the Governor went to look to his family at Fine Creek.

January 7. He returned to Britton's to see further to the arms there, exposed on the ground to heavy rains which had fallen the night before, and thence proceeded to Manchester and lodged there. The enemy encamped at Westover.

January 8. At half after 7 A. M. he crossed over to Richmond, and resumed his residence there. The enemy are still retained in their encampment at Westover by an easterly wind. Colonel John Nicholas has now three hundred militia at the Forest (six miles off from Westover); General Nelson, two hundred at Charles City Court-House (eight miles below Westover); Gibson, one thousand, and Baron Steuben, eight hundred, on the south side of the river.

January 9. The enemy are still encamped at Westover.

January 10. At 1 P. M. they embark: and the wind having shifted a little to the north of west, and pretty fresh, they fall down the river. Baron Steuben marches for Hood's, where their passage may be checked. He reaches Bland's mills in the evening, within nine miles of Hood's.

January 11. At 8 A. M. the wind due west and strong, they make good their retreat.

During this period, time and place have been minutely cited, in order that those who think there was any remissness in the movements of the Governor, may lay their finger on the point, and say, when and where it was. Hereafter, less detail will suffice.

Soon after this, General Phillips having joined Arnold with a reinforcement of two thousand men, they advanced again up to Petersburg, and about the last of April to Manchester. The Governor had remained constantly in and about Richmond, exerting all his powers for collecting militia, and providing such means for the defence of the State as its exhausted resources admitted. Never assuming a guard, and with only the river between him and the enemy, his lodgings were frequently within four, five, or six miles of them.

M. de la Fayette about this time arrived at Richmond with some continental troops, with which, and the militia collected, he continued to occupy that place, and the north bank of the river, while Phillips and Arnold held Manchester and the south bank. But Lord Cornwallis, about the middle of May, joining them with the main southern army, M. de la Fayette was obliged to retire. The enemy crossed the river, and advanced up into the country about fifty miles, and within thirty miles of Charlottesville, at which place the legislature being to meet in June, the Governor proceeded to his seat at Monticello, two or three miles from it. His office was now near expiring, the country under invasion by a powerful army, no services but military of any avail; unprepared by his line of life and education for the command of armies, he believed it right not to stand in the way of talents better fitted than his own to the circumstances under which the country was placed. He therefore himself proposed to his friends in the legislature, that General Nelson, who commanded the militia of the State, should be appointed Governor, as he was sensible that the union of the civil and military power in the same hands, at this time, would greatly facilitate military measures. This appointment accordingly took place on the 12th of June, 1781.

This was the state of things, when, his office having actually expired, and no successor yet in place, Colonel Tarleton, with his regiment, of horse, was detached by Lord Cornwallis to surprise Mr. Jefferson (whom they thought still in office) and the legislature now sitting in Charlottesville. The Speakers of the two Houses, and some other members of the legislature, were lodging with Mr. Jefferson at Monticello. Tarleton, early in the morning, (June 23, I believe,) when within ten miles of that place, detached a company of horse to secure him and his guests, and proceeded himself rapidly with his main body to Charlottesville, where he hoped to find the legislature unapprized of his movement. Notice of it, however, had been brought both to Monticello and Charlottesville about sunrise. The Speakers, with their colleagues, returned to Charlottesville, and, with the other members of the legislature, had barely time to get out of his way. Mr. Jefferson sent off his family, to secure them from danger, and was himself still at Monticello, making arrangements for his own departure, when Lieutenant Hudson arrived there at half speed, and informed him the enemy were then ascending the hill of Monticello. He departed immediately, and knowing that he would be pursued if he took the high road, he plunged into the woods of the adjoining mountain, where, being at once safe, he proceeded to overtake his family. This is the famous adventure of Carter's Mountain, which has been so often resounded through the slanderous chronicles of Federalism. But they have taken care never to detail the facts, lest these should show that this favorite charge amounted to nothing more, than that he did not remain in his house, and there singly fight a whole troop of horse, or suffer himself to be taken prisoner. Having accompanied his family one day's journey, he returned to Monticello. Tarleton had retired after eighteen hours' stay in Charlottesville. Mr. Jefferson then rejoined his family, and proceeded with them to an estate he had in Bedford, about eighty miles southwest, where, riding in his farm some time after, he was thrown from his horse, and disabled from riding on horseback for a considerable time. But Mr. Turner finds it more convenient to give him this fall in his retreat before Tarleton, which had happened some weeks before, as a proof that he withdrew from a troop of horse with a precipitancy which Don Quixote would not have practised.

The facts here stated most particularly, with date of time and place, are taken from the notes made by the writer hereof, for his own satisfaction, at the time: the others are from memory, but so well recollected, that he is satisfied there is no material fact misstated. Should any person undertake to contradict any particular, on evidence which may at all merit the public respect, the writer will take the trouble (though not at all in the best situation for it) to produce the proofs in support of it. He finds, indeed, that, of the persons whom he recollects to have been present on these occasions, few have survived the intermediate lapse of four and twenty years. Yet he trusts that some, as well as himself, are yet among the living; and he is positively certain, that no man can falsify any material fact here stated. He well remembers, indeed, that there were then, as there are at all times, some who blamed every thing done contrary to their own opinion, although their opinions were formed on a very partial knowledge of facts. The censures, which have been hazarded by such men as Mr. Turner, are nothing but revivals of these half-informed opinions. Mr. George Nicholas, then a very young man, but always a very honest one, was prompted by these persons to bring specific charges against Mr. Jefferson. The heads of these, in writing, were communicated through a mutual friend to Mr. Jefferson, who committed to writing also the heads of justification on each of them. I well remember this paper, and believe the original of it still exists; and though framed when every real fact was fresh in the knowledge of every one, this fabricated flight from Richmond was not among the charges stated in this paper, nor any charge against Mr. Jefferson for not fighting, singly, the troop of horse. Mr. Nicholas candidly relinquished further proceeding. The House of Representatives of Virginia pronounced an honorable sentence of entire approbation of Mr. Jefferson's conduct, and so much the more honorable, as themselves had been witnesses to it. And Mr. George Nicholas took a conspicuous occasion afterwards, of his own free will, and when the matter was entirely at rest, to retract publicly the erroneous opinions he had been led into on that occasion, and to make just reparation by a candid acknowledgment of them.



## LETTER XXV.—TO DOCTORS ROGERS AND SLAUGHTER, March 2, 1806

TO DOCTORS ROGERS AND SLAUGHTER.

Washington, March 2, 1806.

Gentlemen,

I have received the favor of your letter of February the 2nd, and read with thankfulness its obliging expressions respecting myself. I regret that the object of a letter from persons whom I so much esteem, and patronized by so many other respectable names, should be beyond the law which a mature consideration of circumstances has prescribed for my conduct. I deem it the duty of every man to devote a certain portion of his income for charitable purposes; and that it is his further duty to see it so applied as to do the most good of which it is capable. This I believe to be best insured, by keeping within the circle of his own inquiry and information, the subjects of distress to whose relief his contributions shall be applied. If this rule be reasonable in private life, it becomes so necessary in my situation, that to relinquish it would leave me without rule or compass. The applications of this kind from different parts of our own, and from foreign countries, are far beyond any resources within my command. The mission of Serampore, in the East Indies, the object of the present application, is but one of many items. However disposed the mind may feel to unlimited good, our means having limits, we are necessarily circumscribed by them. They are too narrow to relieve even the distresses under our own eye: and to desert these for others which we neither see nor know, is to omit doing a certain good for one which is uncertain. I know, indeed, there have been splendid associations for effecting benevolent purposes in remote regions of the earth. But no experience of their effect has proved that more good would not have been done by the same means employed nearer home. In explaining, however, my own motives of action, I must not be understood as impeaching those of others. Their views are those of an expanded liberality. Mine may be too much restrained by the law of usefulness. But it is a law to me, and with minds like yours, will be felt as a justification. With this apology, I pray you to accept my salutations, and assurances of high esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXVI.—TO MR. DUANE, March 22, 1806

TO MR. DUANE.

Washington, March 22, 1806.

I thank you, my good Sir, cordially, for your letter of the 12th; which, however, I did not receive till the 20th. It is a proof of sincerity, which I value above all things; as, between those who practise it, falsehood and malice work their efforts in vain. There is an enemy somewhere endeavoring to sow discord among us. Instead of listening first, then doubting, and lastly believing anile tales handed round without an atom of evidence, if my friends will address themselves to me directly, as you have done, they shall be informed with frankness and thankfulness. There is not a truth on earth which I fear or would disguise. But secret slanders cannot be disarmed, because they are secret. Although you desire no answer, I shall give you one to those articles admitting a short answer, reserving those which require more explanation than the compass of a letter admits, to conversation on your arrival here. And as I write this for your personal satisfaction, I rely that my letter will, under no circumstances, be communicated to any mortal, because you well know how every syllable from me is distorted by the ingenuity of political enemies.

In the first place, then, I have had less communication, directly or indirectly, with the republicans of the east, this session, than I ever had before. This has proceeded from accidental circumstances, not from design. And if there be any coolness between those of the south and myself, it has not been from me towards them. Certainly there has been no other reserve, than to avoid taking part in the divisions among our friends. That Mr. R. has openly attacked the administration is sufficiently known. We were not disposed to join in league with Britain, under any belief that she is fighting for the liberties of mankind, and to enter into war with Spain, and consequently France. The House of Representatives were in the same sentiment, when they rejected Mr. R.'s resolutions for raising a body of regular troops for the western service. We are for a peaceable accommodation with all those nations, if it can be effected honorably. This, perhaps, is not the only ground of his alienation; but which side retains its orthodoxy, the vote of eighty-seven to eleven republicans may satisfy you: but you will better satisfy yourself on coming here, where alone the true state of things can be known, and where you will see republicanism as solidly embodied on all essential points, as you ever saw it on any occasion.

That there is only one minister who is not opposed to me, is totally unfounded. There never was a more harmonious, a more cordial administration, nor ever a moment when it has been otherwise. And while differences of opinion have been always rare among us, I can affirm, that as to present matters, there was not a single paragraph in my message to Congress, or those supplementary to it, in which there was not a unanimity of concurrence in the members of the administration. The fact is, that in ordinary affairs every head of a department consults me on those of his department, and where any thing arises too difficult or important to be decided between us, the consultation becomes general.

That there is an ostensible cabinet and a concealed one, a public profession and concealed counteraction, is false.

That I have denounced republicans by the epithet of Jacobins, and declared I would appoint none but those called moderates of both parties, and that I have avowed or entertain any predilection for those called the third party, or Quids, is in every tittle of it false.

That the expedition of Miranda was countenanced by me is an absolute falsehood, let it have gone from whom it might; and I am satisfied it is equally so as to Mr. Madison. To know as much of it as we could was our duty, but not to encourage it.

Our situation is difficult; and whatever we do, is liable to the criticisms of those who wish to represent it awry. If we recommend measures in a public message, it may be said that members are not sent here to obey the mandates of the President, or to register the edicts of a sovereign. If we

express opinions in conversation, we have then our Charles Jenkinsons, and back-door counsellors. If we say nothing, 'we have no opinions, no plans, no cabinet.' In truth, it is the fable of the old man, his son, and ass, over again.

These are short facts, which may suffice to inspire you with caution, until you can come here and examine for yourself. No other information can give you a true insight into the state of things; but you will have no difficulty in understanding them when on the spot. In the mean time, accept my friendly salutations and cordial good wishes.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXVII.—TO WILSON C. NICHOLAS, March 24, 1806

TO WILSON C. NICHOLAS.—[Confidential.]

Washington, March 24, 1806.

Dear Sir,

A last effort at friendly settlement with Spain is proposed to be made at Paris, and under the auspices of France. For this purpose, General Armstrong and Mr. Bowdoin (both now at Paris) have been appointed joint commissioners: but such a cloud of dissatisfaction rests on General Armstrong in the minds of many persons, on account of a late occurrence stated in all the public papers, that we have in contemplation to add a third commissioner, in order to give the necessary measure of public confidence to the commission. Of these two gentlemen, one being of Massachusetts and one of new York, it is thought the third should be a southern man; and the rather, as the interests to be negotiated are almost entirely southern and western. This addition is not yet ultimately decided on; but I am inclined to believe it will be adopted. Under this expectation, and my wish that you may be willing to undertake it, I give you the earliest possible intimation of it, that you may be preparing both your mind and your measures for the mission. The departure would be required to be very prompt; though the absence, I think, will not be long, Bonaparte not being in the practice of procrastination. This particular consideration will, I hope, reconcile the voyage to your affairs and your feelings. The allowance to an extra mission, is salary from the day of leaving home, and expenses to the place of destination, or in lieu of the latter, and to avoid settlements, a competent fixed sum may be given. For the return, a continuance of the salary for three months after fulfilment of the commission. Be so good as to make up your mind as quickly as possible, and to answer me as early as possible. Consider the measure as proposed provisionally only, and not to be communicated to any mortal until we see it proper. Affectionate salutations.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXVIII.—TO WILSON C. NICHOLAS, April 13, 1806

TO WILSON C. NICHOLAS.

Washington, April 13, 1806.

Dear Sir,

The situation of your affairs certainly furnishes good cause for your not acceding to my proposition of a special mission to Europe. My only hope had been, that they could have gone on one summer without you. An unjust hostility against General Armstrong will, I am afraid, show itself whenever any treaty made by him shall be offered for ratification. I wished, therefore, to provide against this, by joining a person who would have united the confidence of the whole Senate. General Smith was so prominent in the opposition to Armstrong, that it would be impossible for them to act together. We conclude, therefore, to leave the matter with Armstrong and Bowdoin. Indeed, my dear Sir, I wish sincerely you were back in the Senate; and that you would take the necessary measures to get yourself there. Perhaps, as a preliminary, you should go to our legislature. Giles's absence has been a most serious misfortune. A majority of the Senate means well. But Tracy and Bayard are too dexterous for them, and have very much influenced their proceedings. Tracy has been of nearly every committee during the session, and for the most part the chairman, and of course drawer of the reports. Seven federalists voting always in phalanx, and joined by some discontented republicans, some oblique ones, some capricious, have so often made a majority, as to produce very serious embarrassment to the public operations; and very much do I dread the submitting to them, at the next session, any treaty which can be made with either England or Spain, when I consider that five joining the federalists, can defeat a friendly settlement of our affairs. The House of Representatives is as well disposed as I ever saw one. The defection of so prominent a leader threw them into dismay and confusion for a moment; but they soon rallied to their own principles, and let him go off with five or six followers only. One half of these are from Virginia. His late declaration of perpetual opposition to this administration, drew off a few others, who at first had joined him, supposing his opposition occasional only, and not systematic. The alarm the House has had from this schism, has produced a rallying together, and a harmony, which carelessness and security had begun to endanger. On the whole, this little trial of the firmness of our representatives in their principles, and that of the people also, which is declaring itself in support of their public functionaries, has added much to my confidence in the stability of our government; and to my conviction, that should things go wrong at any time, the people will set them to rights by the peaceable exercise of their elective rights. To explain to you the character of this schism, its objects and combinations, can only be done in conversation; and must be deferred till I see you at Monticello, where I shall probably be about the 10th or 12th of May, to pass the rest of the month there. Congress has agreed to rise on Monday the 21st.

Accept my affectionate salutations.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXIX.—TO MR. HARRIS, April 18, 1806 TO MR. HARRIS

Washington, April 18, 1806.

Sir,

It is now some time since I received from you, through the house of Smith and Buchanan, at Baltimore, a bust of the Emperor Alexander, for which I have to return you my thanks. These are the more cordial, because of the value the bust derives from the great estimation in which its original is held by the world, and by none more than by myself. It will constitute one of the most valued ornaments of the retreat I am preparing for myself at my native home. Accept, at the same time, my acknowledgments for the elegant work of Atkinson and Walker on the customs of the Russians. I had laid it down as a law for my conduct while in office, and hitherto scrupulously observed, to accept of no present beyond a book, a pamphlet, or other curiosity of minor value; as well to avoid imputations on my motives of action, as to shut out a practice susceptible of such abuse. But my particular esteem for the character of the Emperor places his image in my mind above the scope of law. I receive it, therefore, and shall cherish it with affection. It nourishes the contemplation of all the good placed in his power, and of his disposition to do it.

A little before Dr. Priestley's death, he informed me that he had received intimations, through a channel he confided in, that the Emperor entertained a wish to know something of our constitution. I have therefore selected the two best works we have on that subject, for which I pray you to ask a place in his library. They are too much in detail to occupy his time; but they will furnish materials for an abstract, to be made by others, on such a scale as may bring the matter within the compass of the time which his higher callings can yield to such an object.

At a very early period of my life, contemplating the history of the aboriginal inhabitants of America, I was led to believe that if there had ever been a relation between them and the men of color in Asia, traces of it would be found in their several languages. I have therefore availed myself of every opportunity which has offered, to obtain vocabularies of such tribes as have been within my reach, corresponding to a list then formed of about two hundred and fifty words. In this I have made such progress, that within a year or two more I think to give to the public what I then shall have acquired. I have lately seen a report of Mr. Volney's to the Celtic Academy, on a work of Mr. Pallas, entitled *Vocabulaires Comparés des Langues de toute la Terre*; with a list of one hundred and thirty words, to which the vocabulary is limited. I find that seventy-three of these words are common to that and to my vocabulary, and therefore will enable us, by a comparison of language, to make the inquiry so long desired, as to the probability of a common origin between the people of color of the two continents. I have to ask the favor of you to procure me a copy of the above work of Pallas, to inform me of the cost, and permit me to pay it here to your use; for I presume you have some mercantile correspondent here, to whom a payment can be made for you. A want of knowledge what the book may cost, as well as of the means of making so small a remittance, obliges me to make this proposition, and to restrain it to the sole condition that I be permitted to reimburse it here.

I enclose you a letter for the Emperor, which be pleased to deliver or have delivered: it has some relation to a subject which the Secretary of State will explain to you.

Accept my salutations, and assurances of esteem and consideration.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXX.—TO THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA

TO THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

Washington, April 19, 1806.

I owe an acknowledgment to your Imperial Majesty, of the great satisfaction I have received from your letter of August the 20th, 1805, and sincere expressions of the respect and veneration I entertain for your character. It will be among the latest and most soothing comforts of my life, to have seen advanced to the government of so extensive a portion of the earth, and at so early a period of his life, a sovereign, whose ruling passion is the advancement of the happiness and prosperity of his people; and not of his own people only, but who can extend his eye and his good will to a distant and infant nation, unoffending in its course, unambitious in its views.

The events of Europe come to us so late, and so suspiciously, that observations on them would certainly be stale, and possibly wide of their actual state. From their general aspect, however, I collect that your Majesty's interposition in them has been disinterested and generous, and having in view only the general good of the great European family. When you shall proceed to the pacification which is to re-establish peace and commerce, the same dispositions of mind will lead you to think of the general intercourse of nations, and to make that provision for its future maintenance, which, in times past, it has so much needed. The northern nations of Europe, at the head of which your Majesty is distinguished, are habitually peaceable. The United States of America, like them, are attached to peace. We have then with them a common interest in the neutral rights. Every nation, indeed, on the continent of Europe, belligerent as well as neutral, is interested in maintaining these rights, in liberalizing them progressively with the progress of science and refinement of morality, and in relieving them from restrictions which the extension of the arts has long since rendered unreasonable and vexatious.

Two personages in Europe, of which your Majesty is one, have it in their power, at the approaching pacification, to render eminent service to nations in general, by incorporating into the act of pacification, a correct definition of the rights of neutrals on the high seas. Such a definition, declared by all the powers lately or still belligerent, would give to those rights a precision and notoriety, and cover them with an authority, which would protect them in an important degree against future violation; and should any further sanction be necessary, that of an exclusion of the violating nation from commercial intercourse with all the others, would be preferred to war, as more analogous to the offence, more easy and likely to be executed with good faith. The essential articles of these rights, too, are so few and simple as easily to be defined.

Having taken no part in the past or existing troubles of Europe, we have no part to act in its pacification. But as principles may then be settled in which we have a deep interest, it is a great happiness for us that they are placed under the protection of an umpire, who, looking beyond the narrow bounds of an individual nation, will take under the cover of his equity the rights of the absent and unrepresented. It is only by a happy concurrence of good characters and good occasions, that a step can now and then be taken to advance the well being of nations. If the present occasion be good, I am sure your Majesty's character will not be wanting to avail the world of it. By monuments of such good offices may your life become an epoch in the history of the condition of man, and may He who called it into being for the good of the human family, give it length of days and success, and have it always in his holy keeping.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXXI.—TO COLONEL MONROE, May 4, 1806 TO COLONEL MONROE

Washington, May 4, 1806.

Dear Sir,

I wrote you on the 16th of March by a common vessel, and then expected to have had, on the rising of Congress, an opportunity of peculiar confidence to you. Mr. Beckley then supposed he should take a flying trip to London, on private business. But I believe he does not find it convenient. He could have let you into the *arcana rerum*, which you have interests in knowing. Mr. Pinckney's pursuits having been confined to his peculiar line, he has only that general knowledge of what has passed here, which the public possess. He has a just view of things so far as known to him. Our old friend, Mercer, broke off from us some time ago, at first professing to disdain joining the federalists, yet from the habit of voting together, becoming soon identified with them. Without carrying over with him one single person, he is now in a state of as perfect obscurity as if his name had never been known. Mr. J. Randolph is in the same track, and will end in the same way. His course has excited considerable alarm. Timid men consider it as a proof of the weakness of our government, and that it is to be rent into pieces by demagogues and to end in anarchy. I survey the scene with a different eye, and draw a different augury from it. In a House of Representatives of a great mass of good sense, Mr. Randolph's popular eloquence gave him such advantages as to place him unrivalled as the leader of the House; and, although not conciliatory to those whom he led, principles of duty and patriotism induced many of them to swallow humiliations he subjected them to, and to vote as was right, as long as he kept the path of right himself. The sudden defection of such a man could not but produce a momentary astonishment, and even dismay; but for a moment only. The good sense of the House rallied around its principles, and, without any leader, pursued steadily the business of the session, did it well, and by a strength of vote which has never before been seen. Upon all trying questions, exclusive of the federalists, the minority of republicans voting with him, has been from four to six or eight, against from ninety to one hundred; and although he yet treats the federalists with ineffable contempt, yet having declared eternal opposition to this administration, and consequently associated with them in his votes, he will, like Mercer, end with them. The augury I draw from this is that there is a steady good sense in the legislature, and in the body of the nation, joined with good intentions, which will lead them to discern and to pursue the public good under all circumstances which can arise, and that no *ignis fatuus* will be able to lead them long astray. In the present case, the public sentiment, as far as declarations of it have yet come in, is, without a single exception, in firm adherence to the administration. One popular paper is endeavoring to maintain equivocal ground; approving the administration in all its proceedings, and Mr. Randolph in all those which have heretofore merited approbation, carefully avoiding to mention his late aberration. The ultimate view of this paper is friendly to you, and the editor, with more judgment than him who assumes to be at the head of your friends, sees that the ground of opposition to the administration is not that on which it would be advantageous to you to be planted. The great body of your friends are among the firmest adherents to the administration, and in their support of you will suffer Mr. Randolph to have no communications with them. My former letter told you the line which both duty and inclination would lead me sacredly to pursue. But it is unfortunate for you, to be embarrassed with such a *soi-disant* friend. You must not commit yourself to him. These views may assist you to understand such details as Mr. Pinckney will give you. If you are here at any time before the fall, it will be in time for any object you may have, and by that time the public sentiment will be more decisively declared. I wish you were here at present, to take your choice of the two governments of Orleans and Louisiana, in either of which I could now place you; and I verily believe it would be to your advantage to be just that



much withdrawn from the focus of the ensuing contest, until its event should be known. The one has a salary of five thousand dollars, the other of two thousand dollars; both with excellent hotels for the Governor. The latter at St. Louis, where there is good society, both French and American, a healthy climate, and the finest field in the United States for acquiring property. The former not unhealthy, if you begin a residence there in the month of November. The Mrs. Trists and their connections are established there. As I think you can within four months inform me what you say to this, I will keep things in their present state till the last day of August, for your answer.

The late change in the ministry I consider as insuring us a just settlement of our differences, and we ask no more. In Mr. Fox, personally, I have more confidence than in any man in England, and it is founded in what, through unquestionable channels, I have had opportunities of knowing of his honesty and his good sense. While he shall be in the administration, my reliance on that government will be solid. We had committed ourselves in a line of proceedings adapted to meet Mr. Pitt's policy and hostility, before we heard of his death, which self-respect did not permit us to abandon afterwards; and the late unparalleled outrage on us at New York excited such sentiments in the public at large, as did not permit us to do less than has been done. It ought not to be viewed by the ministry as looking towards them at all, but merely as the consequences of the measures of their predecessors, which their nation has called on them to correct. I hope, therefore, they will come to just arrangements. No two countries upon earth have so many points of common interest and friendship; and their rulers must be great bunglers indeed, if, with such dispositions, they break them asunder. The only rivalry that can arise, is on the ocean. England may by petty larceny thwartings check us on that element a little, but nothing she can do will retard us there one year's growth. We shall be supported there by other nations, and thrown into their scale to make a part of the great counterpoise to her navy. If, on the other hand, she is just to us, conciliatory, and encourages the sentiment of family feelings and conduct, it cannot fail to befriend the security of both. We have the seamen and materials for fifty ships of the line, and half that number of frigates, and were France to give us the money, and England the dispositions to equip them, they would give to England serious proofs of the stock from which they are sprung, and the school in which they have been taught, and added to the efforts of the immensity of sea-coast lately united under one power, would leave the state of the ocean no longer problematical. Were, on the other hand, England to give the money, and France the dispositions to place us on the sea in all our force, the whole world, out of the continent of Europe, might be our joint monopoly. We wish for neither of these scenes. We ask for peace and justice from all nations, and we will remain uprightly neutral in fact, though leaning in belief to the opinion that an English ascendancy on the ocean is safer for us than that of France. We begin to broach the idea that we consider the whole Gulf Stream as of our waters, in which hostilities and cruising are to be frowned on for the present, and prohibited so soon as either consent or force will permit us. We shall never permit another privateer to cruise within it, and shall forbid our harbors to national cruisers. This is essential for our tranquillity and commerce. Be so good as to have the enclosed letters delivered, to present me to your family, and be assured yourself of my unalterable friendship.

For fear of accidents I shall not make the unnecessary addition of my name.

## LETTER XXXII.—TO GENERAL SMITH, May 4,1806

TO GENERAL SMITH.

Washington, May 4,1806.

Dear Sir,

I received your favor covering some papers from General Wilkinson. I have repented but of one appointment there, that of Lucas, whose temper I see overrules every good quality and every qualification he has. Not a single fact has appeared, which occasions me to doubt that I could have made a fitter appointment than General Wilkinson. One qualm of principle I acknowledge I do feel, I mean the union of the civil and military authority. You remember that when I came into office, while we were lodging together at Conrad's, he was pressed on me to be made Governor of the Mississippi territory; and that I refused it on that very principle. When, therefore, the House of Representatives took that ground, I was not insensible to its having some weight. But in the appointment to Louisiana, I did not think myself departing from my own principle, because I consider it not as a civil government, but merely a military station. The legislature had sanctioned that idea by the establishment of the office of Commandant, in which were completely blended the civil and military powers. It seemed, therefore, that the Governor should be in suit with them. I observed too, that the House of Representatives, on the very day they passed the stricture on this union of authorities, passed a bill making the Governor of Michigan, commander of the regular troops which should at any time be within his government. However, on the subject of General Wilkinson nothing is in contemplation at this time. We shall see what turn things take at home and abroad in the course of the summer. Monroe has had a second conversation with Mr. Fox, which gives me hopes that we shall have an amicable arrangement with that government. Accept my friendly salutations, and assurances of great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## **LETTER XXXIII.—TO MR DIGGES, July 1, 1806**

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO MR DIGGES.

Thomas Jefferson salutes Mr. Digges with friendship and respect, and sends him the newspapers received last night. He is sorry that only the latter part of the particular publication which Mr. Digges wished to see, is in them. He will be happy to see Mr. Digges and his friends on the fourth of July, and to join in congratulations on the return of the day which divorced us from the follies and crimes of Europe, from a dollar in the pound at least of six hundred millions sterling, and from all the ruin of Mr. Pitt's administration. We, too, shall encounter follies; but if great, they will be short, if long, they will be light: and the vigor of our country will get the better of them. Mr. Pitt's follies have been great, long, and inflicted on a body emaciated with age, and exhausted by excesses beyond its power to bear. July 1, 1806.

## LETTER XXXIV.—TO MR. BIDWELL, July 5, 1806

TO MR. BIDWELL.

Washington, July 5, 1806.

Sir,

Your favor of June the 21st has been duly received. We have not as yet heard from General Skinner on the subject of his office. Three persons are proposed on the most respectable recommendations, and under circumstances of such equality as renders it difficult to decide between them. But it shall be done impartially. I sincerely congratulate you on the triumph of republicanism in Massachusetts. The Hydra of Federalism has now lost all its heads but two. Connecticut I think will soon follow Massachusetts. Delaware will probably remain what it ever has been, a mere county of England, conquered indeed, and held under by force, but always disposed to counter-revolution. I speak of its majority only.

Our information from London continues to give us hopes of an accommodation there on both the points of 'accustomed commerce and impressment.' In this there must probably be some mutual concession, because we cannot expect to obtain every thing and yield nothing. But I hope it will be such an one as may be accepted. The arrival of the *Hornet* in France is so recently known, that it will yet be some time before we learn our prospects there. Notwithstanding the efforts made here, and made professedly to assassinate that negotiation in embryo, if the good sense of Bonaparte should prevail over his temper, the present state of things in Europe may induce him to require of Spain, that she should do us justice at least. That he should require her to sell us East Florida, we have no right to insist: yet there are not wanting considerations which may induce him to wish a permanent foundation for peace laid between us. In this treaty, whatever it shall be, our old enemies the federalists, and their new friends, will find enough to carp at. This is a thing of course, and I should suspect error where they found no fault. The buzzard feeds on carrion only. Their rallying point is 'war with France and Spain, and alliance with Great Britain': and every thing is wrong with them which checks their new ardor to be fighting for the liberties of mankind; on the sea always excepted. There one nation is to monopolize all the liberties of the others.

I read, with extreme regret, the expressions of an inclination on your part to retire from Congress. I will not say that this time, more than all others, calls for the service of every man; but I will say, there never was a time when the services of those who possess talents, integrity, firmness, and sound judgment, were more wanted in Congress. Some one of that description is particularly wanted to take the lead in the House of Representatives, to consider the business of the nation as his own business, to take it up as if he were singly charged with it, and carry it through. I do not mean that any gentleman, relinquishing his own judgment, should implicitly support all the measures of the administration; but that, where he does not disapprove of them, he should not suffer them to go off in sleep, but bring them to the attention of the House, and give them a fair chance. Where he disapproves, he will of course leave them to be brought forward by those who concur in the sentiment. Shall I explain my idea by an example? The classification of the militia was communicated to General Varnum and yourself merely as a proposition, which, if you approved, it was trusted you would support. I knew, indeed, that General Varnum was opposed to any thing which might break up the present organization of the militia: but when so modified as to avoid this, I thought he might, perhaps, be reconciled to it. As soon as I found it did not coincide with your sentiments, I could not wish you to support it; but using the same freedom of opinion, I procured it to be brought forward elsewhere. It failed there also, and for a time, perhaps, may not prevail: but a militia can never be used for distant service on any other plan; and Bonaparte will conquer the world, if they do not learn his secret of composing armies of young men only, whose enthusiasm and health enable them to surmount all obstacles. When a gentleman, through zeal for the public service, undertakes to do the

public business, we know that we shall hear the cant of backstairs counsellors. But we never heard this while the declaimer was himself a backstairs man, as he calls it, but in the confidence and views of the administration, as may more properly and respectfully be said. But if the members are to know nothing but what is important enough to be put into a public message, and indifferent enough to be made known to all the world; if the executive is to keep all other information to himself, and the House to plunge on in the dark, it becomes a government of chance and not of design. The imputation was one of those artifices used to despoil an adversary of his most effectual arms; and men of mind will place themselves above a gabble of this order. The last session of Congress was indeed an uneasy one for a time: but as soon as the members penetrated into the views of those who were taking a new course, they rallied in as solid a phalanx as I have ever seen act together. Indeed I have never seen a House of better dispositions.

Perhaps I am not entitled to speak with so much frankness; but it proceeds from no motive which has not a right to your forgiveness. Opportunities of candid explanation are so seldom afforded me, that I must not lose them when they occur. The information I receive from your quarter agrees with that from the south; that the late schism has made not the smallest impression on the public, and that the seceders are obliged to give to it other grounds than those which we know to be the true ones. All we have to wish is, that, at the ensuing session, every one may take the part openly which he secretly befriends. I recollect nothing new and true, worthy communicating to you. As for what is not true, you will always find abundance in the newspapers. Among other things, are those perpetual alarms as to the Indians, for no one of which has there ever been the slightest ground. They are the suggestions of hostile traders, always wishing to embroil us with the Indians, to perpetuate their own extortionate commerce. I salute you with esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXXV.—TO MR. BOWDOIN, July 10, 1806

TO MR. BOWDOIN.

Washington, July 10, 1806.

Dear Sir,

I believe that when you left America, the invention of the polygraph had not yet reached Boston. It is for copying with one pen while you write with the other, and without the least additional embarrassment or exertion to the writer. I think it the finest invention of the present age, and so much superior to the copying machine, that the latter will never be continued a day by any one who tries the polygraph. It was invented by a Mr. Hawkins of Frankford, near Philadelphia, who is now in England, turning it to good account. Knowing that you are in the habit of writing much, I have flattered myself that I could add acceptably to your daily convenience by presenting you with one of these delightful machines. I have accordingly had one made, and to be certain of its perfection I have used it myself some weeks, and have the satisfaction to find it the best one I have ever tried; and in the course of two years' daily use of them, I have had opportunities of trying several. As a secretary, which copies for us what we write without the power of revealing it, I find it a most precious possession to a man in public-business. I enclose directions for unpacking and using the machine when you receive it; but the machine itself must await a special and sure conveyance under the care of some person going to Paris. It is ready packed, and shall go by the first proper conveyance.

As we heard two or three weeks ago of the safe arrival of the *Hornet* at L'Orient, we are anxiously waiting to learn from you the first impressions on her mission. If you can succeed in procuring us Florida, and a good western boundary, it will fill the American mind with joy. It will secure to our fellow-citizens one of their most ardent wishes, a long peace with Spain and France. For be assured, the object of war with them and alliance with England, which, at the last session of Congress, drew off from the republican band about half a dozen of its members, is universally reprobated by our native citizens from north to south. I have never seen the nation stand more firm to its principles, or rally so firmly to its constituted authorities, and in reprobation of the opposition to them. With England, I think we shall cut off the resource of impressing our seamen to fight her battles, and establish the inviolability of our flag in its commerce with her enemies.

We shall thus become what we sincerely wish to be, honestly neutral, and truly useful to both belligerents. To the one, by keeping open a market for the consumption of her manufactures, while they are excluded from all the countries under the power of her enemy; to the other, by securing for her a safe carriage of all her productions, metropolitan or colonial, while her own means are restrained by her enemy, and may, therefore, be employed in other useful pursuits. We are certainly more useful friends to France and Spain as neutrals, than as allies. I hope they will be sensible of it, and by a wise removal of all grounds of future misunderstanding to another age, enable you to present us such an arrangement, as will insure to our fellow-citizens long and permanent peace and friendship with them. With respect to our western boundary, your instructions will be your guide. I will only add, as a comment to them, that we are attached to the retaining the Bay of St. Bernard, because it was the first establishment of the unfortunate La Sale, was the cradle of Louisiana, and more incontestibly covered and conveyed to us by France, under that name, than any other spot in the country. This will be secured to us by taking for our western boundary the Guadaloupe, and from its head around the sources of all waters eastward of it, to the highlands embracing the waters running into the Mississippi. However, all these things I presume will be settled before you receive this; and I hope so settled as to give peace and satisfaction to us all.

Our crops of wheat are greater than have ever been known, and are now nearly secured. A caterpillar gave for a while great alarm, but did little injury. Of tobacco, not half a crop has been planted for want of rain; and even this half, with cotton and Indian corn, has yet many chances to run.

This summer will place our harbors in a situation to maintain peace and order within them. The next, or certainly the one following that, will so provide them with gunboats and common batteries, as to be *hors d'insulte*. Although our prospect is peace, our policy and purpose is to provide for defence by all those means to which our resources are competent.

I salute you with friendship, and assure you of my high respect and consideration.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXXVI.—TO W. A. BURWELL, September 17, 1806

TO W. A. BURWELL.

Monticello, September 17, 1806.

Dear Sir,

Yours of August the 7th, from Liberty, never got to my hands till the 9th instant. About the same time, I received the Enquirer in which Decius was so judiciously answered. The writer of that paper observed, that the matter of Decius consisted, first of facts; secondly, of inferences from these facts: that he was not well enough informed to affirm or deny his facts, and he therefore examines his inferences, and in a very masterly manner shows that even were his facts true, the reasonable inferences from them are very different from those drawn by Decius. But his facts are far from truth, and should be corrected. It happened that Mr. Madison and General Dearborn were here when I received your letter. I therefore, with them, took up Decius and read him deliberately; and our memories aided one another in correcting his bold and unauthorized assertions. I shall note the most material of them in the order of the paper.

1. It is grossly false that our ministers, as is said in a note, had proposed to surrender our claims to compensation for Spanish spoliations, or even for French. Their instructions were to make no treaty in which Spanish spoliations were not provided for; and although they were permitted to be silent as to French spoliations carried into Spanish ports, they were not expressly to abandon even them. 2. It is not true that our ministers, in agreeing to establish the Colorado as our western boundary, had been obliged to exceed the authority of their instructions. Although we considered our title good as far as the Rio Bravo, yet in proportion to what they could obtain east of the Mississippi, they were to relinquish to the westward, and successive sacrifices were marked out, of which even the Colorado was not the last. 3. It is not true that the Louisiana treaty was antedated, lest Great Britain should consider our supplying her enemies with money as a breach of neutrality. After the very words of the treaty were finally agreed to, it took some time, perhaps some days, to make out all the copies in the very splendid manner of Bonaparte's treaties. Whether the 30th of April, 1803, the date expressed, was the day of the actual compact, or that on which it was signed, our memories do not enable us to say. If the former, then it is strictly conformable to the day of the compact; if the latter, then it was postdated, instead of being antedated. The motive assigned, too, is as incorrect as the fact. It was so far from being thought, by any party, a breach of neutrality, that the British minister congratulated Mr. King on the acquisition, and declared that the King had learned it with great pleasure: and when Baring, the British banker, asked leave of the minister to purchase the debt and furnish the money to France, the minister declared to him, that so far from throwing obstacles in the way, if there were any difficulty in the payment of the money, it was the interest of Great Britain to aid it. 4. He speaks of a double set of opinions and principles; the one ostensible, to go on the journals and before the public, the other efficient, and the real motives to action. But where are these double opinions and principles? The executive informed the legislature of the wrongs of Spain, and that preparation should be made to repel them, by force, if necessary. But as it might still be possible to negotiate a settlement, they asked such means as might enable them to meet the negotiation, whatever form it might take. The first part of this system was communicated publicly, the second, privately; but both were equally official, equally involved the responsibility of the executive, and were equally to go on the journals. 5. That the purchase of the Floridas was in direct opposition to the views of the executive, as expressed in the President's official communication. It was not in opposition even to the public part of the communication, which did not recommend war, but only to be prepared for it. It perfectly harmonized with the private part, which asked the means of negotiation in such terms as covered the



purchase of Florida as evidently as it was proper to speak it out. He speaks of secret communications between the executive and members, of backstairs influence, &c.. But he never spoke of this while he and Mr. Nicholson enjoyed it almost solely. But when he differed from the executive in a leading measure, and the executive, not submitting to him, expressed their sentiments to others, the very sentiments (to wit, for the purchase of Florida), which he acknowledges they expressed to him, then he roars out upon backstairs influence. 6. The committee, he says, forbore to recommend offensive measures. Is this true? Did not they recommend the raising – regiments? Besides, if it was proper for the committee to forbear recommending offensive measures, was it not proper for the executive and legislature to exercise the same forbearance? 7. He says Monroe's letter had a most important bearing on our Spanish relations. Monroe's letter related, almost entirely, to our British relations. Of those with Spain he knew nothing particular since he left that country. Accordingly, in his letter he simply expressed an opinion on our affairs with Spain, of which he knew we had better information than he could possess. His opinion was no more than that of any other sensible man; and his letter was proper to be communicated with the English papers, and with them only. That the executive did not hold it up on account of any bearing on Spanish affairs, is evident from the fact, that it was communicated when the Senate had not yet entered on the Spanish affairs, and had not yet received the papers relating to them from the other House. The moment the Representatives were ready to enter on the British affairs, Monroe's letter, which peculiarly related to them, and was official solely as to them, was communicated to both Houses, the Senate being then about entering on the Spanish affairs.

These, my dear Sir, are the principal facts worth correction. Make any use of them you think best, without letting your source of information be known. Can you send me some cones or seeds of the cucumber-tree? Accept affectionate salutations, and assurances of great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

**LETTER XXXVII.—TO ALBERT  
GALLATIN, October 12, 1806  
TO ALBERT GALLATIN**

Washington, October 12, 1806.

Dear Sir,

You witnessed, in the earlier part of the administration, the malignant and long continued efforts which the federalists exerted in their newspapers, to produce misunderstanding between Mr. Madison and myself. These failed completely. A like attempt was afterwards made, through other channels, to effect a similar purpose between General Dearborn and myself, but with no more success. The machinations of the last session to put you at cross questions with us all, were so obvious as to be seen at the first glance of every eye. In order to destroy one member of the administration, the whole were to be set to loggerheads to destroy one another. I observe in the papers lately, new attempts to revive this stale artifice, and that they squint more directly towards you and myself. I cannot, therefore, be satisfied, till I declare to you explicitly, that my affections and confidence in you are nothing impaired, and that they cannot be impaired by means so unworthy the notice of candid and honorable minds. I make the declaration, that no doubts or jealousies, which often beget the facts they fear, may find a moment's harbor in either of our minds. I have so much reliance on the superior good sense and candor of all those associated with me, as to be satisfied they will not suffer either friend or foe to sow tares among us. Our administration now drawing towards a close, I have a sublime pleasure in believing it will be distinguished as much by having placed itself above all the passions which could disturb its harmony, as by the great operations by which it will have advanced the well-being of the nation.

Accept my affectionate salutations, and assurances of my constant and unalterable respect and attachment.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XXXVIII.—TO JOHN DICKINSON, January 13, 1807

TO JOHN DICKINSON.

Washington, January 13, 1807.

My Dear and Ancient Friend,

I have duly received your favor of the 1st instant, and am ever thankful for communications which may guide me in the duties which I wish to perform as well as I am able. It is but too true, that great discontents exist in the territory of Orleans. Those of the French inhabitants have for their sources, 1. the prohibition of importing slaves. This may be partly removed by Congress permitting them to receive slaves from the other States, which, by dividing that evil, would lessen its danger. 2. The administration of justice in our forms, principles, and language, with all of which they are unacquainted, and are the more abhorrent, because of the enormous expense, greatly exaggerated by the corruption of bankrupt and greedy lawyers, who have gone there from the United States and engrossed the practice. 3. The call on them by the land commissioners to produce the titles of their lands. The object of this is really to record and secure their rights. But as many of them hold on rights so ancient that the title papers are lost, they expect the land is to be taken from them wherever they cannot produce a regular deduction of title in writing. In this they will be undeceived by the final result, which will evince to them a liberal disposition of the government towards them. Among the American inhabitants it is the old division of federalists and republicans. The former, are as hostile there as they are every where, and are the most numerous and wealthy. They have been long endeavoring to batter down the Governor, who has always been a firm republican. There were characters superior to him, whom I wished to appoint, but they refused the office: I know no better man who would accept of it, and it would not be right to turn him out for one not better. But it is the second cause, above mentioned, which is deep seated and permanent. The French members of the legislature, being the majority in both Houses, lately passed an act, declaring that the civil, or French laws, should be the laws of their land, and enumerated about fifty folio volumes, in Latin, as the depositories of these laws. The Governor negatived the act. One of the Houses thereupon passed a vote for self-dissolution of the legislature as a useless body, which failed in the other House by a single vote only. They separated, however, and have disseminated all the discontent they could. I propose to the members of Congress in conversation, the enlisting thirty thousand volunteers, Americans by birth, to be carried at the public expense, and settled immediately on a bounty of one hundred and sixty acres of land each, on the west side of the Mississippi, on the condition of giving two years of military service, if that country should be attacked within seven years. The defence of the country would thus be placed on the spot, and the additional number would entitle the territory to become a State, would make the majority American, and make it an American instead of a French State. This would not sweeten the pill to the French; but in making that acquisition we had some view to our own good as well as theirs, and I believe the greatest good of both will be promoted by whatever will amalgamate us together.

I have tired you, my friend, with a long letter. But your tedium will end in a few lines more. Mine has yet two years to endure. I am tired of an office where I can do no more good than many others, who would be glad to be employed in it. To myself, personally, it brings nothing but unceasing drudgery, and daily loss of friends. Every office becoming vacant, every appointment made, *me donne un ingrat, et cent ennemis*. My only consolation is in the belief, that my fellow-citizens at large give me credit for good intentions. I will certainly endeavor to merit the continuance of that good will which follows well intended actions, and their approbation will be the dearest reward I can carry into retirement.

God bless you, my excellent friend, and give you yet many healthy and happy years.  
Th: Jefferson.

## **LETTER XXXIX,—TO WILSON C. NICHOLAS, February 28,1807**

TO WILSON C. NICHOLAS.

Washington, February 28,1807.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of January the 20th was received in due time. But such has been the constant pressure of business, that it has been out of my power to answer it. Indeed, the subjects of it would be almost beyond the extent of a letter, and as I hope to see you ere long at Monticello, it can then be more effectually done verbally. Let me observe, however, generally, that it is impossible for my friends ever to render me so acceptable a favor, as by communicating to me, without reserve, facts and opinions. I have none of that sort of self-love which winces at it; indeed, both self-love and the desire to do what is best strongly invite unreserved communication. There is one subject which will not admit a delay till I see you. Mr. T. M. Randolph is, I believe, determined to retire from Congress, and it is strongly his wish, and that of all here, that you should take his place. Never did the calls of patriotism more loudly assail you than at this moment. After excepting the federalists, who will be twenty-seven, and the little band of schismatics, who will be three or four (all tongue), the residue of the House of Representatives is as well disposed a body of men as I ever saw collected. But there is no one whose talents and standing, taken together, have weight enough to give him the lead. The consequence is, that there is no one who will undertake to do the public business, and it remains undone. Were you here, the whole would rally round you in an instant, and willingly co-operate in whatever is for the public good. Nor would it require you to undertake drudgery in the House. There are enough, able and willing to do that. A rallying point is all that is wanting. Let me beseech you then to offer yourself. You never will have it so much in your power again to render such eminent service.

Accept my affectionate salutations and high esteem.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XL.—TO JAMES MONROE, March 21, 1807

TO JAMES MONROE.

Washington, March 21, 1807.

Dear Sir,

A copy of the treaty with Great Britain came to Mr. Erskine's hands on the last day of the session of Congress, which he immediately communicated to us; and since that, Mr. Purviance has arrived with an original. On the subject of it you will receive a letter from the Secretary of State, of about this date, and one more in detail hereafter. I should not have written, but that I perceive uncommon efforts, and with uncommon wickedness, are making by the federal papers to produce mischief between myself, personally, and our negotiators; and also to irritate the British government, by putting a thousand speeches into my mouth, not one word of which I ever uttered. I have, therefore, thought it safe to guard you, by stating the view which we have given out on the subject of the treaty, in conversation and otherwise; for ours, as you know, is a government which will not tolerate the being kept entirely in the dark, and especially on a subject so interesting as this treaty. We immediately stated in conversation, to the members of the legislature and others, that having, by a letter received in January, perceived that our ministers might sign a treaty not providing satisfactorily against the impressment of our seamen, we had, on the 3rd of February, informed you, that should such an one have been forwarded, it could not be ratified, and recommending, therefore, that you should resume negotiations for inserting an article to that effect; that we should hold the treaty in suspense until we could learn from you the result of our instructions, which probably would not be till summer, and then decide on the question of calling the Senate. We observed, too, that a written declaration of the British commissioners, given in at the time of signature, would of itself, unless withdrawn, prevent the acceptance of any treaty, because its effect was to leave us bound by the treaty, and themselves totally unbound. This is the statement we have given out, and nothing more of the contents of the treaty has been made known. But depend on it, my dear Sir, that it will be considered as a hard treaty when it is known. The British commissioners appear to have screwed every article as far as it would bear, to have taken every thing, and yielded nothing. Take out the eleventh article, and the evil of all the others so much overweighs the good, that we should be glad to expunge the whole. And even the eleventh article admits only that we may enjoy our right to the indirect colonial trade, during the present hostilities. If peace is made this year, and war resumed the next, the benefit of this stipulation is gone, and yet we are bound for ten years, to pass no non-importation or non-intercourse laws, nor take any other measures to restrain the unjust pretensions and practices of the British. But on this you will hear from the Secretary of State. If the treaty cannot be put into an acceptable form, then the next best thing is to back out of the negotiation as well as we can, letting that die away insensibly; but, in the mean time, agreeing informally, that both parties shall act on the principles of the treaty, so as to preserve that friendly understanding which we so sincerely desire, until the one or the other may be disposed to yield the points which divide us. This will leave you to follow your desire of coming home, as soon as you see that the amendment of the treaty is desperate. The power of continuing the negotiations will pass over to Mr. Pinckney, who, by procrastinations, can let it die away, and give us time, the most precious of all things to us. The government of New Orleans is still without such a head as I wish. The salary of five thousand dollars is too small; but I am assured the Orleans legislature would make it adequate, would you accept it. It is the second office in the United States in importance, and I am still in hopes you will accept it. It is impossible to let you stay at home while the public has so much need of talents. I am writing under a severe indisposition of periodical headache, without scarcely command enough of my mind to know what I write. As a part of this letter concerns Mr. Pinckney as well as yourself, be so good as to communicate so much of it to him; and with my

best respects to him, to Mrs. Monroe, and your daughter, be assured yourself, in all cases, of my constant and affectionate friendship and attachment.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XLI.—M. LE COMTE DIODATI, March 29, 1807

M. LE COMTE DIODATI.

Washington, March 29, 1807.

My Dear and Antient Friend,

Your letter of August the 29th reached me the 18th of February. It enclosed a duplicate of that written from Brunswick five years before, but which I never received, or had notice of, but by this duplicate. Be assured, my friend, that I was incapable of such negligence towards you, as a failure to answer it would have implied. It would illy have accorded with those sentiments of friendship I entertained for you at Paris, and which neither time nor distance has lessened. I often pass in review the many happy hours I spent with Madame Diodati and yourself on the banks of the Seine, as well as at Paris, and I count them among the most pleasing I enjoyed in France. Those were indeed days of tranquillity and happiness. They had begun to cloud a little before I left you; but I had no apprehension that the tempest, of which I saw the beginning, was to spread over such an extent of space and time. I have often thought of you with anxiety, and wished to know how you weathered the storm, and into what port you had retired. The letters now received give me the first information, and I sincerely felicitate you on your safe and quiet retreat. Were I in Europe, *pax et panis* would certainly be my motto. Wars and contentions, indeed, fill the pages of history with more matter. But more blest is that nation whose silent course of happiness furnishes nothing for history to say. This is what I ambition for my own country, and what it has fortunately enjoyed now upwards of twenty years, while Europe has been in constant volcanic eruption. I again, my friend, repeat my joy that you have escaped the overwhelming torrent of its lava.

At the end of my present term, of which two years are yet to come, I propose to retire from public life, and to close my days on my patrimony of Monticello, in the bosom of my family. I have hitherto enjoyed uniform health; but the weight of public business begins to be too heavy for me, and I long for the enjoyments of rural life, among my books, my farms, and my family. Having performed my *quadragena stipendia*, I am entitled to my discharge, and should be sorry, indeed, that others should be sooner sensible than myself when I ought to ask it. I have, therefore, requested my fellow-citizens to think of a successor for me, to whom I shall deliver the public concerns with greater joy than I received them. I have the consolation too of having added nothing to my private fortune, during my public service, and of retiring with hands as clean as they are empty. Pardon me these egoisms, which, if ever excusable, are so when writing to a friend to whom our concerns are not uninteresting. I shall always be glad to hear of your health and happiness, and having been out of the way of hearing of any of our cotemporaries of the *corps diplomatique* at Paris, any details of their subsequent history, which you will favor me with, will be thankfully received. I pray you to make my friendly respects acceptable to Madame la Comtesse Diodati, to assure M. Tronchin of my continued esteem, and to accept yourself my affectionate salutations, and assurances of constant attachment and respect.

Th: Jefferson.



## LETTER XLII.—TO MR. BOWDOIN, April 2, 1807 TO MR. BOWDOIN

Washington, April 2, 1807.

Dear Sir,

I wrote you on the 10th of July last; but neither your letter of October the 20th nor that of November the 15th mentioning the receipt of it, I fear it has miscarried. I therefore now enclose a duplicate. As that was to go under cover of the Secretary of State's despatches by any vessel going from our distant ports, I retained the polygraph therein mentioned for a safer conveyance. None such has occurred till now, that the United States' armed brig the Wasp, on her way to the Mediterranean is to touch at Falmouth, with despatches for our ministers at London, and at Brest, with others for yourself and General Armstrong.

You heard in due time from London of the signature of a treaty there between Great Britain and the United States. By a letter we received in January from our ministers at London, we found they were making up their minds to sign a treaty, in which no provision was made against the impressment of our seamen, contenting themselves with a note received in the course of their correspondence, from the British negotiators, assuring them of the discretion with which impressments should be conducted, which could be construed into a covenant only by inferences, against which its omission in the treaty was a strong inference; and in its terms totally unsatisfactory. By a letter of February the 3rd, they were immediately informed that no treaty, not containing a satisfactory article on that head, would be ratified, and desiring them to resume the negotiations on that point. The treaty having come to as actually in the inadmissible shape apprehended, we, of course, hold it up until we know the result of the instructions of February the 3rd. I have but little expectation that the British government will retire from their habitual wrongs in the impressment of our seamen, and am certain, that without that we will never tie up our hands by treaty, from the right of passing a non-importation or non-intercourse act, to make it her interest to become just. This may bring on a war of commercial restrictions. To show, however, the sincerity of our desire for conciliation, I have suspended the non-importation act. This state of things should be understood at Paris, and every effort used on your part to accommodate our differences with Spain, under the auspices of France, with whom it is all-important that we should stand in terms of the strictest cordiality. In fact, we are to depend on her and Russia for the establishment of neutral rights by the treaty of peace, among which should be that of taking no persons by a belligerent out of a neutral ship, unless they be the soldiers of an enemy. Never did a nation act towards another with more perfidy and injustice than Spain has constantly practised against us: and if we have kept our hands off of her till now, it has been purely out of respect to France, and from the value we set on the friendship of France. We expect, therefore, from the friendship of the Emperor, that he will either compel Spain to do us justice, or abandon her to us. We ask but one month to be in possession of the city of Mexico.

No better proof of the good faith of the United States could have been given, than the vigor with which we have acted, and the expense incurred, in suppressing the enterprise meditated lately by Burr against Mexico. Although at first he proposed a separation of the western country, and on that ground received encouragement and aid from Yrujo, according to the usual spirit of his government towards us, yet he very early saw that the fidelity of the western country was not to be shaken, and turned himself wholly towards Mexico. And so popular is an enterprise on that country in this, that we had only to lie still, and he would have had followers enough to have been in the city of Mexico in six weeks. You have doubtless seen my several messages to Congress, which gave a faithful narrative of that conspiracy. Burr himself, after being disarmed by our endeavors of all his followers, escaped from the custody of the court of Mississippi, but was taken near Fort Stoddart, making his way to

Mobile, by some country people, who brought him on as a prisoner to Richmond, where he is now under a course for trial. Hitherto we have believed our law to be, that suspicion on probable grounds was sufficient cause to commit a person for trial, allowing time to collect witnesses till the trial. But the judges here have decided, that conclusive evidence of guilt must be ready in the moment of arrest, or they will discharge the malefactor. If this is still insisted on, Burr will be discharged; because his crimes having been sown from Maine, through the whole line of the western waters, to New Orleans, we cannot bring the witnesses here under four months. The fact is, that the federalists make Burr's cause their own, and exert their whole influence to shield him from punishment, as they did the adherents of Miranda. And it is unfortunate that federalism is still predominant in our judiciary department, which is consequently in opposition to the legislative and executive branches, and is able to baffle their measures often.

Accept my friendly salutations, and assurances of great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XLIII.—TO WILLIAM B. GILES, April 20, 1807

TO WILLIAM B. GILES.

Monticello, April 20, 1807.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of the 6th instant, on the subject of Burr's offences, was received only four days ago. That there should be anxiety and doubt in the public mind, in the present defective state of the proof, is not wonderful; and this has been sedulously encouraged by the tricks of the judges to force trials before it is possible to collect the evidence, dispersed through a line of two thousand miles from Maine to Orleans. The federalists, too, give all their aid, making Burr's cause their own, mortified only that he did not separate the union or overturn the government, and proving, that had he had a little dawn of success, they would have joined him to introduce his object, their favorite monarchy, as they would any other enemy, foreign or domestic, who could rid them of this hateful republic for any other government in exchange.

The first ground of complaint was the supine inattention of the administration to a treason stalking through the land in open day. The present one, that they have crushed it before it was ripe for execution, so that no overt acts can be produced. This last may be true; though I believe it is not. Our information having been chiefly by way of letter, we do not know of a certainty yet what will be proved. We have set on foot an inquiry through the whole of the country which has been the scene of these transactions, to be able to prove to the courts, if they will give time, or to the public by way of communication to Congress, what the real facts have been. For obtaining this, we are obliged to appeal to the patriotism of particular persons in different places, of whom we have requested to make the inquiry in their neighborhood, and on such information as shall be voluntarily offered. Aided by no process or facilities from the federal courts, but frowned on by their new-born zeal for the liberty of those whom we would not permit to overthrow the liberties of their country, we can expect no revelations from the accomplices of the chief offender. Of treasonable intentions, the judges have been obliged to confess there is probable appearance. What loop-hole they will find in the case, when it comes to trial, we cannot foresee. Eaton, Stoddart, Wilkinson, and two others whom I must not name, will satisfy the world, if not the judges, of Burr's guilt. And I do suppose the following overt acts will be proved. 1. The enlistment of men, in a regular way. 2. The regular mounting of guard round Blannerhassett's island, when they expected Governor Tiffin's men to be on them *modo guerrino arraiati*. 3. The rendezvous of Burr with his men at the mouth of Cumberland. 4. His letter to the acting Governor of Mississippi, holding up the prospect of civil war. 5. His capitulation, regularly signed with the aid of the Governor, as between two independent and hostile commanders.

But a moment's calculation will show that this evidence cannot be collected under four months, probably five, from the moment of deciding when and where the trial shall be. I desired Mr. Rodney expressly to inform the Chief Justice of this, unofficially. But Mr. Marshall says, 'More than five weeks have elapsed since the opinion of the Supreme Court has declared the necessity of proving the overt acts, if they exist. Why are they not proved.' In what terms of decency can we speak of this? As if an express could go to Natchez, or the mouth of Cumberland, and return in five weeks, to do which has never taken less than twelve. Again, 'If, in November or December last, a body of troops had been assembled on the Ohio, it is impossible to suppose the affidavits, establishing the fact, could not have been obtained by the last of March.' But I ask the Judge, where they should have been lodged? At Frankfort? at Cincinnati? at Nashville? St. Louis? Natchez? New Orleans? These were the probable places of apprehension and examination. It was not known at Washington till the 26th of March, that Burr would escape from the western tribunals, be retaken and brought to an eastern one: and in five days after (neither five months nor five weeks, as the Judge calculated) he says, it is 'impossible to suppose the affidavits could not have been obtained.' Where? At Richmond

he certainly meant, or meant only to throw dust in the eyes of his audience. But all the principles of law are to be perverted which would bear on the favorite offenders, who endeavor to overturn this odious republic. 'I understand,' says the Judge, 'probable cause of guilt to be a case made out of proof furnishing good reason to believe,' &c. Speaking as a lawyer, he must mean legal proof, i.e. proof on oath, at least. But this is confounding probability and proof. We had always before understood that where there was reasonable ground to believe guilt, the offender must be put on his trial. That guilty intentions were probable, the Judge believed. And as to the overt acts, were not the bundle of letters of information in Mr. Rodney's hands, the letters and facts published in the local newspapers, Burr's flight, and the universal belief or rumor of his guilt, probable ground for presuming the facts of enlistment, military guard, rendezvous, threat of civil war, or capitulation, so as to put him on trial? Is there a candid man in the United States who does not believe some one, if not all, of these overt acts to have taken place?

If there ever had been an instance in this or the preceding administrations, of federal judges so applying principles of law as to condemn a federal or acquit a republican offender, I should have judged them in the present case with more charity. All this, however, will work well. The nation will judge both the offender and judges for themselves. If a member of the executive or legislature does wrong, the day is never far distant when the people will remove him. They will see then, and amend the error in our constitution, which makes any branch independent of the nation. They will see that one of the great co-ordinate branches of the government, setting itself in opposition to the other two, and to the common sense of the nation, proclaims impunity to that class of offenders which endeavors to overturn the constitution, and are themselves protected in it by the constitution itself: for impeachment is a farce which will not be tried again. If their protection of Burr produces this amendment, it will do more good than his condemnation would have done. Against Burr, personally, I never had one hostile sentiment. I never, indeed, thought him an honest, frank-dealing man, but considered him as a crooked gun, or other perverted machine, whose aim or shot you could never be sure of. Still, while he possessed the confidence of the nation, I thought it my duty to respect in him their confidence, and to treat him as if he deserved it: and if his punishment can be commuted now for an useful amendment of the constitution, I shall rejoice in it. My sheet being full, I perceive it is high time to offer you my friendly salutations, and assure you of my constant and affectionate esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XLIV.—TO GEORGE HAY, June 2, 1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Washington, June 2, 1807.

Dear Sir,

While Burr's case is depending before the court, I will trouble you from time to time with what occurs to me. I observe that the case of *Marbury v. Madison* has been cited, and I think it material to stop at the threshold the citing that case as authority, and to have it denied to be law. 1. Because the judges, in the outset, disclaimed all cognizance of the case; although they then went on to say what would have been their opinion, had they had cognizance of it. This then was confessedly an extra-judicial opinion, and, as such, of no authority. 2. Because, had it been judicially pronounced, it would have been against law; for to a commission, a deed, a bond, delivery is essential to give validity. Until, therefore, the commission is delivered out of the hands of the executive and his agents, it is not his deed. He may withhold or cancel it at pleasure, as he might his private deed in the same situation. The constitution intended that the three great branches of the government should be co-ordinate, and independent of each other. As to acts, therefore, which are to be done by either, it has given no control to another branch. A judge, I presume, cannot sit on a bench without a commission, or a record of a commission: and the constitution having given to the judiciary branch no means of compelling the executive either to deliver a commission, or to make a record of it, shows it did not intend to give the judiciary that control over the executive, but that it should remain in the power of the latter to do it or not. Where different branches have to act in their respective lines, finally and without appeal, under any law, they may give to it different and opposite constructions. Thus in the case of William Smith, the House of Representatives determined he was a citizen, and in the case of William Duane (precisely the same in every material circumstance) the judges determined he was no citizen. In the cases of Callender and others, the judges determined the sedition act was valid under the constitution, and exercised their regular powers of sentencing them to fine and imprisonment. But the executive determined that the sedition act was a nullity under the constitution, and exercised his regular power of prohibiting the execution of the sentence, or rather of executing the real law, which protected the acts of the defendants. From these different constructions of the same act by different branches, less mischief arises, than from giving to any one of them a control over the others. The executive and Senate act on the construction, that until delivery from the executive department, a commission is in their possession, and within their rightful power; and in cases of commissions not revocable at will, where, after the Senate's approbation and the President's signing and sealing, new information of the unfitness of the person has come to hand before the delivery of the commission, new nominations have been made and approved, and new commissions have issued.

On this construction I have hitherto acted; on this I shall ever act, and maintain it with the powers of the government, against any control which may be attempted by the judges in subversion of the independence of the executive and Senate within their peculiar department. I presume, therefore, that in a case where our decision is by the constitution the supreme one, and that which can be carried into effect, it is the constitutionally authoritative one, and that that by the judges was *coram non judice*, and unauthoritative, because it cannot be carried into effect. I have long wished for a proper occasion to have the gratuitous opinion in *Marbury v. Madison* brought before the public, and denounced as not law: and I think the present a fortunate one, because it occupies such a place in the public attention. I should be glad, therefore, if, in noticing that case, you could take occasion to express the determination of the executive, that the doctrines of that case were given extra-judicially and against law, and that their reverse will be the rule of action with the executive. If this opinion should not be your own, I would wish it to be expressed merely as that of the executive. If it is your

own also, you would of course give to the arguments such a developement, as a case, incidental only, might render proper.

I salute you with friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XLV.—TO ALBERT GALLATIN, June 3, 1807

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO ALBERT GALLATIN.

I gave you, some time ago, a project of a more equal tariff on wines, than that which now exists. But in that I yielded considerably to the faulty classification of them in our law. I have now formed one with attention, and according to the best information I possess, classing them more rigorously. I am persuaded, that were the duty on cheap wines put on the same ratio with the dear, it would wonderfully enlarge the field of those who use wine, to the expulsion of whiskey. The introduction of a very cheap wine (St. George) into my neighborhood, within two years past, has quadrupled in that time the number of those who keep wine, and will ere long increase them tenfold. This would be a great gain to the treasury, and to the sobriety of our country. I will here add my tariff, wherein you will be able to choose any rate of duty you please; and to decide whether it will not, on a fit occasion, be proper for legislative attention. Affectionate salutations.

	cost per gal- lon.	15 per cent.	20 per cent.	25 per cent. be- ing the average of pres- ent du- ties.	30 per cent.	35 per cent.		present duty.	per cent.
Tokay, Cape, Malmsey, Hock, . . .	4 00 60		80	1 00	1 20	1 40	{ Tokay, 45 cents, which is 11 1-4		
							{ Malmsey, 58 " " 14 1-2		
							{ Hock, 35 " " 25		
Champagne, Burgundy, Claret,* Hermitage, 2 75 41 1-4		55	68 3-4	82 1-2	96 1-4		{ Champagne, 45 " " 16 1-2		
							{ Burgundy, 35 " " 12 1-2		
							{ Claret, 58 " " 26 1-2		
							{ Hermitage, 50 " " 27 1-2		
London particular Madeira, . . . . .	2 20 33	44	55	66	77		{ Pacharetti, 23 " " 15		
All other Madeira, . . . . .	1 30 27	36	45	54	63		{ Sherry, 40 " " 26 1-2		
Pacharetti, Sherry, . . . . .	1 50 22 1-2	30	37 1-2	45	52 1-2				
† The wines of Medoc and Grave not before mentioned, those of Palus, Côterotie, Condrieu, Moselle, . . . . .	1 25 18 3-4	25	31 1-4	37 1-2	43 3-4		{ St. Lucar, 35 " " 28		
St. Lucar and all of Portugal, . . . . .	80 12	16	20	24	28		{ Other Spanish, 23 " " 28 3-4		
Sicily, Teneriffe, Fayal, Malaga, St. George, and other Western Islands, . . . . .	67 10	13	16 3-4	20	23		{ Sicily, 23 " " 34		
							{ Teneriffe, &c. 23 " " 41		
All other wines, . . . . .							{ in bottles, 35 } often 400 per cent.		
							{ in casks, 23 }		

\* The term Claret should be abolished, because unknown in the country where it is made, and because indefinite here. The four crops should be enumerated here instead of Claret, and all other wines, to which that appellation has been applied, should fall into the *ad valorem* class. The four crops are Lafitte, Latour, and Margaux, in Medoc, and Hautbrion, in Grave.

† Blanquesfort, Calon, Leoville, Cantenac, &c. are wines of Medoc. Barsac, Sauterne, Beaume, Preignac, St. Bris, Carbonien, Langon, Podensac, &c. are of Grave. All these are of the second order, being next after the four crops.

## LETTER XLVI.—TO GEORGE HAY, June 5, 1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Washington, June 5, 1807.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of the 31st instant has been received, and I think it will be fortunate if any circumstance should produce a discharge of the present scanty grand jury, and a future summons of a fuller: though the same views of protecting the offender may again reduce the number to sixteen, in order to lessen the chance of getting twelve to concur. It is understood, that wherever Burr met with subjects who did not choose to embark in his projects, unless approved by their government, he asserted that he had that approbation. Most of them took his word for it, but it is said that with those who would not, the following stratagem was practised. A forged letter, purporting to be from General Dearborn, was made to express his approbation, and to say that I was absent at Monticello, but that there was no doubt that, on my return, my approbation of his enterprises would be given. This letter was spread open on his table, so as to invite the eye of whoever entered his room; and he contrived occasions of sending up into his room, those whom he wished to become witnesses of his acting under sanction. By this means, he avoided committing himself to any liability to prosecution for forgery, and gave another proof of being a great man in little things, while he is really small in great ones. I must add General Dearborn's declaration, that he never wrote a letter to Burr in his life, except that when here, once in a winter, he usually wrote him a billet of invitation to dine. The only object of sending you the enclosed letters is to possess you of the fact, that you may know how to pursue it, if any of your witnesses should know any thing of it. My intention in writing to you several times, has been to convey facts or observations occurring in the absence of the Attorney General, and not to make to the dreadful drudgery you are going through the unnecessary addition of writing me letters in answer, which I beg you to relieve yourself from, except when some necessity calls for it.

I salute you with friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.



## **LETTER XLVII.—TO DOCTOR HORATIO TURPIN, June 10, 1807**

TO DOCTOR HORATIO TURPIN.

Washington, June 10, 1807.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of June the 1st has been duly received. To a mind like yours, capable in any question of abstracting it from its relation to yourself, I may safely hazard explanations, which I have generally avoided to others, on questions of appointment. Bringing into office no desires of making it subservient to the advancement of my own private interests, it has been no sacrifice, by postponing them, to strengthen the confidence of my fellow-citizens. But I have not felt equal indifference towards excluding merit from office, merely because it was related to me. However, I have thought it my duty so to do, that my constituents may be satisfied, that, in selecting persons for the management of their affairs, I am influenced by neither personal nor family interests, and especially, that the field of public office will not be perverted by me into a family property. On this subject, I had the benefit of useful lessons from my predecessors, had I needed them, marking what was to be imitated and what avoided. But, in truth, the nature of our government is lesson enough. Its energy depending mainly on the confidence of the people, in their Chief Magistrate, makes it his duty to spare nothing which can strengthen him with that confidence.

Accept assurances of my constant friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XLVIII.—TO JOHN NORVELL, June 11, 1807 TO JOHN NORVELL

Washington, June 11, 1807.

Sir,

Your letter of May the 9th has been duly received. The subjects it proposes would require time and space for even moderate developement. My occupations limit me to a very short notice of them. I think there does not exist a good elementary work on the organization of society into civil government: I mean a work which presents in one full and comprehensive view the system of principles on which such an organization should be founded, according to the rights of nature. For want of a single work of that character, I should recommend Locke on Government, Sidney, Priestley's Essay on the First Principles of Government, Chipman's Principles of Government, and the Federalist. Adding, perhaps, Beccaria on Crimes and Punishments, because of the demonstrative manner in which he has treated that branch of the subject. If your views of political inquiry go further, to the subjects of money and commerce, Smith's Wealth of Nations is the best book to be read, unless Say's Political Economy can be had, which treats the same subjects on the same principles, but in a shorter compass, and more lucid manner. But I believe this work has not been translated into our language.

History, in general, only informs us what bad government is. But as we have employed some of the best materials of the British constitution in the construction of our own government, a knowledge of British history becomes useful to the American politician. There is, however, no general history of that country which can be recommended. The elegant one of Hume seems intended to disguise and discredit the good principles of the government, and is so plausible and pleasing in its style and manner, as to instil its errors and heresies insensibly into the minds of unwary readers. Baxter has performed a good operation on it. He has taken the text of Hume as his ground-work, abridging it by the omission of some details of little interest, and wherever he has found him endeavoring to mislead, by either the suppression of a truth, or by giving it a false coloring, he has changed the text to what it should be, so that we may properly call it Hume's history republicanized. He has, moreover, continued the history (but indifferently) from where Hume left it, to the year 1800. The work is not popular in England, because it is republican; and but a few copies have ever reached America. It is a single quarto volume. Adding to this Ludlow's Memoirs, Mrs. Macaulay's and Belknap's histories, a sufficient view will be presented of the free principles of the English constitution.

To your request of my opinion of the manner in which a newspaper should be conducted, so as to be most useful, I should answer, 'by restraining it to true, facts and sound principles only.' Yet I fear such a paper would find few subscribers. It is a melancholy truth, that a suppression of the press could not more completely deprive the nation of its benefits, than is done by its abandoned prostitution to falsehood. Nothing can now be believed which is seen in a newspaper. Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into that polluted vehicle. The real extent of this state of misinformation is known only to those who are in situations to confront facts within their knowledge with the lies of the day. I really look with commiseration over the great body of my fellow-citizens, who, reading newspapers, live and die in the belief, that they have known something of what has been passing in the world in their time; whereas the accounts they have read in newspapers are just as true a history of any other period of the world as of the present, except that the real names of the day are affixed to their fables. General facts may indeed be collected from them, such as that Europe is now at war, that Bonaparte has been a successful warrior, that he has subjected a great portion of Europe to his will, &c. &c.; but no details can be relied on. I will add, that the man who never looks into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them; inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer to truth than

he whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors. He who reads nothing will still learn the great facts, and the details are all false.

Perhaps an editor might begin a reformation in some such way as this. Divide his paper into four chapters, heading the 1st, Truths. 2nd, Probabilities. 3rd, Possibilities. 4th, Lies. The 1st chapter would be very short, as it would contain little more than authentic papers, and information from such sources, as the editor would be willing to risk his own reputation for their truth. The 2nd would contain what, from a mature consideration of all circumstances, his judgment should conclude to be probably true. This, however, should rather contain too little than too much. The 3rd and 4th should be professedly for those readers who would rather have lies for their money than the blank paper they would occupy.

Such an editor too, would have to set his face against the demoralizing practice of feeding the public mind habitually on slander, and the depravity of taste which this nauseous aliment induces. Defamation is becoming a necessary of life; insomuch, that a dish of tea in the morning or evening cannot be digested without this stimulant. Even those who do not believe these abominations, still read them with complaisance to their auditors, and instead of the abhorrence and indignation which should fill a virtuous mind, betray a secret pleasure in the possibility that some may believe them, though they do not themselves. It seems to escape them, that it is not he who prints, but he who pays for printing a slander, who is its real author.

These thoughts on the subjects of your letter are hazarded at your request. Repeated instances of the publication of what has not been intended for the public eye, and the malignity with which political enemies torture every sentence from me into meanings imagined by their own wickedness only, justify my expressing a solicitude, that this hasty communication may in nowise be permitted to find its way into the public papers. Not fearing these political bull-dogs, I yet avoided putting myself in the way of being baited by them, and do not wish to volunteer away that portion of tranquillity, which a firm execution of my duties will permit me to enjoy.

I tender you my salutations, and best wishes for your success.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER XLIX.—TO WILLIAM SHORT, June 12, 1807 TO WILLIAM SHORT

Washington, June 12, 1807.

Dear Sir,

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The proposition in your letter of May the 16th, of adding an umpire to our discordant negotiators at Paris, struck me favorably on reading it, and reflection afterwards strengthened my first impressions. I made it therefore a subject of consultation with my coadjutors, as is our usage. For our government, although in theory subject to be directed by the unadvised will of the President, is, and from its origin has been, a very different thing in practice. The minor business in each department is done by the Head of the department, on consultation with the President alone. But all matters of importance or difficulty are submitted to all the Heads of departments composing the cabinet; sometimes by the President's consulting them separately and successively, as they happen to call on him; but in the greatest cases, by calling them together, discussing the subject maturely, and finally taking the vote, in which the President counts himself but as one. So that in all important cases the executive is, in fact, a directory, which certainly the President might control: but of this there was never an example either in the first or the present administration. I have heard, indeed, that my predecessor sometimes decided things against his council.

I adopted in the present case the mode of separate consultation. The opinion of each member, taken separately, was, that the addition of a third negotiator was not at this time advisable. For the present, therefore, the question must rest. Mr. Bowdoin, we know, is anxious to come home, and is detained only by the delicacy of not deserting his post. In the existing temper between him and his colleague, it would certainly be better that one of them should make an opening for re-composing the commission more harmoniously. I salute you with affection and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER L.—TO GEORGE HAY, June 12, 1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Washington, June 12, 1807.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 9th is this moment received. Reserving the necessary right of the President of the United States to decide, independently of all other authority, what papers, coming to him as President, the public interests permit to be communicated, and to whom, I assure you of my readiness, under that restriction, voluntarily to furnish, on all occasions, whatever the purposes of justice may require. But the letter of General Wilkinson, of October the 21st, requested for the defence of Colonel Burr, with every other paper relating to the charges against him, which were in my possession when the Attorney General went on to Richmond in March, I then delivered to him; and I have always taken for granted he left the whole with you. If he did, and the bundle retains the order in which I had arranged it, you will readily find the letter desired, under the date of its receipt, which was November the 25th: but lest the Attorney General should not have left those papers with you, I this day write to him to forward this one by post. An uncertainty whether he is at Philadelphia, Wilmington, or New Castle, may produce delay in his receiving my letter, of which it is proper you should be apprized. But, as I do not recollect the whole contents of that letter, I must beg leave to devolve on you the exercise of that discretion which it would be my right and duty to exercise, by withholding the communication of any parts of the letter, which are not directly material for the purposes of justice.

With this application, which is specific, a prompt compliance is practicable. But when the request goes to 'copies of the orders issued in relation to Colonel Burr, to the officers at Orleans, Natchez, &c. by the Secretaries of the War and Navy departments,' it seems to cover a correspondence of many months, with such a variety of officers, civil and military, all over the United States, as would amount to the laying open the whole executive books. I have desired the Secretary of War to examine his official communications; and on a view of these, we may be able to judge what can and ought to be done towards a compliance with the request. If the defendant alleges that there was any particular order, which, as a cause, produced any particular act on his part, then he must know what this order was, can specify it, and a prompt answer can be given. If the object had been specified, we might then have had some guide for our conjectures, as to what part of the executive records might be useful to him: but, with a perfect willingness to do what is right, we are without the indications which may enable us to do it. If the researches of the Secretary at War should produce any thing proper for communication, and pertinent to any point we can conceive in the defence before the court, it shall be forwarded to you. I salute you with respect and esteem.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LI.—TO GEORGE HAY, June 17, 1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Washington, June 17, 1807.

Sir,

In answering your letter of the 9th, which desired a communication of one to me from General Wilkinson, specified by its date, I informed you in mine of the 12th that I had delivered it, with all other papers respecting the charges against Aaron Burr, to the Attorney General, when he went to Richmond; that I had supposed he had left them in your possession, but would immediately write to him, if he had not, to forward that particular letter without delay. I wrote to him accordingly on the same day, but having no answer, I know not whether he has forwarded the letter. I stated in the same letter, that I had desired the Secretary at War, to examine his office, in order to comply with your further request, to furnish copies of the orders which had been given respecting Aaron Burr and his property; and in a subsequent letter of the same day, I forwarded to you copies of two letters from the Secretary at War, which appeared to be within the description expressed in your letter. The order from the Secretary of the Navy, you said, you were in possession of. The receipt of these papers had, I presume, so far anticipated, and others this day forwarded will have substantially fulfilled, the object of a subpoena from the District Court of Richmond, requiring that those officers and myself should attend the Court in Richmond, with the letter of General Wilkinson, the answer to that letter, and the orders of the departments of War and the Navy, therein generally described. No answer to General Wilkinson's letter, other than a mere acknowledgment of its receipt, in a letter written for a different purpose, was ever written by myself or any other. To these communications of papers, I will add, that if the defendant supposes there are any facts within the knowledge of the Heads of departments, or of myself, which can be useful for his defence, from a desire of doing any thing our situation will permit in furtherance of justice, we shall be ready to give him the benefit of it, by way of deposition, through any persons whom the Court shall authorize to take our testimony at this place. I know, indeed, that this cannot be done but by consent of parties; and I therefore authorize you to give consent on the part of the United States. Mr. Burr's consent will be given of course, if he supposes the testimony useful.

As to our personal attendance at Richmond, I am persuaded the Court is sensible, that paramount duties to the nation at large control the obligation of compliance with their summons in this case; as they would, should we receive a similar one, to attend the trials of Blannerhassett and others, in the Mississippi territory, those instituted at St. Louis and other places on the western waters, or at any place, other than the seat of government. To comply with such calls would leave the nation without an executive branch, whose agency, nevertheless, is understood to be so constantly necessary, that it is the sole branch which the constitution requires to be always in function. It could not then mean that it should be withdrawn from its station by any co-ordinate authority.

With respect to papers, there is certainly a public and a private side to our offices. To the former belong grants of land, patents for inventions, certain commissions, proclamations, and other papers patent in their nature. To the other belong mere executive proceedings. All nations have found it necessary, that for the advantageous conduct of their affairs, some of these proceedings, at least, should remain known to their executive functionary only. He, of course, from the nature of the case, must be the sole judge of which of them the public interests will permit publication. Hence, under our constitution, in requests of papers, from the legislative to the executive branch, an exception is carefully expressed, as to those which he may deem the public welfare may require not to be disclosed; as you will see in the enclosed resolution of the House of Representatives, which produced the message of January 22nd, respecting this case. The respect mutually due between the constituted authorities, in their official intercourse, as well as sincere dispositions to do for every one what is just, will always insure from the executive, in exercising the duty of discrimination confided to him,

the same candor and integrity to which the nation has in like manner trusted in the disposal of its judiciary authorities. Considering you as the organ for communicating these sentiments to the Court, I address them to you for that purpose, and salute you with esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LII.—TO GEORGE HAY, June 19,1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Washington, June 19,1807.

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 17th was received last night. Three blank pardons had been (as I expect) made up and forwarded by the mail of yesterday, and I have desired three others to go by that of this evening. You ask what is to be done if Bollman finally rejects his pardon, and the Judge decides it to have no effect? Move to commit him immediately for treason or misdemeanor, as you think the evidence will support; let the court decide where he shall be sent for trial; and on application, I will have the marshal aided in his transportation, with the executive means. And we think it proper, further, that when Burr shall have been convicted of either treason or misdemeanor, you should immediately have committed all those persons against whom you should find evidence sufficient, whose agency has been so prominent as to mark them as proper objects of punishment, and especially where their boldness has betrayed an inveteracy of criminal disposition. As to obscure offenders and repenting ones, let them lie for consideration.

I enclose you the copy of a letter received last night, and giving singular information. I have inquired into the character of Graybell. He was an old revolutionary captain, is now a flour merchant in Baltimore, of the most respectable character, and whose word would be taken as implicitly as any man's for whatever he affirms. The letter-writer, also, is a man of entire respectability. I am well informed, that for more than a twelvemonth it has been believed in Baltimore, generally, that Burr was engaged in some criminal enterprise, and that Luther Martin knew all about it. We think you should immediately despatch a subpoena for Graybell; and while that is on the road, you will have time to consider in what form you will use his testimony; e.g. shall Luther Martin be summoned as a witness against Burr, and Graybell held ready to confront him? It may be doubted whether we could examine a witness to discredit our own witness. Besides, the lawyers say that they are privileged from being forced to breaches of confidence, and that no others are. Shall we move to commit Luther Martin, as *particeps criminis* with Burr? Graybell will fix upon him misprision of treason at least. And at any rate, his evidence will put down this unprincipled and impudent federal bull-dog, and add another proof that the most clamorous defenders of Burr are all his accomplices. It will explain why Luther Martin flew so hastily to the aid of 'his honorable friend,' abandoning his clients and their property during a session of a principal court in Maryland, now filled, as I am told, with the clamors and ruin of his clients. I believe we shall send on Latrobe as a witness. He will prove that Aaron Burr endeavored to get him to engage several thousand men, chiefly Irish emigrants, whom he had been in the habit of employing in the works he directs, under pretence of a canal opposite Louisville, or of the Washita, in which, had he succeeded, he could with that force alone have carried every thing before him, and would not have been where he now is. He knows, too, of certain meetings of Burr, Bollman, Yrujo, and one other whom we have never named yet, but have him not the less in our view.

I salute you with friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

P. S. Will you send us half a dozen blank subpoenas?

Since writing the within I have had a conversation with Latrobe. He says it was five hundred men he was desired to engage. The pretexts were to work on the Ohio canal, and be paid in Washita lands. Your witnesses will some of them prove that Burr had no interest in the Ohio canal, and that consequently this was a mere pretext to cover the real object from the men themselves, and all others. Latrobe will set out in the stage of to-morrow evening, and be with you Monday evening. T. J.



**LETTER LIII.—TO GOVERNOR  
SULLIVAN, June 19, 1807  
TO GOVERNOR SULLIVAN**

Washington, June 19, 1807.

Dear Sir,

In acknowledging the receipt of your favor of the 3rd instant, I avail myself of the occasion it offers of tendering to yourself, to Mr. Lincoln, and to your State, my sincere congratulations on the late happy event of the election of a republican executive to preside over its councils. The harmony it has introduced between the legislative and executive branches, between the people and both of them, and between all and the General Government, are so many steps towards securing that union of action and effort in all its parts, without which no nation can be happy or safe. The just respect, with which all the States have ever looked to Massachusetts, could leave none of them without anxiety while she was in a state of alienation from her family and friends. Your opinion of the propriety and advantage of a more intimate correspondence between the executives of the several States, and that of the Union, as a central point, is precisely that which I have ever entertained; and on coming into office I felt the advantages which would result from that harmony. I had it even in contemplation, after the annual recommendation to Congress of those measures called for by the times, which the constitution had placed under their power, to make communications in like manner to the executives of the States, as to any parts of them to which their legislatures might be alone competent. For many are the exercises of power reserved to the States, wherein an uniformity of proceeding would be advantageous to all. Such are quarantines, health laws, regulations of the press, banking institutions, training militia, &c. &c. But you know what was the state of the several governments when I came into office. That a great proportion of them were federal, and would have been delighted with such opportunities of proclaiming their contempt, and of opposing republican men and measures. Opportunities so furnished and used by some of the State governments, would have produced an ill effect, and would have insured the failure of the object of uniform proceeding. If it could be ventured even now (Connecticut and Delaware being still hostile) it must be on some greater occasion than is likely to arise within my time. I look to it, therefore, as a course which will probably be to be left to the consideration of my successor.

I consider, with you, the federalists as completely vanquished, and never more to take the field under their own banners. They will now reserve themselves to profit by the schisms among republicans, and to earn favors from minorities, whom they will enable to triumph over their more numerous antagonists. So long as republican minorities barely accept their votes, no great harm will be done; because it will only place in power one shade of republicanism, instead of another. But when they purchase the votes of the federalists, by giving them a participation of office, trust, and power, it is a proof that anti-monarchism is not their strongest passion. I do not think that the republican minority in Pennsylvania has fallen into this heresy, nor that there are in your State materials of which a minority can be made who will fall into it.

With respect to the tour my friends to the north have proposed that I should make in that quarter, I have not made up a final opinion. The course of life which General Washington had run, civil and military, the services he had rendered, and the space he therefore occupied in the affections of his fellow-citizens, take from his examples the weight of precedents for others, because no others can arrogate to themselves the claims which he had on the public homage. To myself, therefore, it comes as a new question, to be viewed under all the phases it may present. I confess, that I am not reconciled to the idea of a chief magistrate parading himself through the several States as an object of public gaze, and in quest of an applause, which, to be valuable, should be purely voluntary. I had

rather acquire silent good will by a faithful discharge of my duties, than owe expressions of it to my putting myself in the way of receiving them. Were I to make such a tour to Portsmouth or Portland, I must do it to Savannah, perhaps to Orleans and Frankfort. As I have never yet seen the time when the public business would have permitted me to be so long in a situation in which I could not carry it on, so I have no reason to expect that such a time will come while I remain in office. A journey to Boston or Portsmouth, after I shall be a private citizen, would much better harmonize with my feelings, as well as duties; and, founded in curiosity, would give no claims to an extension of it. I should see my friends, too, more at our mutual ease, and be left more exclusively to their society. However, I end as I began, by declaring I have made up no opinion on the subject, and that I reserve it as a question for future consideration and advice.

In the mean time, and at all times, I salute you with great respect and esteem,

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LIV.—TO GEORGE HAY, June 20, 1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Washington, June 20, 1807.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Latrobe now comes on as a witness against Burr. His presence here is with great inconvenience dispensed with, as one hundred and fifty workmen require his constant directions on various public works of pressing importance. I hope you will permit him to come away as soon as possible. How far his testimony will be important as to the prisoner, I know not; but I am desirous that those meetings of Yrujo with Burr and his principal accomplices should come fully out, and judicially, as they will establish the just complaints we have against his nation.

I did not see till last night the opinion of the Judge on the *subpoena duces tecum* against the President. Considering the question there as *coram non judice*, I did not read his argument with much attention. Yet I saw readily enough, that, as is usual, where an opinion is to be supported, right or wrong, he dwells much on smaller objections, and passes over those which are solid. Laying down the position generally, that all persons owe obedience to subpoenas, he admits no exception unless it can be produced in his law books. But if the constitution enjoins on a particular officer to be always engaged in a particular set of duties imposed on him, does not this supersede the general law, subjecting him to minor duties inconsistent with these? The constitution enjoins his constant agency in the concerns of six millions of people. Is the law paramount to this, which calls on him on behalf of a single one? Let us apply the Judge's own doctrine to the case of himself and his brethren. The sheriff of Henrico summons him from the bench, to quell a riot somewhere in his county. The federal judge is, by the general law, a part of the posse of the State sheriff. Would the Judge abandon major duties to perform lesser ones? Again; the court of Orleans or Maine commands, by subpoenas, the attendance of all the judges of the Supreme Court. Would they abandon their posts as judges, and the interests of millions committed to them, to serve the purposes of a single individual? The leading principle of our constitution is the independence of the legislature, executive, and judiciary, of each other, and none are more jealous of this than the judiciary. But would the executive be independent of the judiciary, if he were subject to the commands of the latter, and to imprisonment for disobedience; if the several courts could bandy him from pillar to post, keep him constantly trudging from north to south, and east to west, and withdraw him entirely from his constitutional duties? The intention of the constitution, that each branch should be independent of the others, is further manifested by the means it has furnished to each, to protect itself from enterprises of force attempted on them by the others, and to none has it given more effectual or diversified means than to the executive. Again; because ministers can go into a court in London, as witnesses, without interruption to their executive duties, it is inferred that they would go to a court one thousand or one thousand five hundred miles off, and that ours are to be dragged from Maine to Orleans by every criminal who will swear that their testimony 'may be of use to him.' The Judge says, 'it is apparent that the President's duties, as chief magistrate, do not demand his whole time, and are not unremitting.' If he alludes to our annual retirement from the seat of government, during the sickly season, he should be told that such arrangements are made for carrying on the public business, at and between the several stations we take, that it goes on as unremittingly there, as if we were at the seat of government. I pass more hours in public business at Monticello than I do here, every day; and it is much more laborious, because all must be done in writing. Our stations being known, all communications come to them regularly, as to fixed points. It would be very different were we always on the road, or placed in the noisy and crowded taverns where courts are held. Mr. Rodney is expected here every hour, having been kept away by a sick child. I salute you with friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LV.—TO DOCTOR WISTAR, June 21, 1807

TO DOCTOR WISTAR.

Washington, June 21, 1807.

Dear Sir,

I have a grandson, the son of Mr. Randolph, now about fifteen years of age, in whose education I take a lively interest.

I am not a friend to placing young men in populous cities, because they acquire there habits and partialities which do not contribute to the happiness of their after life. But there are particular branches of science, which are not so advantageously taught any where else in the United States as in Philadelphia. The garden at the Woodlands for Botany, Mr. Peale's Museum for Natural History, your Medical School for Anatomy, and the able professors in all of them, give advantages not to be found elsewhere. We propose, therefore, to send him to Philadelphia to attend the schools of Botany, Natural History, Anatomy, and perhaps Surgery; but not of Medicine. And why not of Medicine, you will ask? Being led to the subject, I will avail myself of the occasion to express my opinions on that science, and the extent of my medical creed. But, to finish first with respect to my grandson, I will state the favor I ask of you, and which is the object of this letter.

This subject dismissed, I may now take up that which it led to, and further tax your patience with unlearned views of medicine; which, as in most cases, are, perhaps, the more confident in proportion as they are less enlightened.

We know, from what we see and feel, that the animal body is in its organs and functions subject to derangement, inducing pain, and tending to its destruction. In this disordered state, we observe nature providing for the re-establishment of order, by exciting some salutary evacuation of the morbid matter, or by some other operation which escapes our imperfect senses and researches. She brings on a crisis, by stools, vomiting, sweat, urine, expectoration, bleeding, &c, which, for the most part, ends in the restoration of healthy action. Experience has taught us also, that there are certain substances, by which, applied to the living body, internally or externally, we can at will produce these same evacuations, and thus do, in a short time, what nature would do but slowly, and do effectually, what perhaps she would not have strength to accomplish. Where, then, we have seen a disease, characterized by specific signs or phenomena, and relieved by a certain natural evacuation or process, whenever that disease recurs under the same appearances, we may reasonably count on producing a solution of it, by the use of such substances as we have found produce the same evacuation or movement. Thus, fulness of the stomach we can relieve by emetics; diseases of the bowels, by purgatives; inflammatory cases, by bleeding; intermittents, by the Peruvian bark; syphilis, by mercury; watchfulness, by opium; &c. So far, I bow to the utility of medicine. It goes to the well defined forms of disease, and happily, to those the most frequent. But the disorders of the animal body, and the symptoms indicating them, are as various as the elements of which the body is composed. The combinations, too, of these symptoms are so infinitely diversified, that many associations of them appear too rarely to establish a definite disease: and to an unknown disease, there cannot be a known remedy. Here, then, the judicious, the moral, the humane physician should stop. Having been so often a witness to the salutary efforts which nature makes to re-establish the disordered functions, he should rather trust to their action, than hazard the interruption of that, and a greater derangement of the system, by conjectural experiments on a machine so complicated and so unknown as the human body, and a subject so sacred as human life. Or, if the appearance of doing something be necessary to keep alive the hope and spirits of the patient, it should be of the most innocent character. One of the most successful physicians I have ever known, has assured me, that he used more bread pills, drops of colored water, and powders of hickory ashes, than of all other medicines put together. It was certainly a pious fraud. But the adventurous physician goes on, and substitutes presumption for

knowledge. From the scanty field of what is known, he launches into the boundless region of what is unknown. He establishes for his guide some fanciful theory of corpuscular attraction, of chemical agency, of mechanical powers, of stimuli, of irritability accumulated or exhausted, of depletion by the lancet, and repletion by mercury, or some other ingenious dream, which lets him into all nature's secrets at short hand. On the principle which he thus assumes, he forms his table of nosology, arrays his diseases into families, and extends his curative treatment, by analogy, to all the cases he has thus arbitrarily marshaled together. I have lived myself to see the disciples of Hoffman, Boerhaave, Stahl, Cullen, Brown, succeed one another like the shifting figures of a magic-lantern, and their fancies like the dresses of the annual doll-babies from Paris, becoming, from their novelty, the vogue of the day, and yielding to the next novelty their ephemeral favor. The patient, treated on the fashionable theory, sometimes gets well in spite of the medicine. The medicine therefore restored him, and the young doctor receives new courage to proceed in his bold experiments on the lives of his fellow creatures. I believe we may safely affirm, that the inexperienced and presumptuous band of medical tyros let loose upon the world, destroys more of human life in one year, than all the Robin-hoods, Cartouches, and Macheaths do in a century. It is in this part of medicine that I wish to see a reform, an abandonment of hypothesis for sober facts, the first degree of value set on clinical observation, and the lowest on visionary theories. I would wish the young practitioner, especially, to have deeply impressed on his mind the real limits of his art, and that when the state of his patient gets beyond these, his office is to be a watchful, but quiet spectator of the operations of nature, giving them fair play by a well regulated regimen, and by all the aid they can derive from the excitement of good spirits and hope in the patient. I have no doubt, that some diseases not yet understood may in time be transferred to the table of those known. But, were I a physician, I would rather leave the transfer to the slow hand of accident, than hasten it by guilty experiments on those who put their lives into my hands. The only sure foundations of medicine are, an intimate knowledge of the human body, and observation on the effects of medicinal substances on that. The anatomical and clinical schools, therefore, are those in which the young physician should be formed. If he enters with innocence that of the theory of medicine, it is scarcely possible he should come out untainted with error. His mind must be strong indeed, if, rising above juvenile credulity, it can maintain a wise infidelity against the authority of his instructors, and the bewitching delusions of their theories. You see that I estimate justly that portion of instruction, which our medical students derive from your labors; and, associating with it one of the chairs which my old and able friend, Doctor Rush, so honorably fills, I consider them as the two fundamental pillars of the edifice. Indeed, I have such an opinion of the talents of the professors in the other branches which constitute the school of medicine with you, as to hope and believe, that it is from this side of the Atlantic, that Europe, which has taught us so many other things, will at length be led into sound principles in this branch of science, the most important of all others, being that to which we commit the care of health and life.

I dare say, that by this time you are sufficiently sensible that old heads, as well as young, may sometimes be charged with ignorance and presumption. The natural course of the human mind is certainly from credulity to scepticism: and this is perhaps the most favorable apology I can make for venturing so far out of my depth, and to one, too, to whom the strong as well as the weak points of this science are so familiar. But having stumbled on the subject in my way, I wished to give a confession of my faith to a friend; and the rather, as I had perhaps, at times, to him as well as others, expressed my scepticism in medicine, without defining its extent or foundation. At any rate, it has permitted me, for a moment, to abstract myself from the dry and dreary waste of politics, into which I have been impressed by the times on which I happened, and to indulge in the rich fields of nature, where alone I should have served as a volunteer, if left to my natural inclinations and partialities.

I salute you at all times with affection and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LVI.—TO MR. BOWDOIN, July 10, 1807

TO MR. BOWDOIN.

Washington, July 10, 1807.

Dear Sir,

I wrote you on the 10th of July, 1806; but supposing, from your not acknowledging the receipt of the letter, that it had miscarried, I sent a duplicate with my subsequent one of April the 2nd. These having gone by the Wasp, you will doubtless have received them. Since that, yours of May the 1st has come to hand. You will see by the despatches from the department of State, carried by the armed vessel the Revenge, into what a critical state our peace with Great Britain is suddenly brought, by their armed vessels in our waters. Four vessels of war (three of them two-deckers) closely blockade Norfolk at this instant. Of the authority under which this aggression is committed, their minister here is unapprized. You will see by the proclamation of July the 2nd, that (while we are not omitting such measures of force as are immediately necessary) we propose to give Great Britain an opportunity of disavowal and reparation, and to leave the question of war, non-intercourse, or other measures, uncommitted, to the legislature. This country has never been in such a state of excitement since the battle of Lexington. In this state of things, cordial friendship with France, and peace at least with Spain, become more interesting. You know the circumstances respecting this last power, which have rendered it ineligible that you should have proceeded heretofore to your destination. But this obstacle is now removed by their recall of Yrujo, and appointment of another minister, and, in the mean time, of a *chargé des affaires*, who has been received. The way being now open for taking your station at Madrid, it is certainly our wish you should do so, and that this may be more agreeable to you than your return home, as is solicited in yours of May the 1st. It is with real unwillingness we should relinquish the benefit of your services. Nevertheless, if your mind is decidedly bent on that, we shall regret, but not oppose your return. The choice, therefore, remains with yourself. In the mean time, your place in the joint commission being vacated by either event, we shall take the measures rendered necessary by that. We have seen, with real grief, the misunderstanding which has taken place between yourself and General Armstrong. We are neither qualified nor disposed to form an opinion between you. We regret the pain which must have been felt by persons, both of whom hold so high a place in our esteem, and we have not been without fear that the public interest might suffer by it. It has seemed, however, that the state of Europe has been such as to admit little to be done, in matters so distant from them.

The present alarm has had the effect of suspending our foreign commerce. No merchant ventures to send out a single vessel; and I think it probable this will continue very much the case till we get an answer from England. Our crops are uncommonly plentiful. That of small grain is now secured south of this, and the harvest is advancing here.

Accept my salutations, and assurances of affectionate esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LVII.—TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE, July 14, 1807

TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

Washington, July 14, 1807.

My Dear Friend,

I received last night your letters of February the 20th and April the 29th, and a vessel just sailing from Baltimore enables me hastily to acknowledge them; to assure you of the welcome with which I receive whatever comes from you, and the continuance of my affectionate esteem for yourself and family. I learn with much concern, indeed, the state of Madame de la Fayette's health. I hope I have the pleasure yet to come of learning its entire re-establishment. She is too young not to give great confidence to that hope.

Measuring happiness by the American scale, and sincerely wishing that of yourself and family, we had been anxious to see them established on this side of the great water. But I am not certain that any equivalent can be found for the loss of that species of society, to which our habits have been formed from infancy. Certainly had you been, as I wished, at the head of the government of Orleans, Burr would never have given me one moment's uneasiness. His conspiracy has been one of the most flagitious of which history will ever furnish an example. He meant to separate the western States from us, to add Mexico to them, place himself at their head, establish what he would deem an energetic government, and thus provide an example and an instrument for the subversion of our freedom. The man who could expect to effect this, with American materials, must be a fit subject for Bedlam. The seriousness of the crime, however, demands more serious punishment. Yet, although there is not a man in the United States who doubts his guilt, such are the jealous provisions of our laws in favor of the accused against the accuser, that I question if he is convicted. Out of forty-eight jurors to be summoned, he is to select the twelve who are to try him, and if there be any one who will not concur in finding him guilty, he is discharged of course. I am sorry to tell you that Bollman was Burr's right hand man in all his guilty schemes. On being brought to prison here, he communicated to Mr. Madison and myself the whole of the plans, always, however, apologetically for Burr as far as they would bear. But his subsequent tergiversations have proved him conspicuously base. I gave him a pardon, however, which covers him from every thing but infamy. I was the more astonished at his engaging in this business, from the peculiar motives he should have felt for fidelity. When I came into the government, I sought him out on account of the services he has rendered you, cherished him, offered him two different appointments of value, which, after keeping them long under consideration, he declined for commercial views, and would have given him any thing for which he was fit. Be assured he is unworthy of ever occupying again the care of any honest man. Nothing has ever so strongly proved the innate force of our form of government, as this conspiracy. Burr had probably engaged one thousand men to follow his fortunes, without letting them know his projects, otherwise than by assuring them the government approved of them. The moment a proclamation was issued, undeceiving them, he found himself left with about thirty desperadoes only. The people rose in mass wherever he was or was suspected to be, and by their own energy the thing was crushed in one instant, without its having been necessary to employ a man of the military but to take care of their respective stations. His first enterprise was to have been to seize New Orleans, which he supposed would powerfully bridle the upper country, and place him at the door of Mexico. It is with pleasure I inform you that not a single native Creole, and but one American of those settled there before we received the place, took any part with him. His partisans were the new emigrants from the United States and elsewhere, fugitives from justice or debt, and adventurers and speculators of all descriptions.

I enclose you a proclamation, which will show you the critical footing on which we stand, at present, with England. Never, since the battle of Lexington, have I seen this country in such a state of exasperation as at present. And even that did not produce such unanimity. The federalists themselves coalesce with us as to the object, although they will return to their old trade of condemning every step we take towards obtaining it. 'Reparation for the past, and security for the future,' is our motto. Whether these will be yielded freely, or will require resort to non-intercourse, or to war, is yet to be seen. We have actually near two thousand men in the field, covering the exposed parts of the coast, and cutting off supplies from the British vessels.

I am afraid I have been very unsuccessful in my endeavors to serve Madame de Tesse in her taste for planting. A box of seeds, &c. which I sent her in the close of 1805, was carried with the vessel into England, and discharged so late that I fear she lost their benefit, for that season. Another box, which I prepared in the autumn of 1806, has, I fear, been equally delayed from other accidents. However, I will persevere in my endeavors.

Present me respectfully to her, M. de Tesse, Madame de la Fayette, and your family, and accept my affectionate salutations, and assurances of constant esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.



## LETTER LVIII.—TO JOHN PAGE, July 17, 1807

TO JOHN PAGE.

Washington, July 17, 1807.

My Dear Friend,

Yours of the 11th is received. In appointments to public offices of mere profit, I have ever considered faithful service in either our first or second revolution as giving preference of claim, and that appointments on that principle would gratify the public, and strengthen that confidence so necessary to enable the executive to direct the whole public force to the best, advantage of the nation. Of Mr. Boiling Robertson's talents and integrity I have long been apprized, and would gladly use them where talents and integrity are wanting. I had thought of him for the vacant place of secretary of the Orleans territory, but supposing the salary of two thousand dollars not more than he makes by his profession, and while remaining with his friends, I have, in despair, not proposed it to him. If he would accept it, I should name him instantly with the greatest satisfaction. Perhaps you could inform me on this point.

With respect to Major Gibbons, I do indeed recollect, that in some casual conversation, it was said that the most conspicuous accomplices of Burr were at home at his house; but it made so little impression on me, that neither the occasion nor the person is now recollected. On this subject, I have often expressed the principles on which I act, with a wish they might be understood by the federalists in office. I have never removed a man merely because he was a federalist: I have never wished them to give a vote at an election, but according to their own wishes. But as no government could discharge its duties to the best advantage of its citizens, if its agents were in a regular course of thwarting instead of executing all its measures, and were employing the patronage and influence of their offices against the government and its measures, I have only requested they would be quiet, and they should be safe: and if their conscience urges them to take an active and zealous part in opposition, it ought also to urge them to retire from a post which they could not conscientiously conduct with fidelity to the trust reposed in them; and on failure to retire, I have removed them; that is to say, those who maintained an active and zealous opposition to the government. Nothing which I have yet heard of Major Gibbons places him in danger from these principles.

I am much pleased with the ardor displayed by our countrymen on the late British outrage. It gives us the more confidence of support in the demand of reparation for the past, and security for the future, that is to say, an end of impressments. If motives of either justice or interest should produce this from Great Britain, it will save a war: but if they are refused, we shall have gained time for getting in our ships and property, and at least twenty thousand seamen now afloat on the ocean, and who may man two hundred and fifty privateers. The loss of these to us would be worth to Great Britain many victories of the Nile and Trafalgar. The mean time may also be importantly employed in preparations to enable us to give quick and deep blows.

Present to Mrs. Page, and receive yourself my affectionate and respectful salutations.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LIX.—TO WILLIAM DUANE, July 20, 1807

TO WILLIAM DUANE.

Washington, July 20, 1807.

Sir,

Although I cannot always acknowledge the receipt of communications, yet I merit their continuance by making all the use of them of which they are susceptible. Some of your suggestions had occurred, and others will be considered. The time is coming when our friends must enable us to hear every thing, and expect us to say nothing; when we shall need all their confidence that every thing is doing which can be done, and when our greatest praise shall be, that we appear to be doing nothing. The law for detaching one hundred thousand militia, and the appropriation for it, and that for fortifications, enable us to do every thing for land service, as well as if Congress were here; and as to naval matters, their opinion is known. The course we have pursued, has gained for our merchants a precious interval to call in their property and our seamen, and the postponing the summons of Congress will aid in avoiding to give too quick an alarm to the adversary. They will be called, however, in good time. Although we demand of England what is merely of right, reparation for the past, security for the future, yet as their pride will possibly, nay probably, prevent their yielding them to the extent we shall require, my opinion is, that the public mind, which I believe is made up for war, should maintain itself at that point. They have often enough, God knows, given us cause of war before; but it has been on points which would not have united the nation. But now they have touched a chord which vibrates in every heart. Now then is the time to settle the old and the new.

I have often wished for an occasion of saying a word to you on the subject of the Emperor of Russia, of whose character and value to us, I suspect you are not apprized correctly. A more virtuous man, I believe, does not exist, nor one who is more enthusiastically devoted to better the condition of mankind. He will probably, one day, fall a victim to it, as a monarch of that principle does not suit a Russian noblesse. He is not of the very first order of understanding, but he is of a high one. He has taken a peculiar affection to this country and its government, of which he has given me public as well as personal proofs. Our nation being like his, habitually neutral, our interests as to neutral rights, and our sentiments, agree. And whenever conferences for peace shall take place, we are assured of a friend in him. In fact, although in questions of restitution he will be with England, in those of neutral rights he will be with Bonaparte and every other power in the world, except England: and I do presume that England will never have peace until she subscribes to a just code of marine law. I have gone into this subject, because I am confident that Russia (while her present monarch lives) is the most cordially friendly to us of any power on earth, will go furthest to serve us, and is most worthy of conciliation. And although the source of this information must be a matter of confidence with you, yet it is desirable that the sentiments should become those of the nation. I salute you with esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LX.—TO GEORGE HAY, August 20, 1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Monticello, August 20, 1807.

Dear Sir,

I received yesterday your favor of the 11th. An error of the post-office had occasioned the delay. Before an impartial jury Burr's conduct would convict himself, were not one word of testimony to be offered against him. But to what a state will our law be reduced by party feelings in those who administer it? Why do not Blannerhasset, Dayton, &c. demand private and comfortable lodgings? In a country where an equal application of law to every condition of man is fundamental, how could it be denied to them? How can it ever be denied to the most degraded malefactor? The enclosed letter of James Morrison, covering a copy of one from Alston to Blannerhasset, came to hand yesterday. I enclose them, because it is proper all these papers should be in one deposite, and because you should know the case and all its bearings, that you may understand whatever turns up in the cause. Whether the opinion of the letter-writer is sound, may be doubted. For however these, and other circumstances which have come to us, may induce us to believe that the bouncing letter he published, and the insolent one he wrote to me, were intended as blinds, yet they are not sufficient for legal conviction. Blannerhasset and his wife could possibly tell us enough. I commiserate the sufferings you have to go through in such a season, and salute you with great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXI.—TO GEORGE HAY, September 4, 1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Monticello, September 4, 1807.

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 1st came to hand yesterday. The event has been – that is to say, not only to clear Burr, but to prevent the evidence from ever going before the world. But this latter case must not take place. It is now, therefore, more than ever indispensable, that not a single witness be paid or permitted to depart, until his testimony has been committed to writing, either as delivered in court, or as taken by yourself in the presence of any of Burr's counsel, who may choose to attend to cross-examine. These whole proceedings will be laid before Congress, that they may decide, whether the defect has been in the evidence of guilt, or in the law, or in the application of the law, and that they may provide the proper remedy for the past and the future. I must pray you also to have an authentic copy of the record made out (without saying for what) and to send it to me: if the Judge's opinions make not a part of it, then I must ask a copy of them, either under his hand, if he delivers one signed, or duly proved by affidavit.

This criminal is preserved to become the rallying point of all the disaffected and the worthless of the United States, and to be the pivot on which all the intrigues and the conspiracies which foreign governments may wish to disturb us with, are to turn. If he is convicted of the misdemeanor, the Judge must in decency give us respite by some short confinement of him; but we must expect it to be very short. Be assured yourself, and communicate the same assurances to your colleagues, that your and their zeal and abilities have been displayed in this affair to my entire satisfaction and your own honor.

I salute you with great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXII.—TO GEORGE HAY, September 7, 1807

TO GEORGE HAY.

Monticello, September 7, 1807.

Dear Sir,

I received, late last night, your favor of the day before, and now re-enclose you the subpoena. As I do not believe that the district courts have a power of commanding the executive government to abandon superior duties and attend on them, at whatever distance, I am unwilling, by any notice of the subpoena, to set a precedent which might sanction a proceeding so preposterous. I enclose you, therefore, a letter, public and for the court, covering substantially all they ought to desire. If the papers which were enclosed in Wilkinson's letter may, in your judgment, be communicated without injury, you will be pleased to communicate them. I return you the original letter.

I am happy in having the benefit of Mr. Madison's counsel on this occasion, he happening to be now with me. We are both strongly of opinion, that the prosecution against Burr for misdemeanor should proceed at Richmond. If defeated, it will heap coals of fire on the head of the Judge: if successful, it will give time to see whether a prosecution for treason against him can be instituted in any, and what other court. But, we incline to think, it may be best to send Blannerhasset and Smith (Israel) to Kentucky, to be tried both for the treason and misdemeanor. The trial of Dayton for misdemeanor may as well go on at Richmond.

I salute you with great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## **LETTER LXIII.—TO THE REV. MR. MILLAR, January 23, 1808**

TO THE REV. MR. MILLAR,

Washington, January 23, 1808.

Sir,

I have duly received your favor of the 18th, and am thankful to you for having written it, because it is more agreeable to prevent than to refuse what I do not think myself authorized to comply with. I consider the government of the United States as interdicted by the constitution from intermeddling with religious institutions, their doctrines, discipline, or exercises. This results not only from the provision that no law shall be made respecting the establishment or free exercise of religion, but from that also which reserves to the States the powers not delegated to the United States. Certainly, no power to prescribe any religious exercise, or to assume authority in religious discipline, has been delegated to the General Government. It must then rest with the States, as far as it can be in any human authority. But it is only proposed that I should recommend, not prescribe, a day of fasting and prayer. That is, that I should indirectly assume to the United States an authority over religious exercises, which the constitution has directly precluded them from. It must be meant, too, that this recommendation is to carry some authority, and to be sanctioned by some penalty on those who disregard it; not indeed of fine and imprisonment, but of some degree of proscription, perhaps in public opinion. And does the change in the nature of the penalty make the recommendation the less a law of conduct for those to whom it is directed? I do not believe it is for the interest of religion to invite the civil magistrate to direct its exercises, its discipline, or its doctrines; nor of the religious societies, that the General Government should be invested with the power of effecting any uniformity of time or matter among them. Fasting and prayer are religious exercises; the enjoining them an act of discipline. Every religious society has a right to determine for itself the times for these exercises, and the objects proper for them, according to their own particular tenets; and this right can never be safer than in their own hands, where the constitution has deposited it.

I am aware that the practice of my predecessors may be quoted. But I have ever believed, that the example of State executives led to the assumption of that authority by the General Government, without due examination, which would have discovered that what might be a right in a State government, was a violation of that right when assumed by another. Be this as it may, every one must act according to the dictates of his own reason, and mine tells me that civil powers alone have been given to the President of the United States, and no authority to direct the religious exercises of his constituents.

I again express my satisfaction that you have been so good as to give me an opportunity of explaining myself in a private letter, in which I could give my reasons more in detail than might have been done in a public answer: and I pray you to accept the assurances of my high esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXIV.—TO COLONEL MONROE, February 18, 1808

TO COLONEL MONROE.

Washington, February 18, 1808.

My Dear Sir,

You informed me that the instruments you had been so kind as to bring for me from England, would arrive at Richmond with your baggage, and you wished to know what was to be done with them there. I will ask the favor of you to deliver them to Mr. Jefferson, who will forward them to Monticello in the way I shall advise him. And I must intreat you to send me either a note of their amount, or the bills, that I may be enabled to reimburse you. There can be no pecuniary matter between us, against which this can be any set-off. But if, contrary to my recollection or knowledge, there were any thing, I pray that that may be left to be settled by itself. If I could have known the amount beforehand, I should have remitted it, and asked the advance only under the idea that it should be the same as ready money to you on your arrival. I must again, therefore, beseech you to let me know its amount.

I see with infinite grief a contest arising between yourself and another, who have been very dear to each other, and equally so to me. I sincerely pray that these dispositions may not be affected between you; with me I confidently trust they will not. For independently of the dictates of public duty, which prescribes neutrality to me, my sincere friendship for you both will insure its sacred observance. I suffer no one to converse with me on the subject. I already perceive my old friend Clinton estranging himself from me. No doubt lies are carried to him, as they will be to the other two candidates, under forms, which, however false he can scarcely question. Yet I have been equally careful as to him also, never to say a word on his subject. The object of the contest is a fair and honorable one, equally open to you all; and I have no doubt the personal conduct of all will be so chaste, as to offer no ground of dissatisfaction with each other. But your friends will not be as delicate. I know too well from experience the progress of political controversy, and the exacerbation of spirit into which it degenerates, not to fear for the continuance of your mutual esteem. One piquing thing said, draws on another, that a third, and always with increasing acrimony, until all restraint is thrown off, and it becomes difficult for yourselves to keep clear of the toils in which your friends will endeavor to interlace you, and to avoid the participation in their passions which they will endeavor to produce. A candid recollection of what you know of each other will be the true corrective. With respect to myself, I hope they will spare me. My longings for retirement are so strong, that I with difficulty encounter the daily drudgeries of my duty. But my wish for retirement itself is not stronger than that of carrying into it the affections of all my friends. I have ever viewed Mr. Madison and yourself as two principal pillars of my happiness. Were either to be withdrawn, I should consider it as among the greatest calamities which could assail my future peace of mind. I have great confidence that the candor and high understanding of both will guard me against this misfortune, the bare possibility of which has so far weighed on my mind, that I could not be easy without unburthening it.

Accept my respectful salutations for yourself and Mrs. Monroe, and be assured of my constant and sincere friendship.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXV.—TO COLONEL MONROE, March 10, 1808

TO COLONEL MONROE.

Washington, March 10, 1808.

Dear Sir,

From your letter of the 27th ultimo, I perceive that painful impressions have been made on your mind during your late mission, of which I had never entertained a suspicion. I must, therefore, examine the grounds, because explanations between reasonable men can never but do good. 1. You consider the mission of Mr. Pinckney as an associate, to have been in some way injurious to you. Were I to take that measure on myself, I might say in its justification, that it has been the regular and habitual practice of the United States to do this, under every form in which their government has existed. I need not recapitulate the multiplied instances, because you will readily recollect them. I went as an adjunct to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, yourself as an adjunct first to Mr. Livingston, and then to Mr. Pinckney, and I really believe there has scarcely been a great occasion which has not produced an extraordinary mission. Still, however, it is well known, that I was strongly opposed to it in the case of which you complain. A committee of the Senate called on me with two resolutions of that body on the subject of impressment and spoliations by Great Britain, and requesting that I would demand satisfaction. After delivering the resolutions, the committee entered into free conversation, and observed, that although the Senate could not, in form, recommend any extraordinary mission, yet that as individuals, there was but one sentiment among them on the measure, and they pressed it. I was so much averse to it, and gave them so hard an answer, that they felt it, and spoke of it. But it did not end here. The members of the other House took up the subject, and set upon me individually, and these the best friends to you, as well as myself, and represented the responsibility which a failure to obtain redress would throw on us both, pursuing a conduct in opposition to the opinion of nearly every member of the legislature. I found it necessary, at length, to yield my own opinion, to the general sense of the national council, and it really seemed to produce a jubilee among them; not from any want of confidence in you, but from a belief in the effect which an extraordinary mission would have on the British mind, by demonstrating the degree of importance which this country attached to the rights which we considered as infringed.

2. You complain of the manner in which the treaty was received. But what was that manner? I cannot suppose you to have given a moment's credit to the stuff which was crowded in all sorts of forms into the public papers, or to the thousand speeches they put into my mouth, not a word of which I had ever uttered. I was not insensible at the time of the views to mischief, with which these lies were fabricated. But my confidence was firm, that neither yourself nor the British government, equally outraged by them, would believe me capable of making the editors of newspapers the confidants of my speeches or opinions. The fact was this. The treaty was communicated to us by Mr. Erskine on the day Congress was to rise. Two of the Senators inquired of me in the evening, whether it was my purpose to detain them on account of the treaty. My answer was, 'that it was not: that the treaty containing no provision against the impressment of our seamen, and being accompanied by a kind of protestation of the British ministers, which would leave that government free to consider it as a treaty or no treaty, according to their own convenience, I should not give them the trouble of deliberating on it.' This was substantially, and almost verbally, what I said whenever spoken to about it, and I never failed when the occasion would admit of it, to justify yourself and Mr. Pinckney, by expressing my conviction, that it was all that could be obtained from the British government; that you had told their commissioners that your government could not be pledged to ratify, because it was contrary to their instructions; of course, that it should be considered but as a projet; and in this light I



stated it publicly in my message to Congress on the opening of the session. Not a single article of the treaty was ever made known beyond the members of the administration, nor would an article of it be known at this day, but for its publication in the newspapers, as communicated by somebody from beyond the water, as we have always understood. But as to myself, I can solemnly protest, as the most sacred of truths, that I never, one instant, lost sight of your reputation and favorable standing with your country, and never omitted to justify your failure to attain our wish, as one which was probably unattainable. Reviewing, therefore, this whole subject, I cannot doubt you will become sensible, that your impressions have been without just ground. I cannot, indeed, judge what falsehoods may have been written or told you; and that, under such forms as to command belief. But you will soon find, my dear Sir, that so inveterate is the rancor of party spirit among us, that nothing ought to be credited but what we hear with our own ears. If you are less on your guard than we are here, at this moment, the designs of the mischief-makers will not fail to be accomplished, and brethren and friends will be made strangers and enemies to each other, without ever having said or thought a thing amiss of each other. I presume that the most insidious falsehoods are daily carried to you, as they are brought to me, to engage us in the passions of our informers, and stated so positively and plausibly as to make even doubt a rudeness to the narrator; who, imposed on himself, has no other than the friendly view of putting us on our guard. My answer is, invariably, that my knowledge of your character is better testimony to me of a negative, than any affirmative which my informant did not hear from yourself with his own ears. In fact, when you shall have been a little longer among us, you will find that little is to be believed which interests the prevailing passions, and happens beyond the limits of our own senses. Let us not then, my dear friend, embark our happiness and our affections on the ocean of slander, of falsehood, and of malice, on which our credulous friends are floating. If you have been made to believe that I ever did, said, or thought a thing unfriendly to your fame and feelings, you do me injury as causeless as it is afflicting to me. In the present contest in which you are concerned, I feel no passion, I take no part, I express no sentiment. Whichever of my friends is called to the supreme cares of the nation, I know that they will be wisely and faithfully administered, and as far as my individual conduct can influence, they shall be cordially supported,

For myself I have nothing further to ask of the world, than to preserve in retirement so much of their esteem as I may have fairly earned, and to be permitted to pass in tranquillity, in the bosom of my family and friends, the days which yet remain for me. Having reached the harbor myself, I shall view with anxiety (but certainly not with a wish to be in their place) those who are still buffeting the storm, uncertain of their fate. Your voyage has so far been favorable, and that it may continue with entire prosperity, is the sincere prayer of that friendship which I have ever borne you, and of which I now assure you, with the tender of my high respect and affectionate salutations.

Th: Jefferson,

## LETTER LXVI.—TO RICHARD M. JOHNSON, March 10, 1808

TO RICHARD M. JOHNSON.

Washington, March 10, 1808.

Sir,

I am sure you can too justly estimate my occupations, to need an apology for this tardy acknowledgment of your favor of February the 27th. I cannot but be deeply sensible of the good opinion you are pleased to express of my conduct in the administration of our government. This approbation of my fellow-citizens is the richest reward I can receive. I am conscious of having always intended to do what was best for them: and never, for a single moment, to have listened to any personal interest of my own. It has been a source of great pain to me, to have met with so many among our opponents, who had not the liberality to distinguish between political and social opposition; who transferred at once to the person, the hatred they bore to his political opinions. I suppose, indeed, that in public life, a man whose political principles have any decided character, and who has energy enough to give them effect, must always expect to encounter political hostility from those of adverse principles. But I came to the government under circumstances calculated to generate peculiar acrimony. I found all its offices in the possession of a political sect, who wished to transform it ultimately into the shape of their darling model, the English government; and in the mean time, to familiarize the public mind to the change, by administering it on English principles, and in English forms. The elective interposition of the people had blown all their designs, and they found themselves and their fortresses of power and profit put in a moment into the hands of other trustees. Lamentations and invective were all that remained to them. This last was naturally directed against the agent selected to execute the multiplied reformatations, which their heresies had rendered necessary. I became of course the butt of every thing which reason, ridicule, malice, and falsehood could supply. They have concentrated all their hatred on me, till they have really persuaded themselves, that I am the sole source of all their imaginary evils. I hope, therefore, that my retirement will abate some of their disaffection to the government of their country, and that my successor will enter on a calmer sea than I did. He will at least find the vessel of state in the hands of his friends, and not of his foes. Federalism is dead, without even the hope of a day of resurrection. The quondam leaders, indeed, retain their rancor and principles; but their followers are amalgamated with us in sentiment, if not in name. If our fellow-citizens, now solidly republican, will sacrifice favoritism towards men for the preservation of principle, we may hope that no divisions will again endanger a degeneracy in our government.

I pray you to accept my salutations, and assurances of great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXVII.—TO LEVI LINCOLN, March 23, 1808

TO LEVI LINCOLN.

Washington, March 23, 1808.

Dear Sir,

Your letter on the subject of Mr. Lee came safely to hand. You know our principles render federalists in office safe, if they do not employ their influence in opposing the government, but only give their own vote according to their conscience. And this principle we act on as well with those put in office by others, as by ourselves.

We have received from your presses a very malevolent and incendiary denunciation of the administration, bottomed on absolute falsehood from beginning to end. The author would merit exemplary punishment for so flagitious a libel, were not the torment of his own abominable temper punishment sufficient for even as base a crime as this. The termination of Mr. Rose's mission, *re infectâ*, put it in my power to communicate to Congress yesterday, every thing respecting our relations with England and France, which will effectually put down Mr. Pickering, and his worthy coadjutor Quincy. Their tempers are so much alike, and really their persons, as to induce a supposition that they are related. The embargo appears to be approved, even by the federalists of every quarter except yours. The alternative was between that and war, and, in fact, it is the last card we have to play, short of war. But if peace does not take place in Europe, and if France and England will not consent to withdraw the operation of their decrees and orders from us, when Congress shall meet in December, they will have to consider at what point of time the embargo, continued, becomes a greater evil than war. I am inclined to believe, we shall have this summer and autumn to prepare for the defence of our sea-port towns, and hope that in that time the works of defence will be completed, which have been provided for by the legislature. I think Congress will rise within three weeks. I salute you with great affection and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

**LETTER LXVIII.—TO CHARLES  
PINCKNEY, March 30, 1808  
TO CHARLES PINCKNEY**

Washington, March 30, 1808.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 8th was received on the 25th, and I proceed to state to you my views of the present state and prospect of foreign affairs, under the confidence that you will use them for your own government and opinions only, and by no means let them get out as from me. With France we are in no immediate danger of war. Her future views it is impossible to estimate. The immediate danger we are in of a rupture with England, is postponed for this year. This is effected by the embargo, as the question was simply between that and war. That may go on a certain time, perhaps through the year, without the loss of their property to our citizens, but only its remaining unemployed on their hands. A time would come, however, when war would be preferable to a continuance of the embargo. Of this Congress may have to decide at their next meeting. In the mean time, we have good information, that a negotiation for peace between France and England is commencing through the medium of Austria. The way for it has been smoothed by a determination expressed by France (through the *Moniteur*, which is their government paper), that herself and her allies will demand from Great Britain no renunciation of her maritime principles; nor will they renounce theirs. Nothing shall be said about them in the treaty, and both sides will be left in the next war to act on their own. No doubt the meaning of this is, that all the Continental powers of Europe will form themselves into an armed neutrality, to enforce their own principles. Should peace be made, we shall have safely rode out the storm in peace and prosperity. If we have any thing to fear, it will be after that. Nothing should be spared from this moment in putting our militia into the best condition possible, and procuring arms. I hope, that this summer, we shall get our whole sea-ports put into that state of defence, which Congress has thought proportioned to our circumstances and situation; that is to say, put *hors d'insulte* from a maritime attack, by a moderate squadron. If armies are combined with their fleets, then no resource can be provided, but to meet them in the field. We propose to raise seven regiments only for the present year, depending always on our militia for the operations of the first year of war. On any other plan, we should be obliged always to keep a large standing army. Congress will adjourn in about three weeks. I hope Captain McComb is going on well with your defensive works. We shall be able by mid-summer, to give you a sufficient number of gun-boats to protect Charleston from any vessels which can cross the bar; but the militia of the place must be depended on to fill up the complement of men necessary for action in the moment of an attack, as we shall man them, in ordinary, but with their navigating crew of eight or ten good seamen. I salute you with great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXIX.—TO DOCTOR LEIB, June 23, 1808

TO DOCTOR LEIB.

Washington, June 23, 1808.

Sir,

I have duly received your favor covering a copy of the talk to the Tammany society, for which I thank you, and particularly for the favorable sentiments expressed towards myself. Certainly, nothing will so much sweeten the tranquillity and comfort of retirement, as the knowledge that I carry with me the good will and approbation of my republican fellow-citizens, and especially of the individuals in unison with whom I have so long acted. With respect to the federalists, I believe we think alike; for when speaking of them, we never mean to include a worthy portion of our fellow-citizens, who consider themselves as in duty bound to support the constituted authorities of every branch, and to reserve their opposition to the period of election. These having acquired the appellation of federalists, while a federal administration was in place, have not cared about throwing off their name, but, adhering to their principle, are the supporters of the present order of things. The other branch of the federalists, those who are so in principle as well as in name, disapprove of the republican principles and features of our constitution, and would, I believe, welcome any public calamity (war with England excepted) which might lessen the confidence of our country in those principles and forms. I have generally considered them rather as subjects for a madhouse. But they are now playing a game of the most mischievous tendency, without perhaps being themselves aware of it. They are endeavoring to convince England, that we suffer more by the embargo than they do, and that, if they will but hold out a while, we must abandon it. It is true, the time will come when we must abandon it. But if this is before the repeal of the orders of council, we must abandon it only for a state of war. The day is not distant, when that will be preferable to a longer continuance of the embargo. But we can never remove that, and let our vessels go out and be taken under these orders, without making reprisal. Yet this is the very state of things which these federal monarchists are endeavoring to bring about; and in this it is but too possible they may succeed. But the fact is, that if we have war with England, it will be solely produced by their manoeuvres. I think that in two or three months we shall know what will be the issue. I salute you with esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## **LETTER LXX.—TO ROBERT L. LIVINGSTON, October 15, 1808**

TO ROBERT L. LIVINGSTON.

Washington, October 15, 1808.

Sir,

Your letter of September the 22nd waited here for my return, and it is not till now that I have been able to acknowledge it. The explanation of his principles, given you by the French Emperor, in conversation, is correct as far as it goes. He does not wish us to go to war with England, knowing we have no ships to carry on that war. To submit to pay to England the tribute on our commerce which she demands by her orders of council, would be to aid her in the war against him, and would give him just ground to declare war with us. He concludes, therefore, as every rational man must, that the embargo, the only remaining alternative, was a wise measure. These are acknowledged principles, and should circumstances arise, which may offer advantage to our country in making them public, we shall avail ourselves of them. But as it is not usual nor agreeable to governments to bring their conversations before the public, I think it would be well to consider this on your part as confidential, leaving to the government to retain or make it public, as the general good may require. Had the Emperor gone further, and said that he condemned our vessels going voluntarily into his ports in breach of his municipal laws, we might have admitted it rigorously legal, though not friendly. But his condemnation of vessels taken on the high seas by his privateers, and carried involuntarily into his ports, is justifiable by no law, is piracy, and this is the wrong we complain of against him.

Supposing that you may be still at Clermont, from whence your letter is dated, I avail myself of this circumstance to request your presenting my friendly respects to Chancellor Livingston.

I salute you with esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXXI.—TO DOCTOR JAMES BROWN, October 27, 1808

TO DOCTOR JAMES BROWN.

Washington, October 27, 1808.

Dear Sir,

You will wonder that your letter of June the 3rd should not be acknowledged till this date. I never received it till September the 12th, and coming soon after to this place, the accumulation of business I found here has prevented my taking it up till now. That you ever participated in any plan for a division of the Union, I never for one moment believed. I knew your Americanism too well. But as the enterprise against Mexico was of a very different character, I had supposed what I heard on that subject to be possible. You disavow it; that is enough for me, and I for ever dismiss the idea. I wish it were possible to extend my belief of innocence to a very different description of men in New Orleans; but I think there is sufficient evidence of there being there a set of foreign adventurers, and native malcontents, who would concur in any enterprise to separate that country from this. I did wish to see these people get what they deserved; and under the maxim of the law itself, that *inter arma silent leges*, that in an encampment expecting daily attack from a powerful enemy, self-preservation is paramount to all law, I expected that instead of invoking the forms of the law to cover traitors, all good citizens would have concurred in securing them. Should we have ever gained our Revolution, if we had bound our hands by manacles of the law, not only in the beginning, but in any part of the revolutionary conflict? There are extreme cases where the laws become inadequate even to their own preservation, and where the universal resource is a dictator, or martial law. Was New Orleans in that situation? Although we knew here that the force destined against it was suppressed on the Ohio, yet we supposed this unknown at New Orleans at the time that Burr's accomplices were calling in the aid of the law to enable them to perpetrate its suppression, and that it was reasonable, according to the state of information there, to act on the expectation of a daily attack. Of this you are the best judge.

Burr is in London, and is giving out to his friends that that government offers him two millions of dollars the moment he can raise an ensign of rebellion as big as an handkerchief. Some of his partisans will believe this, because they wish it. But those who know him best will not believe it the more because he says it. For myself, even in his most flattering periods of the conspiracy, I never entertained one moment's fear. My long and intimate knowledge of my countrymen satisfied and satisfies me, that, let there ever be occasion to display the banners of the law, and the world will see how few and pitiful are those who shall array themselves in opposition. I as little fear foreign invasion. I have indeed thought it a duty to be prepared to meet even the most powerful, that of a Bonaparte, for instance, by the only means competent, that of a classification of the militia, and placing the junior classes at the public disposal: but the lesson he receives in Spain extirpates all apprehensions from my mind. If, in a peninsula, the neck of which is adjacent to him, and at his command, where he can march any army without the possibility of interception or obstruction from any foreign power, he finds it necessary to begin with an army of three hundred thousand men, to subdue a nation of five millions, brutalized by ignorance, and enervated by long peace, and should find constant reinforcements of thousands after thousands necessary to effect at last a conquest as doubtful as deprecated, what numbers would be necessary against eight millions of free Americans, spread over such an extent of country as would wear him down by mere marching, by want of food, autumnal diseases, &c.? How would they be brought, and how reinforced, across an ocean of three thousand miles, in possession of a bitter enemy, whose peace, like the repose of a dog, is never more than momentary? And for what? For nothing but hard blows. If the Orleanese Creoles would but contemplate these truths, they would cling to the

American Union, soul and body, as their first affection, and we should be as safe there as we are every where else. I have no doubt of their attachment to us in preference of the English.

I salute you with sincere friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.



## **LETTER LXXII.—TO LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR LINCOLN, November 13, 1808**

TO LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR LINCOLN.

Washington, November 13, 1808.

Dear Sir,

I enclose you a petition from Nantucket, and refer it for your decision. Our opinion here is, that that place has been so deeply concerned in smuggling, that if it wants, it is because it has illegally sent away what it ought to have retained for its own consumption. Be so good as to bear in mind that I have asked the favor of you to see that your State encounters no real want, while, at the same time, where applications are made merely to cover fraud, no facilities towards that be furnished. I presume there can be no want in Massachusetts, as yet, as I am informed that Governor Sullivan's permits are openly bought and sold here and in Alexandria, and at other markets. The Congressional campaign is just opening: three alternatives alone are to be chosen from. 1. Embargo. 2. War. 3. Submission and tribute. And, wonderful to tell, the last will not want advocates. The real question, however, will lie between the two first, on which there is considerable division. As yet the first seems most to prevail; but opinions are by no means yet settled down. Perhaps the advocates of the second may, to a formal declaration of war, prefer general letters of mark and reprisal, because, on a repeal of their edicts by the belligerent, a revocation of the letters of mark restores peace without the delay, difficulties, and ceremonies of a treaty. On this occasion, I think it fair to leave to those who are to act on them, the decisions they prefer, being to be myself but a spectator. I should not feel justified in directing measures which those who are to execute them would disapprove. Our situation is truly difficult. We have been pressed by the belligerents to the very wall, and all further retreat is impracticable. I salute you with sincere friendship.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXXIII.—TO THOMAS JEFFERSON RANDOLPH, November 24, 1808

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON RANDOLPH.

Washington, November 24, 1808.

My Dear Jefferson,

Your situation, thrown at such a distance from us and alone, cannot but give us all great anxieties for you. As much has been secured for you, by your particular position and the acquaintance to which you have been recommended, as could be done towards shielding you from the dangers which surround you. But thrown on a wide world, among entire strangers, without a friend or guardian to advise, so young, too, and with so little experience of mankind, your dangers are great, and still your safety must rest on yourself. A determination never to do what is wrong, prudence, and good humor, will go far towards securing to you the estimation of the world. When I recollect that at fourteen years of age, the whole care and direction of myself was thrown on myself entirely, without a relation or friend qualified to advise or guide me, and recollect the various sorts of bad company with which I associated from time to time, I am astonished I did not turn off with some of them, and become as worthless to society as they were. I had the good fortune to become acquainted very early with some characters of very high standing, and to feel the incessant wish that I could ever become what they were. Under temptations and difficulties, I would ask myself what would Dr. Small, Mr. Wythe, Peyton Randolph do in this situation? What course in it will insure me their approbation? I am certain that this mode of deciding on my conduct, tended more to its correctness than any reasoning powers I possessed. Knowing the even and dignified line they pursued, I could never doubt for a moment which of two courses would be in character for them. Whereas, seeking the same object through a process of moral reasoning, and with the jaundiced eye of youth, I should often have erred. From the circumstances of my position, I was often thrown into the society of horse-racers, card-players, fox-hunters, scientific and professional men, and of dignified men; and many a time have I asked myself, in the enthusiastic moment of the death of a fox, the victory of a favorite horse, the issue of a question eloquently argued at the bar, or in the great council of the nation, well, which of these kinds of reputation should I prefer? That of a horse-jockey? a fox-hunter? an orator? or the honest advocate of my country's rights? Be assured, my dear Jefferson, that these little returns into ourselves, this self-catechizing habit, is not trifling, nor useless, but leads to the prudent selection and steady pursuit of what is right.

I have mentioned good humor as one of the preservatives of our peace and tranquillity. It is among the most effectual, and its effect is so well imitated and aided, artificially, by politeness, that this also becomes an acquisition of first-rate value. In truth, politeness is artificial good humor, it covers the natural want of it, and ends by rendering habitual a substitute nearly equivalent to the real virtue. It is the practice of sacrificing to those whom we meet in society, all the little conveniences and preferences which will gratify them, and deprive us of nothing worth a moment's consideration; it is the giving a pleasing and flattering turn to our expressions, which will conciliate others, and make them pleased with us as well as themselves. How cheap a price for the good will of another! When this is in return for a rude thing said by another, it brings him to his senses, it mortifies and corrects him in the most salutary way, and places him at the feet of your good nature, in the eyes of the company. But in stating prudential rules for our government in society I must not omit the important one of never entering into dispute or argument with another. I never yet saw an instance of one of two disputants convincing the other by argument. I have seen many, of their getting warm, becoming rude, and shooting one another. Conviction is the effect of our own dispassionate reasoning, either in solitude, or weighing within ourselves, dispassionately, what we hear from others, standing uncommitted in

argument ourselves. It was one of the rules, which, above all others, made Doctor Franklin the most amiable of men in society, 'never to contradict any body.' If he was urged to announce an opinion, he did it rather by asking questions, as if for information, or by suggesting doubts. When I hear another express an opinion which is not mine, I say to myself, he has a right to his opinion, as I to mine; why should I question it? His error does me no injury, and shall I become a Don Quixote, to bring all men by force of argument to one opinion? If a fact be misstated, it is probable he is gratified by a belief of it, and I have no right to deprive him of the gratification. If he wants information, he will ask it, and then I will give it in measured terms; but if he still believes his own story, and shows a desire to dispute the fact with me, I hear him, and say nothing. It is his affair, not mine, if he prefers error. There are two classes of disputants most frequently to be met with among us. The first is of young students, just entered the threshold of science, with a first view of its outlines, not yet filled up with the details and modifications which a further progress would bring to their knowledge. The other consists of the ill-tempered and rude men in society, who have taken up a passion for politics. (Good humor and politeness never introduce into mixed society a question on which they foresee there will be a difference of opinion.) From both of those classes of disputants, my dear Jefferson, keep aloof, as you would from the infected subjects of yellow fever or pestilence. Consider yourself, when with them, as among the patients of Bedlam, needing medical more than moral counsel. Be a listener only, keep within yourself, and endeavor to establish with yourself the habit of silence, especially on politics. In the fevered state of our country, no good can ever result from any attempt to set one of these fiery zealots to rights, either in fact or principle. They are determined as to the facts they will believe, and the opinions on which they will act. Get by them, therefore, as you would by an angry bull: it is not for a man of sense to dispute the road with such an animal. You will be more exposed than others to have these animals shaking their horns at you, because of the relation in which you stand with me. Full of political venom, and willing to see me and to hate me as a chief in the antagonist party, your presence will be to them what the vomit-grass is to the sick dog, a nostrum for producing ejaculation. Look upon them exactly with that eye, and pity them as objects to whom you can administer only occasional ease. My character is not within their power. It is in the hands of my fellow-citizens at large, and will be consigned to honor or infamy by the verdict of the republican mass of our country, according to what themselves will have seen, not what their enemies and mine shall have said. Never, therefore, consider these puppies in politics as requiring any notice from you, and always show, that you are not afraid to leave my character to the umpirage of public opinion. Look steadily to the pursuits which have carried you to Philadelphia, be very select in the society you attach yourself to, avoid taverns, drinkers, smokers, idlers, and dissipated persons generally; for it is with such that broils and contentions arise; and you will find your path more easy and tranquil. The limits of my paper warn me that it is time for me to close with my affectionate adieu.

Th: Jefferson.

P. S. Present me affectionately to Mr. Ogilvie, and in doing the same to Mr. Peale, tell him I am writing with his polygraph, and shall send him mine the first moment I have leisure enough to pack it. T. J.

## LETTER LXXIV.—TO DOCTOR EUSTIS, January 14, 1809

TO DOCTOR EUSTIS.

Washington, January 14, 1809.

Sir,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of December the 24th, and of the resolutions of the republican citizens of Boston, of the 19th of that month. These are worthy of the ancient character of the sons of Massachusetts, and of the spirit of concord with her sister States, which, and which alone, carried us successfully through the revolutionary war, and finally placed us under that national government, which constitutes the safety of every part, by uniting for its protection the powers of the whole. The moment for exerting these united powers, to repel the injuries of the belligerents of Europe, seems likely to be pressed upon us. They have interdicted our commerce with nearly the whole world. They have declared it shall be carried on with such places, in such articles, and in such measure only, as they shall dictate; thus prostrating all the principles of right, which have hitherto protected it. After exhausting the cup of forbearance and conciliation to its dregs, we found it necessary, on behalf of that commerce, to take time to call it home into a state of safety, to put the towns and harbors which carry it on into a condition of defence, and to make further preparation for enforcing the redress of its wrongs, and restoring it to its rightful freedom. This required a certain measure of time, which, although not admitting specific limitation, must, from its avowed objects, have been obvious to all: and the progress actually made towards the accomplishment of these objects, proves it now to be near its term.

While thus endeavoring to secure, and preparing to vindicate that commerce, the absurd opinion has been propagated, that this temporary and necessary arrangement was to be a permanent system, and was intended for its destruction. The sentiments expressed in the paper you were so kind as to enclose me, show that those who have concurred in them, have judged with more candor the intentions of their government, and are sufficiently aware of the tendency of the excitements and misrepresentations which have been practised on this occasion. And such, I am persuaded, will be the disposition of the citizens of Massachusetts at large, whenever truth can reach them. Associated with her sister States in a common government, the fundamental principle of which is, that the will of the majority is to prevail, sensible, that in the present difficulty, that will has been governed by no local interests or jealousies, that to save permanent rights, temporary sacrifices were necessary, that these have fallen as impartially on all, as in a situation so peculiar they could be made to do, she will see, in the existing measures, a legitimate and honest exercise of the will and wisdom of the whole. And her citizens, faithful to themselves and their associates, will not, to avoid a transient pressure, yield to the seductions of enemies to their independence, foreign or domestic, and take a course equally subversive of their well-being, as of that of their brethren.

The approbation expressed by the republican citizens of the town of Boston, of the course pursued by the national government, is truly consoling to its members: and, encouraged by the declaration of the continuance of their confidence, and by the assurance of their support, they will continue to pursue the line of their high duties according to the best of their understandings, and with undeviating regard to the good of the whole. Permit me to avail myself of this occasion of tendering you personally the assurances of my great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXXV.—TO COLONEL MONROE, January 28, 1809

TO COLONEL MONROE.

Washington, January 28, 1809.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of the 18th was received in due time, and the answer has been delayed as well by a pressure of business, as by the expectation of your absence from Richmond.

The idea of sending a special mission to France or England is not entertained at all here. After so little attention to us from the former, and so insulting an answer from Canning, such a mark of respect as an extraordinary mission, would be a degradation against which all minds revolt here. The idea was hazarded in the House of Representatives a few days ago, by a member, and an approbation expressed by another, but rejected indignantly by every other person who spoke, and very generally in conversation by all others: and I am satisfied such a proposition would get no vote in the Senate. The course the legislature means to pursue, may be inferred from the act now passed for a meeting in May, and a proposition before them for repealing the embargo in June, and then resuming and maintaining by force our right of navigation. There will be considerable opposition to this last proposition, not only from the federalists, old and new, who oppose every thing, but from sound members of the majority. Yet it is believed it will obtain a good majority, and that it is the only proposition which can be devised that could obtain a majority of any kind. Final propositions, will, therefore, be soon despatched to both the belligerents through the resident ministers, so that their answers will be received before the meeting in May, and will decide what is to be done. This last trial for peace is not thought desperate. If, as is expected, Bonaparte should be successful in Spain, however every virtuous and liberal sentiment revolts at it, it may induce both powers to be more accommodating with us. England will see here the only asylum for her commerce and manufactures, worth more to her than her orders of council. And Bonaparte, having Spain at his feet, will look immediately to the Spanish colonies, and think our neutrality cheaply purchased by a repeal of the illegal parts of his decrees, with perhaps the Floridas thrown into the bargain. Should a change in the aspect of affairs in Europe produce this disposition in both powers, our peace and prosperity may be revived and long continue. Otherwise, we must again take the tented field, as we did in 1776 under more inauspicious circumstances.

There never has been a situation of the world before, in which such endeavors as we have made would not have secured our peace. It is probable there never will be such another. If we go to war now, I fear we may renounce for ever the hope of seeing an end of our national debt. If we can keep at peace eight years longer, our income, liberated from debt, will be adequate to any war, without new taxes or loans, and our position and increasing strength will put us *hors d'insulte* from any nation. I am now so near the moment of retiring, that I take no part in affairs beyond the expression of an opinion. I think it fair, that my successor should now originate those measures of which he will be charged with the execution and responsibility, and that it is my duty to clothe them with the forms of authority. Five weeks more will relieve me from a drudgery to which I am no longer equal, and restore me to a scene of tranquillity, amidst my family and friends, more congenial to my age and natural inclinations. In that situation, it will always be a pleasure to me to see you, and to repeat to you the assurances of my constant friendship and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXXVI.—TO THOMAS MANN RANDOLPH, February 7, 1809

TO THOMAS MANN RANDOLPH.

Washington, February 7, 1809.

Dear Sir,

I thought Congress had taken their ground firmly for continuing their embargo till June, and then war. But a sudden and unaccountable revolution of opinion took place the last week, chiefly among the New England and New York members, and in a kind of panic, they voted the 4th of March for removing the embargo, and by such a majority as gave all reason to believe, they would not agree either to war or non-intercourse. This, too, was after we had become satisfied, that the Essex Junto had found their expectation desperate, of inducing the people there to either separation or forcible opposition. The majority of Congress, however, has now rallied to the removing the embargo on the 4th of March, non-intercourse with France and Great Britain, trade every where else, and continuing war preparations. The further details are not yet settled, but I believe it is perfectly certain that the embargo will be taken off the 4th of March. Present my warmest affections to my dearest Martha, and the young ones, and accept the assurances of them to yourself.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXXVII.—TO JOHN HOLLINS, February 19, 1809

TO JOHN HOLLINS.

Washington, February 19, 1809.

Dear Sir,

A little transaction of mine, as innocent an one as I ever entered into, and where an improper construction was never less expected, is making some noise, I observe, in your city. I beg leave to explain it to you, because I mean to ask your agency in it. The last year, the Agricultural Society of Paris, of which I am a member, having had a plough presented to them, which, on trial with a graduated instrument, did equal work with half the force of their best ploughs, they thought it would be a benefit to mankind to communicate it. They accordingly sent one to me, with a view to its being made known here, and they sent one to the Duke of Bedford also, who is one of their members, to be made use of for England, although the two nations were then at war. By the Mentor, now going to France, I have given permission to two individuals in Delaware and New York, to import two parcels of Merino sheep from France, which they have procured there, and to some gentlemen in Boston, to import a very valuable machine which spins cotton, wool, and flax equally. The last spring, the Society informed me they were cultivating the cotton of the Levant and other parts of the Mediterranean, and wished to try also that of our southern States. I immediately got a friend to have two tierces of seed forwarded to me. They were consigned to Messrs. Falls and Brown of Baltimore, and notice of it being given me, I immediately wrote to them to re-ship them to New York, to be sent by the Mentor. Their first object was to make a show of my letter, as something very criminal, and to carry the subject into the newspapers. I had, on a like request, some time ago (but before the embargo), from the President of the Board of Agriculture of London, of which I am also a member, to send them some of the genuine May wheat of Virginia, forwarded to them two or three barrels of it. General Washington, in his time, received from the same Society the seed of the perennial succory, which Arthur Young had carried over from France to England, and I have since received from a member of it the seed of the famous turnip of Sweden, now so well known here. I mention these things, to show the nature of the correspondence which is carried on between societies instituted for the benevolent purpose of communicating to all parts of the world whatever useful is discovered in any one of them. These societies are always in peace, however their nations may be at war. Like the republic of letters, they form a great fraternity spreading over the whole earth, and their correspondence is never interrupted by any civilized nation. Vaccination has been a late and remarkable instance of the liberal diffusion of a blessing newly discovered. It is really painful, it is mortifying, to be obliged to note these things, which are known to every one who knows any thing, and felt with approbation by every one who has any feeling. But we have a faction to whose hostile passions the torture even of right into wrong is a delicious gratification. Their malice I have long learned to disregard, their censure to deem praise. But I observe, that some republicans are not satisfied (even while we are receiving liberally from others) that this small return should be made. They will think more justly at another day: but, in the mean time, I wish to avoid offence. My prayer to you, therefore, is, that you will be so good, under the enclosed order, as to receive these two tierces of seed from Falls and Brown, and pay them their disbursements for freight, &c. which I will immediately remit you on knowing the amount. Of the seed, when received, be so good as to make manure for your garden. When rotted with a due mixture of stable manure or earth, it is the best in the world. I rely on your friendship to excuse this trouble, it being necessary I should not commit myself again to persons of whose honor, or the want of it, I know nothing.

Accept the assurances of my constant esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.



## LETTER LXXVIII.—TO M. DUPONT DE NEMOURS, March 2, 1809

TO M. DUPONT DE NEMOURS.

Washington, March 2, 1809.

Dear Sir,

My last to you was of May the 2nd; since which I have received yours of May the 25th, June the 1st, July the 23rd, 24th, and September the 5th, and distributed the two pamphlets according to your desire. They are read with the delight which every thing from your pen gives.

After using every effort which could prevent or delay our being entangled in the war of Europe, that seems now our only resource. The edicts of the two belligerents, forbidding us to be seen on the ocean, we met by an embargo. This gave us time to call home our seamen, ships, and property, to levy men and put our sea-ports into a certain state of defence. We have now taken off the embargo, except as to France and England and their territories, because fifty millions of exports annually sacrificed, are the treble of what war would cost us; besides, that by war we should take something, and lose less than at present. But to give you a true description of the state of things here, I must refer you to Mr. Coles, the bearer of this, my secretary, a most worthy, intelligent, and well-informed young man, whom I recommend to your notice, and conversation on our affairs. His discretion and fidelity may be relied on. I expect he will find you with Spain at your feet, but England still afloat, and a barrier to the Spanish colonies. But all these concerns I am now leaving to be settled by my friend Mr. Madison. Within a few days I retire to my family, my books, and farms; and having gained the harbor myself, I shall look on my friends still buffeting the storm, with anxiety indeed, but not with envy. Never did a prisoner, released from his chains, feel such relief as I shall on shaking off the shackles of power. Nature intended me for the tranquil pursuits of science, by rendering them my supreme delight. But the enormities of the times in which I have lived, have forced me to take a part in resisting them, and to commit myself on the boisterous ocean of political passions. I thank God for the opportunity of retiring from them without censure, and carrying with me the most consoling proofs of public approbation. I leave every thing in the hands of men so able to take care of them, that if we are destined to meet misfortunes, it will be because no human wisdom could avert them. Should you return to the United States, perhaps your curiosity may lead you to visit the hermit of Monticello. He will receive you with affection and delight; hailing you in the mean time with his affectionate salutations, and assurances of constant esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

P. S. If you return to us, bring a couple of pair of true-bred shepherd's dogs. You will add a valuable possession to a country now beginning to pay great attention to the raising sheep.

T.J.

## LETTER LXXIX.—TO THE PRESIDENT, March 17, 1809

TO THE PRESIDENT.

Monticello, March 17, 1809.

Dear Sir,

On opening my letters from France, in the moment of my departure from Washington, I found from their signatures that they were from literary characters, except one from Mr. Short, which mentioned in the outset that it was private, and that his public communications were in the letter to the Secretary of State, which I sent you. I find, however, on reading his letter to me (which I did not do till I got home) a passage of some length, proper to be communicated to you, and which I have therefore extracted.

I had a very fatiguing journey, having found the roads excessively bad, although I have seen them worse. The last three days I found it better to be on horseback, and travelled eight hours through as disagreeable a snow storm as I was ever in. Feeling no inconvenience from the expedition but fatigue, I have more confidence in my *vis vitæ* than I had before entertained. The spring is remarkably backward. No oats sown, not much tobacco seed, and little done in the gardens. Wheat has suffered considerably. No vegetation visible yet but the red maple, weeping-willow, and lilac. Flour is said to be at eight dollars at Richmond, and all produce is hurrying down.

I feel great anxiety for the occurrences of the ensuing four or five months. If peace can be preserved, I hope and trust you will have a smooth administration. I know no government which would be so embarrassing in war as ours. This would proceed very much from the lying and licentious character of our papers; but much, also, from the wonderful credulity of the members of Congress in the floating lies of the day. And in this no experience seems to correct them. I have never seen a Congress during the last eight years, a great majority of which I would not implicitly have relied on in any question, could their minds have been purged of all errors of fact. The evil, too, increases greatly with the protraction of the session, and I apprehend, in case of war, their session would have a tendency to become permanent. It is much, therefore, to be desired that war may be avoided, if circumstances will admit. Nor in the present maniac state of Europe, should I estimate the point of honor by the ordinary scale. I believe we shall, on the contrary, have credit with the world, for having made the avoidance of being engaged in the present unexampled war, our first object. War, however, may become a less losing business than unresisted depredation. With every wish that events may be propitious to your administration, I salute you with sincere affection and every sympathy of the heart.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXXX.—TO THE INHABITANTS OF ALBEMARLE COUNTY, April 3, 1809

TO THE INHABITANTS OF ALBEMARLE COUNTY, IN VIRGINIA,

Returning to the scenes of my birth and early life, to the society of those with whom I was raised, and who have been ever dear to me, I receive, fellow-citizens and neighbors, with inexpressible pleasure, the cordial welcome you are so good as to give me. Long absent on duties which the history of a wonderful era made incumbent on those called to them, the pomp, the turmoil, the bustle, and splendor of office, have drawn but deeper sighs for the tranquil and irresponsible occupations of private life, for the enjoyment of an affectionate intercourse with you, my neighbors and friends, and the endearments of family love, which nature has given us all, as the sweetener of every hour. For these I gladly lay down the distressing burthen of power, and seek, with my fellow-citizens, repose and safety under the watchful cares, the labors, and perplexities of younger and abler minds. The anxieties you express to administer to my happiness, do, of themselves, confer that happiness; and the measure will be complete, if my endeavors to fulfil my duties in the several public stations to which I have been called, have obtained for me the approbation of my country. The part which I have acted on the theatre of public life, has been before them; and to their sentence I submit it: but the testimony of my native county, of the individuals who have known me in private life, to my conduct in its various duties and relations, is the more grateful, as proceeding from eye-witnesses and observers, from triers of the vicinage. Of you, then, my neighbors, I may ask, in the face of the world, 'Whose ox have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed, or of whose hand have I received a bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?' On your verdict I rest with conscious security. Your wishes for my happiness are received with just sensibility, and I offer sincere prayers for your own welfare and prosperity.

Th: Jefferson.

April 3, 1809.

## LETTER LXXXI.—TO WILSON C. NICHOLAS, June 13, 1809

TO WILSON C. NICHOLAS.

Monticello, June 13, 1809.

Dear Sir,

I did not know till Mr. Patterson called on us, a few days ago, that you had passed on to Washington. I had recently observed in the debates of Congress, a matter introduced, on which I wished to give explanations more fully in conversation, which I will now do by abridgment in writing. Mr. Randolph has proposed an inquiry into certain prosecutions at common law in Connecticut, for libels on the government, and not only himself, but others have stated them with such affected caution, and such hints at the same time, as to leave on every mind the impression that they had been instituted either by my direction, or with my acquiescence, at least. This has not been denied by my friends, because probably the fact is unknown to them. I shall state it for their satisfaction, and leave it to be disposed of as they think best.

I had observed in a newspaper (some years ago, I do not recollect the time exactly), some dark hints of a prosecution in Connecticut, but so obscurely hinted, that I paid little attention to it. Some considerable time after, it was again mentioned, so that I understood that some prosecution was going on in the federal court there, for calumnies uttered from the pulpit against me by a clergyman. I immediately wrote to Mr. Granger, who, I think, was in Connecticut at the time, stating that I had laid it down as a law to myself, to take no notice of the thousand calumnies issued against me, but to trust my character to my own conduct, and the good sense and candor of my fellow-citizens; that I had found no reason to be dissatisfied with that course, and I was unwilling it should be broke through by others as to any matter concerning me; and I therefore requested him to desire the district attorney to dismiss the prosecution. Some time after this, I heard of subpoenas being served on General Lee, David M. Randolph, and others, as witnesses to attend the trial. I then, for the first time, conjectured the subject of the libel. I immediately wrote to Mr. Granger, to require an immediate dismissal of the prosecution. The answer of Mr. Huntington, the district attorney, was, that these subpoenas had been issued by the defendant without his knowledge, that it had been his intention to dismiss all the prosecutions at the first meeting of the court, and to accompany it with an avowal of his opinion, that they could not be maintained, because the federal court had no jurisdiction over libels. This was accordingly done. I did not till then know that there were other prosecutions of the same nature, nor do I now know what were their subjects. But all went off together; and I afterwards saw, in the hands of Mr. Granger, a letter written by the clergyman, disavowing any personal ill will towards me, and solemnly declaring he had never uttered the words charged. I think Mr. Granger either showed me, or said there were affidavits of at least half a dozen respectable men who were present at the sermon, and swore no such expressions were uttered, and as many equally respectable who swore the contrary. But the clergyman expressed his gratification at the dismissal of the prosecution. I write all this from memory, and after too long an interval of time to be certain of the exactness of all the details; but I am sure there is no variation material, and Mr. Granger, correcting small lapses of memory, can confirm every thing substantial. Certain it is, that the prosecutions had been instituted, and had made considerable progress, without my knowledge; that they were disapproved by me as soon as known, and directed to be discontinued. The attorney did it on the same ground on which I had acted myself in the cases of Duane, Callender, and others; to wit, that the sedition law was unconstitutional and null, and that my obligation to execute what was law, involved that of not suffering rights secured by valid laws, to be prostrated by what was no law. I always understood that these prosecutions had been invited, if not instituted, by Judge Edwards, and the marshal, being

republican, had summoned a grand jury partly or wholly republican: but that Mr. Huntington declared from the beginning against the jurisdiction of the court, and had determined to enter *nolle-prosequis* before he received my directions.

I trouble you with another subject. The law making my letters post free, goes to those to me only, not those from me. The bill had got to its passage before this was observed (and first I believe by Mr. Dana), and the house under too much pressure of business near the close of the session to bring in another bill. As the privilege of freedom was given to the letters from as well as to both my predecessors, I suppose no reason exists for making a distinction. And in so extensive a correspondence as I am subject to, and still considerably on public matters, it would be a sensible convenience to myself, as well as those who have occasion to receive letters from me. It happens, too, as I was told at the time (for I have never looked into it myself), that it was done by two distinct acts on both the former occasions. Mr. Eppes, I think, mentioned this to me. I know from the Post Master General, that Mr. Adams franks all his letters. I state this matter to you as being my representative, which must apologize for the trouble of it. We have been seasonable since you left us. Yesterday evening and this morning we have had refreshing showers, which will close and confirm the business of planting. Affectionately yours,

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXXXII.—TO THE PRESIDENT, August 17, 1809

TO THE PRESIDENT.

Monticello, August 17, 1809.

Dear Sir,

I never doubted the chicanery of the Anglomen, on whatsoever measures you should take in consequence of the disavowal of Erskine; yet I am satisfied that both the proclamations have been sound. The first has been sanctioned by universal approbation; and although it was not literally the case foreseen by the legislature, yet it was a proper extension of their provision to a case similar, though not the same. It proved to the whole world our desire of accommodation, and must have satisfied every candid federalist on that head. It was not only proper on the well-grounded confidence that the arrangement would be honestly executed, but ought to have taken place even had the perfidy of England been foreseen. Their dirty gain is richly remunerated to us by our placing them so shamefully in the wrong, and by the union it must produce among ourselves. The last proclamation admits of quibbles, of which advantage will doubtless be endeavored to be taken, by those to whom gain is their god, and their country nothing. But it is soundly defensible. The British minister assured us, that the orders of council would be revoked before the 10th of June. The executive, trusting in that assurance, declared by proclamation that the revocation was to take place, and that on that event the law was to be suspended. But the event did not take place, and the consequence, of course, could not follow. This view is derived from the former non-intercourse law only, having never read the latter one. I had doubted whether Congress must not be called; but that arose from another doubt, whether their second law had not changed the ground, so as to require their agency to give operation to the law. Should Bonaparte have the wisdom to correct his injustice towards us, I consider war with England as inevitable. Our ships will go to France and its dependencies, and they will take them. This will be war on their part, and leaves no alternative but reprisal. I have no doubt you will think it safe to act on this hypothesis, and with energy. The moment that open war shall be apprehended from them, we should take possession of Baton Rouge. If we do not, they will, and New Orleans becomes irrecoverable, and the western country blockaded during the war. It would be justifiable towards Spain on this ground, and equally so on that of title to West Florida, and reprisal extended to East Florida. Whatever turn our present difficulty may take, I look upon all cordial conciliation with England as desperate during the life of the present King. I hope and doubt not that Erskine will justify himself. My confidence is founded in a belief of his integrity, and in the — of Canning. I consider the present as the most shameless ministry which ever disgraced England. Copenhagen will immortalize their infamy. In general their administrations are so changeable, and they are obliged to descend to such tricks to keep themselves in place, that nothing like honor or morality can ever be counted on in transactions with them. I salute you with all possible affection.

Th: Jefferson.

## LETTER LXXXIII.—TO DOCTOR BARTON, September 21, 1809

TO DOCTOR BARTON.

Monticello, September 21, 1809.

Dear Sir,

I received last night your favor of the 14th, and would with all possible pleasure have communicated to you any part or the whole of the Indian vocabularies which I had collected, but an irreparable misfortune has deprived me of them. I have now been thirty years availing myself of every possible opportunity of procuring Indian vocabularies to the same set of words: my opportunities were probably better than will ever occur again to any person having the same desire. I had collected about fifty, and had digested most of them in collateral columns, and meant to have printed them the last year of my stay in Washington. But not having yet digested Captain Lewis's collection, nor having leisure then to do it, I put it off till I should return home. The whole, as well digested as originals, were packed in a trunk of stationery, and sent round by water with about thirty other packages of my effects, from Washington, and while ascending James river, this package, on account of its weight and presumed precious contents, was singled out and stolen. The thief, being disappointed on opening it, threw into the river all its contents, of which he thought he could make no use. Among these were the whole of the vocabularies. Some leaves floated ashore, and were found in the mud; but these were very few, and so defaced by the mud and water, that no general use can ever be made of them. On the receipt of your letter I turned to them, and was very happy to find, that the only morsel of an original vocabulary among them, was Captain Lewis's of the Pani language, of which you say you have not one word. I therefore enclose it to you as it is, and a little fragment of some other, which I see is in his hand-writing, but no indication remains on it of what language it is. It is a specimen of the condition of the little which was recovered. I am the more concerned at this accident, as of the two hundred and fifty words of my vocabularies, and the one hundred and thirty words of the great Russian vocabularies of the languages of the other quarters of the globe, seventy-three were common to both, and would have furnished materials for a comparison, from which something might have resulted. Although I believe no general use can ever be made of the wrecks of my loss, yet I will ask the return of the Pani vocabulary when you are done with it. Perhaps I may make another attempt to collect, although I am too old to expect to make much progress in it.

I learn, with pleasure, your acquisition of the pamphlet on the astronomy of the ancient Mexicans. If it be ancient and genuine, or modern and rational, it will be of real value. It is one of the most interesting countries of our hemisphere, and merits every attention.

I am thankful for your kind offer of sending the original Spanish for my perusal. But I think it a pity to trust it to the accidents of the post, and whenever you publish the translation, I shall be satisfied to read that which shall be given by your translator, who is, I am sure, a greater adept in the language than I am.

Accept the assurances of my great esteem and respect.

Th: Jefferson.

## **LETTER LXXXIV.—TO DON VALENTINE DE FORONDA, October 4, 1809**

TO DON VALENTINE DE FORONDA.

Monticello, October 4, 1809.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of August the 26th came to hand in the succeeding month, and have now to thank you for the pamphlet it contained. I have read it with pleasure, and find the constitution proposed would probably be as free as is consistent with hereditary institutions. It has one feature which I like much; that which provides that when the three co-ordinate branches differ in their construction of the constitution, the opinion of two branches shall overrule the third. Our constitution has not sufficiently solved this difficulty.



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