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**“All Men
Are
Created
Equal.”**

Thomas Jefferson,
(ABRIDGED.)

... BY ...

RICHARD S. POPPEN.

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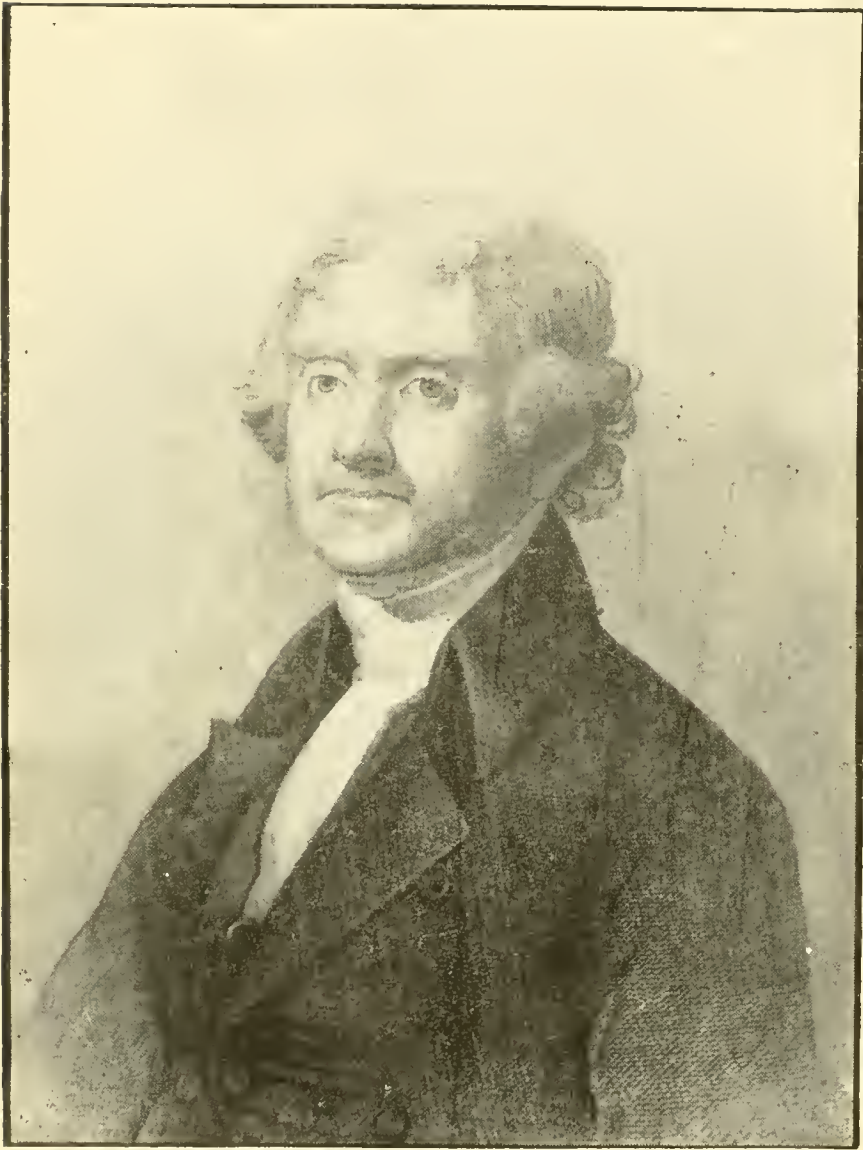
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Th. Jefferson

"All Men are Created Equal"

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Thomas Jefferson

The Declaration of Independence and Letters,
Addresses, Excerpts and
Aphorisms

Selected From
His Writings
With a

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

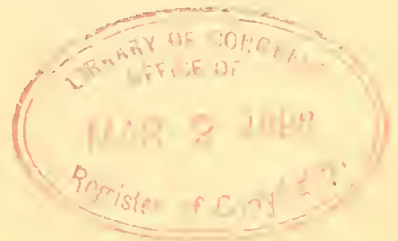
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An Outline of the Two Principal Parties

2nd COPY,
1898.

BY
RICHARD S. POPPEN

ST. LOUIS, MO.
1898.



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The purpose of this hand-book is to bring Thomas Jefferson, the wisest exponent of true Democracy, closer to the hearts of the people, whom he loved so well.

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PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

GEORGE WASHINGTON, 1789-1797.

(Elected Unanimously.)

THE DEMOCRATIC OR RE-PUBLICAN PARTY.

.....
.....

3. Thomas Jefferson.
1801-1809.

4. James Madison.
1809-1817.

5. James Monroe.
1817-1825.

.....
.....

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

7. Andrew Jackson.
1829-1837.

8. Martin Van Buren.
1837-1841.

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.....
.....

11. James Knox Polk.
1845-1849.

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.....
.....

14. Franklin Pierce.
1853-1857.

THE MONARCHICAL OR FEDERAL PARTY.

2. John Adams.
1797-1801.

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.....
.....
.....

THE NATIONAL OR PSEUDO REPUBLICAN PARTY.

6. John Quincy Adams (son of John Adams).
1825-1829.

.....
.....
.....

THE WHIG PARTY.

9. Wm. Henry Harrison (lived one month).

10. John Tyler (a Democrat).
1841-1845.

.....
12. Zachary Taylor (lived six months).

13. Millard Fillmore.
1849-1853.

.....
.....

AN OUTLINE OF THE TWO PRINCIPAL PARTIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

Of the early history of the two principal parties we find an outline in Jefferson's ~~ANAS~~ as follows:

"The contests of that day (before and during the formation of the Constitution), were contests of principle between the ~~advocates of republican, and those of kingly government~~; had not the former made the efforts they ~~did~~, our government would have been, even at this early day, a very different thing from what the successful issue of those efforts have made it.

The alliance between the States under the old Articles of Confederation, for the purpose of joint defence against the aggression of Great Britain, was found insufficient, as treaties of alliance generally are. All then looked forward to some further bond of union, which would insure eternal peace, and a political system of our own, independent of that of Europe. Whether all should be consolidated into a single government, or each remain independent as to internal matters, and the whole form a single nation as to what was foreign only, and whether that national government should be a monarchy or republic, would of course divide opinions, ~~according to the constitutions, the habits, and the circumstances of each individual.~~

Some officers of the army, as it has always been said and believed (and Steuben and Knox have ever been named as the leading agents), trained to monarchy by military habits, are understood to have proposed to General Washington to decide this great question by the army before its disbandment, and to assume himself the crown on the assurance of their support. The indigna-

tion with which he is said to have scouted this parricide proposition was equally worthy of his virtue and wisdom.

The want of some authority which should procure justice to the public creditors, and an observance of treaties with foreign nations, produced, some time after, the call of a convention of the States at Annapolis. Although at this meeting a difference of opinion was evident on the question of a republican or kingly government, yet so general through the States was the sentiment in favor of the former, that the friends of the latter confined themselves to a course of obstruction only, and delay, to everything proposed; they hoped that nothing being done, and all things going from bad to worse, a kingly government might be usurped, and submitted to by the people. The effect of their manoeuvres, with the defective attendance of Deputies from the States, resulted in the measure of calling a more general convention to be held at Philadelphia. At this, the same party exhibited the same practices, and with the same views of preventing a government of concord which they foresaw would be republican, and forcing through anarchy their way to monarchy. But the mass of that convention was too honest, too wise, and too steady to be baffled and misled by their manoeuvres. One of these was a form of government proposed by Colonel Hamilton, which would have been in fact a compromise between the two parties of royalism and republicanism. According to this, the executive and one branch of the legislature were to be during good behavior, i. e. for life, and the governors of the States were to be named by these two permanent organs. This, however, was rejected; on which Hamilton left the convention, as desperate, and never returned again until near its final conclusion. These opinions and efforts, secret or avowed, of the advocates for monarchy, had begotten great jealousy through the States generally; and this jealousy it was which excited the strong opposition to the conventional constitution; a jealousy which yielded at last only to a general determination to establish certain amendments as barriers against a government either monarchical or consolidated." In another place of the

same book we read: "Before the establishment of our present government a very extensive combination had taken place in New York and the Eastern States among that description of people who were partly monarchical in principle or frightened with Shay's rebellion and the impotence of the old Congress. Delegates in different places had actually had consultations on the subject of seizing on the powers of a government and establish them by force; had corresponded with one another, and had sent a deputy to General Washington to solicit his co-operation. He refused to join them. The new convention was in the meantime proposed by Virginia and appointed. These people believed it impossible the States should ever agree on a government. They therefore let the proposed convention go on, not doubting its failure. When Hamilton's plan of government failed to be carried, and he retired in disgust, his associates took every method to prevent any form of government being agreed to. But the final passage and adoption of the constitution completely defeated the views of the combination and saved us from an attempt to establish a government over us by force. This fact throws a blaze of light on the conduct of several members from New York and the Eastern States in the convention at Annapolis and the grand convention. At that of Annapolis, several Eastern members most vehemently opposed Madison's proposition for a more general convention with more general powers. They wished things to get more and more into confusion to justify the violent measure they proposed. The idea of establishing a government by reasoning and agreement, they publicly ridiculed as a Utopian project, visionary and unexampled."

At the first session of Congress (Washington elected President) which commenced proceedings under the Constitution in March, 1789, a bill of rights was framed, recognizing "the equality of all men and their rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." During the pendency of this bill one party, calling themselves FEDERALISTS and denounced by the opposition as MONARCHISTS, endeavored to establish a central govern-

ment, all power to rest in the President and House of Congress: the other party, named ANTI-FEDERALISTS, and taunted by their opponents as DEMOCRATS, or RULERS OF THE MOB, advocated local self-government and opposed bitterly any extended delegation of authority from the States to the Union. When the bill of rights had been accepted in ten amendments to the constitution, all opposition was withdrawn and the Anti-Federalists, disposed at first to call their party the DEMOCRATIC-REPUBLICANS, named themselves, at the suggestion of Thomas Jefferson, the REPUBLICAN PARTY. George Washington having been unanimously elected and re-elected without a division on party lines, the first contest occurred in 1796, when the Federalists elected John Adams President. He advocated a strong central government but was accused by his opponents of being a monarchist. Jefferson relates the following incident: "At the second election of president and vice-president of the United States, when there was a considerable vote given to Clinton in opposition to Mr. Adams, he took occasion to remark it in conversation in the Senate chamber with Mr. Adams, who, gritting his teeth, said, 'Damn 'em! damn 'em! damn 'em! you see that an elective government will not do.' In another conversation he said: 'Republicanism must be disgraced, sir.'" Mr. Adams disgraced HIS ADMINISTRATION by the passage of the "Alien and Sedition laws,"* and that he aimed at a monarchical government is attested by Hamilton, who, during a conversation with several gentlemen using the words, "Federal government," exclaimed: "O, say the Federal monarchy; let us call things by their right names for a monarchy it is." In a letter, written to Dr. Rush on January 16th, 1811, Jefferson says: "Mr. Adams gave it as his opinion, that if some of the defects and abuses of the British constitution were corrected, it would be the most perfect constitution of government ever devised by man. Hamilton, on the contrary, asserted, that with its existing vices, it was the most perfect model of gov-

*See Page 65.

ernment that could be formed, and that the correction of its vices would render it an impracticable government. This was the real line of difference between the political principles of these two gentlemen." In a letter to President Washington, dated September 9th, 1792, Jefferson writes: "Col Hamilton's (objection to the constitution) was that it wanted a king and house of lords." Fortunately for the people, these champions of monarchism failed to foist their doctrines into the government of this country for the election of Thomas Jefferson to the presidency in 1801, gave the finishing stroke to the Federal or Monarchical Party. During the ninth Congress (1805), the Jeffersonian Republicans changed their party-name to the DEMOCRATIC PARTY, but the terms REPUBLICANS and DEMOCRATS remained synonymous down to the presidential campaign of 1824, when all four candidates claimed to be Republicans. The Federalists (this name having become offensive to the people), then calling themselves NATIONAL REPUBLICANS, but named by Jefferson and his followers the PSEUDO REPUBLICANS, elected John Quincy Adams (son of John Adams) president. This campaign was called the "scrub race for the presidency." In 1828 the party lines were sharply drawn and Gen. Andrew Jackson was elected president. This being again a triumph of the people's government, the "Democratic Party" then became the exclusive and permanent name of the followers of Thomas Jefferson. In 1834 the National Republicans changed their name to the WHIGS, electing in 1840, Gen. Wm. H. Harrison president. In the presidential campaign of 1852 they appeared for the last time in National politics. In 1856 the opponents of the Democracy revived the former name of the Democratic party by adopting the word REPUBLICAN as their name, which they hold to this day. They elected in 1860, Abraham Lincoln president, and under his administration slavery was abolished and the civil war brought to a successful termination.

In a letter written to H. Lee in 1824, Thomas Jefferson says: "Men by their constitutions are naturally divided

into two parties: 1. Those who fear and distrust the people, and wish to draw all powers from them into the hands of the higher classes. 2. Those who identify themselves with the people, have confidence in them, cherish and consider them as the most honest and safe, although not the most wise depository of the public interests. In every country two parties exist; and in every one where they are free to think, speak and write, they will declare themselves. Call them, therefore, liberals and serviles, Jacobins and ultras, whigs and tories, republicans and federalists, democrats and aristocrats, or by whatever name you please, they are the same parties still and pursue the same object." If this be true, one is prompted to ask: Who are now the LIBERALS; who the SERVILES? Which now is the party that legislates in the interest of the ARISTOCRATS and which the party that stands for the RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE?

SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Thomas Jefferson the third President of the United States and the Father of Democracy (the people's government), was born April 2, 1743, at Shadwell, Albemarle County, in the State of Virginia. At the age of five years he was sent to an English school and at nineteen he graduated from William and Mary's college. The next five years Jefferson studied law with Mr. George Wythe, a prominent jurist in whom he found a "faithful and beloved mentor in youth and most affectionate friend through life." In 1768 he was elected from the county of Albemarle to the House of Burgesses and re-elected annually until it was closed by the revolution. In 1774 Jefferson was chosen a delegate to the State Convention which elected him in 1775 one of the delegates to the General Congress to meet at Philadelphia. On the 11th of June, 1776, Congress appointed Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Sherman and Livingston, a committee to prepare a Declaration of Independence, and at the request of his associates, Jefferson prepared a draft, which, after few verbal alterations by them, was taken up for consideration in the House on the 28th of June and unanimously agreed to on the evening of the 4th of July, 1776. In September of the same year he resigned from the General Congress to take his seat in the legislature of Virginia, where he thought his services were most needed. Of the various measures introduced there, were four proposed by Jefferson which were passed: the repeal of the laws of entail, the abolition of primogeniture, the restoration of the rights of conscience and relief of the people from taxation for the support of the established church, and a system of general education. He tried to add to these the gradual emancipation of slaves, and trial by jury in the courts of chancery, but without success. His bill, however, forbidding the further importation of slaves into the

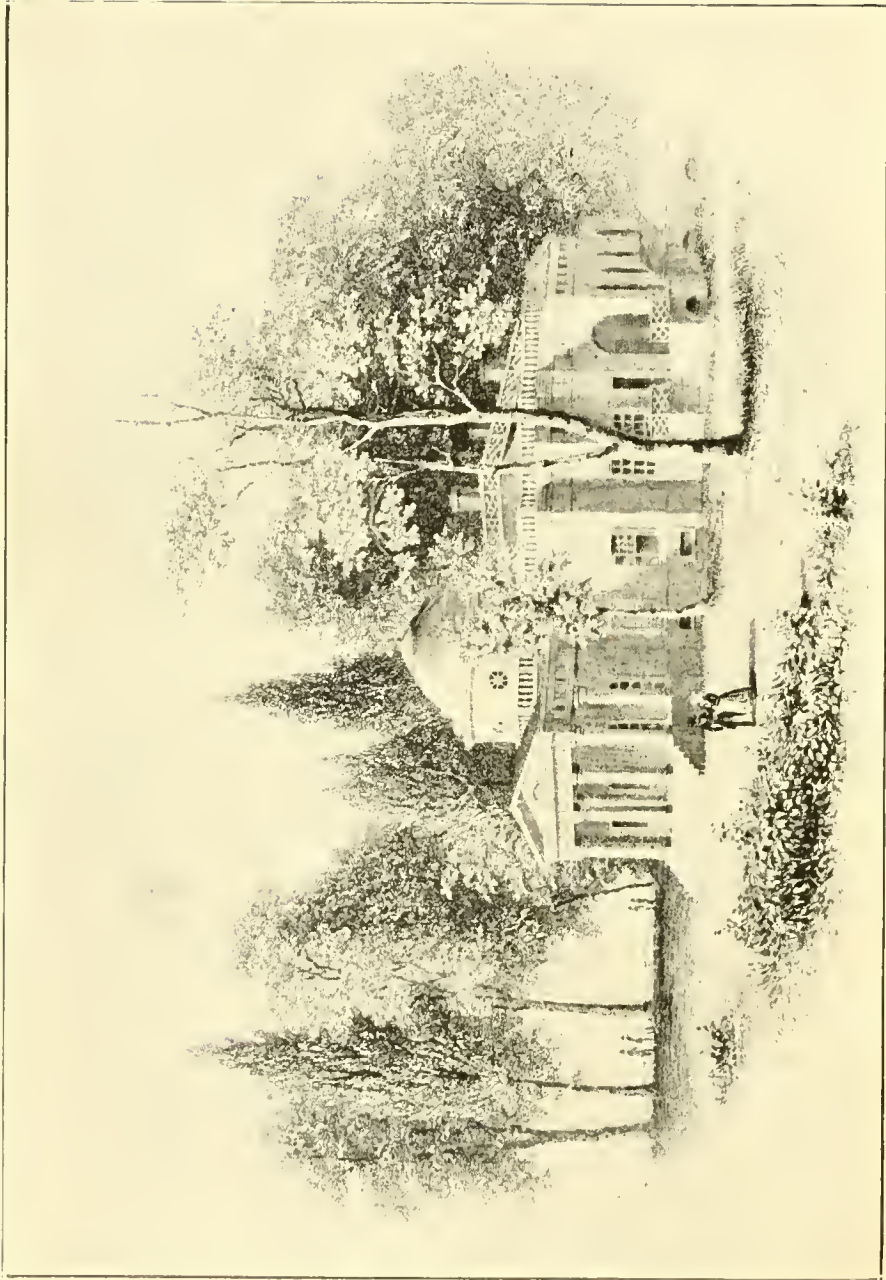
State, was passed without opposition. In 1779 Jefferson was elected governor of his State, declining in 1781 a reelection. In 1782 he was appointed by Congress to act as one of the plenipotentiaries to negotiate a treaty of peace with the mother country, but the business being nearly completed before he was ready to sail, he was recalled. In 1783 he was again a member of Congress where, as chairman of the committee appointed for that purpose, he reported the treaty of peace with England. In 1784 he was for the second time appointed by Congress as minister plenipotentiary to assist Franklin and Adams in negotiating treaties of commerce with European States. Jefferson arrived in Paris in July, and in January, 1785, he was selected, as he put it, "to succeed Franklin, for no one could replace him." In 1789 he left Paris on a leave of absence and on his arrival in America, President Washington tendered him the office of Secretary of State. He accepted it with reluctance and entered upon his new duties in March, 1790. Jefferson, a strong advocate of Democracy, of decentralization or division of power, was bitterly opposed to the principal features of the British Constitution; Alexander Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury and the acknowledged leader of the Federalists, on the other hand, admired the English form of government and favored all measures that tended to strengthen the executive, and to centralize all power in the general government, aiming, as he was accused by Jefferson and others, at the ultimate establishment of monarchy and an hereditary aristocracy: Washington again very prudently remained neutral, though he was supposed to sympathize more with the Federal than the Republican leader. In 1793 Jefferson, feeling he did not have the exclusive confidence of the President, resigned his seat in the cabinet and retired to Monticello. In 1796 he was elected Vice-President with John Adams to the presidency. The Reign of Terror in France caused a reaction in the United States against the sympathizers with the French revolutionists, and President Adams, mistaking it for a popular sentiment against Republicanism, was led into several ill-advis-

ed measures, (to-wit: The alien and the sedition bills, and others), which gave the finishing stroke to the Federal party; for in 1801 Jefferson and Burr were elected President and Vice-President, and the Jeffersonian policy of a people's government was firmly established. In 1805 Jefferson was re-elected by 143 out of 176 electoral votes.

His administration was one of great simplicity; all pomp and ceremony he disliked. He rode to the capitol alone on horseback, and hitched the bridle of his horse to a fence, and instead of opening Congress in person with a speech, as in England, and as his predecessors had done, he sent his message by his private secretary. When Congress gave to the President no title but that of office, to-wit: "George Washington, President of the United States," he wrote to a friend from Paris: "I hope the terms of Excellency, Honor, Worship, Esquire will forever disappear from among us from that moment; I wish that of Mr. would follow them;" and in another letter he says: "If it be possible to be certainly conscious of anything, I am conscious of feeling no difference between writing to the highest and lowest being on earth." The most important acts during Jefferson's administration were the complete extermination of the Algerine pirates who, for half a century, had preyed upon the commerce of the world; the purchase from France of the Territory of Louisiana for \$15,000,000; the reorganization and arming of the militia; the reduction of the taxes and the public debt; and the purchase of the Indians' titles by a fair remuneration. But all these acts, of the greatest importance to the material welfare of the United States, pale into insignificance compared to the one which has brought and will continue to bring slowly, but with irresistible steps, happiness to the homes of all humanity: the placing on a firm basis the democratic principles of a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people;" the breaking of the shackles of money-power and despotism, and the raising from the dust the oppressed and the down-trodden to manhood, self-respect and independence. Let Jefferson speak: "Truth and reason are eternal. They have

prevailed. And they will eternally prevail, however, in times and places they may be overborne for a while by violence, military, civil or ecclesiastical. The preservation of the holy fire is confided to us by the world, and the sparks which will emanate from it will ever serve to rekindle it in other quarters of the globe."

Jefferson refused unconditionally to be re-elected for a third term, though the Legislatures of five States formally requested him to be a candidate. His last seventeen years he spent in Monticello, devoting his time to the erection of a university for young men. He died at his home on the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and on the same day John Adams, his predecessor and leader of the Federals, as if foreseeing that truth and democratic principles will ever prevail, uttered his last words: "Thomas Jefferson still survives."



MONTICELLO.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.—
JULY 4TH, 1776.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The his-

tory of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people. He has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers. He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent

hither swarms of new officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us in times of peace standing armies without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; for protecting them by a mock trial from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States; for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; for imposing taxes on us without our consent; for depriving us in many cases of the benefits of trial by jury; for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses; for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; for suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrection among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries.

A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislatures to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here; we have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which would inevitably interrupt our connection and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as free and independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent States may of right do.

And for the support of this declaration, with a firm

reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

The Shackles Which Are Not Knocked Off at the Conclusion of this War, Will Remain on Us.

Monticello, 1781.

It can never be too often repeated that the time for fixing every essential right on a legal basis is while our rulers are honest, and ourselves united. From the conclusion of this war we shall be going down hill. It will not then be necessary to resort every moment to the people for support. They will be forgotten, therefore, and their rights disregarded. They will forget themselves, but in the sole faculty of making money, and will never think of uniting to effect a due respect for their rights. The shackles, therefore, which shall not be knocked off at the conclusion of this war, will remain on us long, will be made heavier and heavier, till our rights shall revive or expire in a convulsion.

Opinion Can Not Be Coerced.

Monticello, 1781.

It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself. Subject opinion to coercion. Whom will you make your inquisitors? Fallible men; men governed by bad passions, by private as well as public reasons. And why subject it to coercion? To produce uniformity. But is uniformity desirable? No more than of face and stature. Introduce the bed of Procrustes then, and as there is danger that the large men may beat the small, make us all of a size, by lopping the former and stretching the latter.

The People the Only Safe Depositories of a Government.

Monticello, 1782.

In every government on earth is some trace of human weakness, some germ of corruption and degeneracy,

which cunning will discover, and wickedness insensibly open, cultivate and improve. Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree. The influence over government must be shared among all the people. If every individual which composes their mass participates of the ultimate authority, the government will be safe; because the corrupting the whole mass will exceed any private resources of wealth; and public ones can not be provided, but by levies on the people. In this case every man would have to pay his own price. The government of Great Britain has been corrupted, because but one man in ten has a right to vote for members of Parliament. The sellers of the government, therefore, get nine-tenths of their price clear. It has been thought that corruption is restrained by confining the right of suffrage to a few of the wealthier of the people; but it would be more effectually restrained by an extension of that right to such numbers as would bid defiance to the means of corruption.

LETTERS AND ADDRESSES.

[The following letters and addresses, arranged chronologically, have been selected for the purpose of familiarizing the reader with Jefferson's views and forecasts on such issues of civil administration and political economy as were then, and are now, of vital importance to the interests of this country; delineating at the same time the most important events during his life.]

Superiority of the United States to All Other Countries.
Paris, June 17, 1785.

To James Monroe:

I sincerely wish you may find it convenient to come here,* the pleasure of the trip will be less than you expect, but the utility greater. It will make you adore your own country, its soil, its climate, its equality, liberty, laws, people and manners. My God! how little do my countrymen know what precious blessings they are in possession of, and which no other people on earth enjoy. I confess I had no idea of it myself. While we shall see multiplied instances of Europeans going to live in America, I will venture to say, no man now living will ever see an instance of an American removing to settle in Europe, and continuing there. Come, then, and see the proof of this, and on your return add your testimony to that of every thinking American, in order to satisfy our countrymen how much it is their interest to preserve, uninfected by contagion, those peculiarities in their governments and manners, to which they are indebted for those blessings.

Advice to a Student How to Acquire Education.

Paris, August 19, 1785.

To Peter Carr.**

I trust, that with your dispositions, even the acquisition of science is a pleasing employment. I can assure

*Jefferson was sent by Congress to Paris as Minister Plenipotentiary.

**Jefferson's favorite nephew.

you, that the possession of it is, what (next to an honest heart) will above all things render you dear to your friends, and give you fame and promotion in your own country. When your mind shall be well improved with science nothing will be necessary to place you in the highest points of view, but to pursue the interests of your country, the interests of your friends, and your own interests also, with the purest integrity, the most chaste honor. The defect of these virtues can never be made up by all the other acquirements of body and mind. Make these, then, your first object. Give up money, give up fame, give up science, give the earth itself and all it contains, rather than do an immoral act. And never suppose, that in any possible situation, or under any circumstances, it is best for you to do a dishonorable thing, however slightly so it may appear to you. Whenever you are to do a thing, though it can never be known but to yourself, ask yourself how you would act were all the world looking at you, and act accordingly. Encourage all your virtuous dispositions, and exercise them whenever an opportunity arises; being assured that they will gain strength by exercise, as a limb of a body does, and that exercise will make them habitual. From the practice of the purest virtue, you may be assured you will derive the most sublime comforts in every moment of life, and in the moment of death. If ever you find yourself environed with difficulties and perplexing circumstances, out of which you are at a loss how to extricate yourself, do what is right, and be assured that that will extricate you the best out of the worst situation. Though you can not see, when you take one step, what will be the next, yet follow truth, justice, and plain dealing, and never fear their leading you out of the labyrinth, in the easiest manner possible. The knot which you thought a Gordian one, will untie itself before you. Nothing is so mistaken as the supposition, that a person is to extricate himself from a difficulty, by intrigue, by chicanery, by dissimulation, by trimming, by an untruth, by an injustice. This increases the difficulties tenfold; and those who pursue these methods get themselves so

involved at length, that they can turn no way but their infamy becomes more exposed. It is of great importance to set a resolution, not to be shaken, never to tell an untruth. There is no vice so mean, so pitiful, so contemptible; and he who permits himself to tell a lie once, finds it much easier to do it a second and third time, till at length it becomes habitual; he tells lies without attending to it, and truths without the world's believing him. This falsehood of the tongue leads to that of the heart, and in time depraves all its good dispositions.

An honest heart being the first blessing, a knowing head is the second. It is time for you now to begin to be choice in your reading, to begin to pursue a regular course in it, and not to suffer yourself to be turned to the right or left by reading anything out of that course. In order to assure a certain progress in this reading, consider what hours you have free from the school and the exercises of the school. Give about two of them every day, to exercise; for health must not be sacrificed to learning. A strong body makes the mind strong. As to the species of exercise, I advise the gun. While this gives a moderate exercise to the body, it gives boldness, enterprise and independence to the mind. Games played with the ball and others of that nature are too violent for the body, and stamp no character on the mind. Let your gun, therefore, be the constant companion of your walks. Never think of taking a book with you. The object of walking is to relax the mind. You should, therefore, not permit yourself even to think while you walk; but divert yourself by the objects surrounding you. Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very far. The Europeans value themselves on having subdued the horse to the uses of man; but I doubt whether we have not lost more than we have gained, by the use of this animal. No one has occasioned so much the degeneracy of the human body. An Indian goes on foot nearly as far in a day, for a long journey, as an enfeebled white does on his horse, and he will tire the best horses. There is no habit you will value so much as that of walking far without fatigue. I

would advise you to take your exercise in the afternoon; not because it is the best time for exercise, for certainly it is not; but because it is the best time to spare from your studies; and habit will soon reconcile it to health, and render it nearly as useful as if you gave to that the more precious hours of the day. A little walk of half an hour in the morning, when you first rise, is advisable also. It shakes off sleep, and produces other good effects in the animal economy. Rise at a fixed and an early hour, and go to bed at a fixed and early hour also. Sitting up late at night is injurious to the health, and not useful to the mind. Having ascribed proper hours to exercise, divide what remain (I mean of your vacant hours) into three portions. Give the principal to history, the other two, to philosophy and poetry. Write to me once every month or two, and let me know the progress you make.

The Superiority of Agriculture to All Other Pursuits,
And the Necessity of a Navy to Prevent Insult.

Paris, August 23d, 1785.

To John Jay:

The present letter is occasioned by the question proposed in yours of June the 14th: "Whether it would be useful to us to carry all our own productions, or none?"

Were we perfectly free to decide this question, I should reason as follows. We have now lands enough to employ an infinite number of people in their cultivation. Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country, and wedded to its liberty and interests, by the most lasting bonds. As long, therefore, as they can find employment in this line, I would not convert them into martiners, artisans, or anything else. But our citizens will find employment in this line, till their numbers, and, of course, their productions, become too great for the demand, both internal and foreign. This is not the case as yet, and probably will not be for a considerable time.

As soon as it is, the surplus of hands must be turned to something else. I should then, perhaps, wish to turn them to the sea in preference to manufactures; because, comparing the characters of the two classes, I find the former the most valuable citizens. I consider the class of artificers as the panders of vice, and the instruments by which the liberties of a country are generally overturned. However, we are not free to decide this question on principles of theory only. Our people are decided in the opinion that it is necessary for us to take a share in the occupation of the ocean, and their established habits induce them to require that the sea be kept open to them, and that that line of policy be pursued, which will render the use of that element to them as great as possible. I think it a duty in those entrusted with the administration of their affairs, to conform themselves to the decided choice of their constituents; and that, therefore, we should, in every instance, preserve an equality of right to them in the transportation of commodities, in the right of fishing, and in the other uses of the sea.

But what will be the consequence? Frequent wars without a doubt. Their property will be violated on the sea, and in foreign ports, their persons will be insulted, imprisoned, etc., for pretended debts, contracts, crimes, contraband, etc, etc. These insults must be resented, even if we had no feelings, yet to prevent their eternal repetition; or, in other words, our commerce on the ocean and in other countries, must be paid for by frequent war. The justest dispositions possible in ourselves will not secure us against it. It would be necessary that all other nations were just also. Justice, indeed, on our part, will save us from those wars which would have been produced by a contrary disposition. But how can we prevent those produced by the wrongs of other nations? By putting ourselves in a condition to punish them. Weakness provokes insult and injury, while a condition to punish, often prevents them. This reasoning leads to the necessity of some naval force; that being the only weapon by which we can reach an enemy.

I think it to our interest to punish the first insult; because an insult unpunished is the parent of many others. We are not, at this moment, in a condition to do it, but we should put ourselves into it as soon as possible. If a war with England should take place, it seems to me that the first thing necessary would be a resolution to abandon the carrying trade, because we can not protect it. Foreign nations must, in that case, be invited to bring us what we want, and to take our productions in their own bottoms. This alone could prevent the loss of those productions to us, and the acquisition of them to our enemy. Our seamen might be employed in depredations on their trade. But how dreadfully we shall suffer on our coasts, if we have no force on the water, former experience has taught us. Indeed, I look forward with horror to the very possible case of war with a European power, and think there is no protection against them, but from the possession of some force on the sea. Our vicinity to their West India possessions, and to the fisheries, is a bridle which a small naval force, on our part, would hold in the mouths of the most powerful of these countries. I hope our land office will rid us of our debts, and that our first attention then will be to the beginning a naval force of some sort. This alone can countenance our people as carriers on the water, and I suppose them to be determined to continue such.

Jefferson's Views on Democracy.

Paris, January 16th, 1787.

To Col. Edward Carrington:

The tumults in America* I expected would have produced in Europe an unfavorable opinion of our political state. But it has not. On the contrary, the small effect of these tumults seems to have given more confidence in the firmness of our governments. The interposition of the people themselves on the side of government has

*Rebellion in Massachusetts and New Hampshire under Captain Shays in 1786. Their demand was respite in the judiciary proceedings for collecting taxes.

had a great effect on the opinion here. I am persuaded myself that the good sense of the people will always be found to be the best army. They may be led astray for a moment, but will soon correct themselves. The people are the only censors of their governors; and even their errors will tend to keep these to the true principles of their institution. To punish these errors too severely would be to suppress the only safeguard of the public liberty. The way to prevent these irregular interpositions of the people, is to give them full information of their affairs through the channel of the public papers, and to contrive that those papers should penetrate the whole mass of the people. The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them. I am convinced that those societies (as the Indians) which live without government, enjoy in their general mass an infinitely greater degree of happiness than those who live under the European governments. Among the former, public opinion is in the place of law, and restrains morals as powerfully as laws ever did anywhere. Among the latter, under pretense of governing, they have divided their nations into two classes, wolves and sheep. I do not exaggerate. This is a true picture of Europe. Cherish, therefore, the spirit of our people, and keep alive their attention. Do not be too severe upon their errors, but reclaim them by enlightening them. If once they become inattentive to the public affairs, you and I, and Congress and Assemblies, Judges and Governors, shall all become wolves. It seems to be the law of our general nature, in spite of individual exceptions; and experience declares that man is the only animal which devours his own kind; for I can apply no milder term to the government of Europe, and to the general prey of the rich on the poor.

The True Policy of the United States.

Paris, August 14th, 1787.

To Col. Humphreys:

(After commenting on the unfortunate and threatening condition of Europe, Jefferson adds):

So much for the blessings of having kings, and magistrates who would be kings. From these events, our young Republic may learn useful lessons, never to call on foreign powers to settle their differences, to guard against hereditary magistrates, to prevent their citizens from becoming so established in wealth and power, as to be thought worthy of alliance by marriage with the nieces, sisters, etc., etc., of kings, and, in short, to besiege the throne of heaven with eternal prayers, to extirpate from creation this class of human lions, tigers and mammoths called kings, from whom let him perish who does not say "good Lord deliver us."

The Perpetual Re-Eligibility of the President Will
Make the Office Hereditary.

Paris, May 2d, 1788.

To George Washington:

I had intended to have written a word to your Excellency on the subject of the new constitution, but I have already spun out my letter to an immoderate length. I will just observe, therefore, that according to my ideas there is a great deal of good in it. There are two things, however, which I dislike strongly: 1. The want of a declaration of rights.* I am in hopes the opposition of Virginia will remedy this, and produce such a declaration. 2. The perpetual re-eligibility of the President. This I fear will make an office for life first, and then hereditary. I was much an enemy to monarchies before I came to Europe. I am ten thousand times more so since I have seen what they are. There is scarcely an evil known in these countries which may not be traced

*A "Bill of Rights," in ten amendments, was added to the Constitution in December, 1791.

to their king as its source, nor a good which is not derived from the small fibres of republicanism existing among them. I can further say with safety there is not a crowned head in Europe whose talents or merits would entitle him to be elected a vestryman by the people of any parish in America. However, I shall hope that before there is danger of this change taking place in the office of President, the good sense and free spirit of our countrymen will make the changes necessary to prevent it. Under this hope, I look forward to the general adoption of the new constitution with anxiety, as necessary for us under our present circumstances.

The Constitution of the United States and Its Defects.

Paris, March 18th, 1789.

To Col. Humphreys:

The operations which have taken place in America lately, fill me with pleasure. In the first place, they realize the confidence I had, that whenever our affairs go obviously wrong, the good sense of the people will interpose, and set them to rights. The example of changing a constitution,* by assembling the wise men of the State, instead of assembling armies, will be worth as much to the world as the former examples we had given them. The constitution, too, which was the result of our deliberations, is unquestionably the wisest ever yet presented to men, and some of the accommodations of interest which it has adopted, are greatly pleasing to me, who have before had occasions of seeing how difficult those interests were to accommodate. A general concurrence of opinion seems to authorize us to say, it has some defects. I am one of those who think it a defect, that the important rights, not placed in security by the frame of the constitution itself, were not explicitly secured by a supplementary declaration. There are rights which it is useless to surrender to the government, and which governments have yet always been found to

*The "Articles of Confederation," ratified in 1778, were changed to the "Federal Constitution" and adopted by the States in 1789.

invade. These are the rights of thinking, and publishing our thoughts by speaking or writing; the right of free commerce; the right of personal freedom. There are instruments for administering the government, so peculiarly trustworthy that we should never leave the legislature at liberty to change them. The new constitution has secured these in the executive and legislative department; but not in the judiciary. It should have established trials by the people themselves; that is to say, by jury. There are instruments so dangerous to the rights of the nation, and which place them so totally at the mercy of their governors, that those governors, whether legislative or executive, should be restrained from keeping such instruments on foot, but in well-defined cases. Such an instrument is a standing army. We are now allowed to say, such a declaration of rights, as a supplement to the constitution where that is silent, is wanting to secure us in these points. The general voice has legitimated this objection. It has not, however, authorized me to consider as a real defect, what I thought and still think one, the perpetual re-eligibility of the President. But three States out of eleven, having declared against this, we must suppose we are wrong, according to the fundamental law of every society, the law of the majority, to which we are bound to submit. And should the majority change their opinion, and become sensible that this trait in their constitution is wrong, I would wish it to remain uncorrected, as long as we can avail ourselves of the services of our great leader, whose talents and whose weight of character, I consider as peculiarly necessary to get the government so under way as that it may afterwards be carried on by subordinate characters.

The Participation of the People in Government.

Paris, July 19th, 1789.

To M. L'Abbe Arnond:

We think, in America, that it is necessary to introduce the people into every department of government, as far as they are capable of exercising it; and that this is the

only way to insure a long-continued and honest administration of its powers.

1. They are not qualified to exercise themselves the executive department, but they are qualified to name the person who shall exercise it. With us, therefore, they choose this officer every four years. 2. They are not qualified to legislate. With us, therefore, they only choose the legislators. 3. They are not qualified to judge questions of law. But they are very capable of judging questions of fact. In the form of juries, therefore, they determine all matters of fact, leaving to the permanent judges, to decide the law resulting from those facts. But we all know that permanent judges acquire an *Esprit de corps*; that being known, they are liable to be tempted by bribery; that they are misled by favor, by relationship, by a spirit of party, by a devotion to the executive or legislative power; that it is better to leave a cause to the decision of cross and pile,* than to that of a judge biased to one side; and that the opinion of twelve honest jurymen gives still a better hope of right, than cross and pile does. It is in the power, therefore, of the juries, if they think permanent judges are under any bias whatever, in any cause, to take on themselves to judge the law as well as the fact. They never exercise this power, but when they suspect partiality in the judges; and by the exercise of this power, they have been the firmest bulwarks of English liberty. Were I called upon to decide, whether the people had best be omitted in the legislative or judiciary department, I would say it is better to leave them out of the legislative. The execution of the laws is more important than the making them. However, it is best to have the people in all the three departments, where that is possible.

Jefferson Appointed to the Office of Secretary of State.
Chesterfield, December 15th, 1789.

To the President:

Sir—I have received at this place** the honor of your

*Heads and tails.

**Jefferson had returned from Paris to the United States.

letters of October the 13th and November the 30th, and am truly flattered by your nomination of me to the very dignified office of Secretary of State; for which, permit me here to return you my humble thanks. Could any circumstance seduce me to overlook the disproportion between its duties and my talents, it would be the encouragement of your choice. But when I contemplate the extent of that office, embracing as it does the principal mass of domestic administration, together with the foreign, I can not be insensible of my inequality to it; and I should enter on it with gloomy forebodings from the criticisms and censures of a public, just indeed in their intentions, but sometimes misinformed and misled, and always too respectable to be neglected. I can not but foresee the possibility that this may end disagreeably for me, who, having no motive to public service, but the public satisfaction, would certainly retire the moment that satisfaction should appear to languish. On the other hand I feel a degree of familiarity with the duties of my present office, as far at least as I am capable of understanding its duties. The ground I have already passed over, enables me to see my way into that which is before me. The change of government too, taking place in a country where it is exercised, seems to open a possibility of procuring from the new rulers, some new advantages in commerce, which may be agreeable to our countrymen. So that as far as my fears, my hopes, or my inclinations might enter into this question, I confess they would not lead me to prefer a change.

But it is not for an individual to choose his post. You are to marshal us as may best be for the public good; and it is only in the case of its being indifferent to you, that I would avail myself of the option you have so kindly offered in your letter. If you think it better to transfer me to another post, my inclination must be no obstacle; nor shall it be, if there is any desire to suppress the office I now hold, or to reduce its grade. In either of these cases, be so good only as to signify to me by another line your ultimate wish, and I shall conform to it cordially. If it should be to remain at New York, my

chief comfort will be to work under your eye, my only shelter the authority of your name, and the wisdom of measures to be dictated by you and implicitly executed by me. Whatever you may be pleased to decide I do not see that the matters which have called me hither will permit me to shorten the stay I originally asked; that is to say, to set out on my journey northward till the month of March. As early as possible in that month I shall have the honor of paying my respects to you in New York. In the meantime, I have that of tendering you the homage of those sentiments and respectful attachment with which I am, sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant.

Shares of the United States Bank Taken Immediately.

Philadelphia, July 10th, 1791.

To Col. Monroe:

The Bank* filled and overflowed in the moment it was opened. Instead of twenty thousand shares, twenty-four thousand were offered, and a great many unrepresented, who had not suspected that so much haste was necessary. Thus it is that we shall be paying 13 per cent per annum for eight millions of paper money, instead of having that circulation of gold and silver for nothing. Experience has proved to us that a dollar of silver disappears for every dollar of paper emitted; and, for the paper emitted from the bank 7 per cent profits will be received by the subscribers for it as bank paper, and 6 per cent on the public paper of what it is the representative. Nor is there any reason to believe, that either the six millions of paper, or the two millions of specie deposited, will not be suffered to be withdrawn, and the paper thrown into circulation. The cash deposited by strangers for safe keeping will probably suffice for cash demands. Very few subscribers have offered from Virginia or North Carolina, which gives uneasiness to Hamilton. It is impossible to say where the appetite

*The bill establishing a United States bank, to which Jefferson was bitterly opposed, became a law in January, 1791.

for gambling will stop. The land office, the Federal town, certain schemes of manufacture, are all likely to be converted into aliment for that rage.

The Unit must Stand on Both Metals.

February, 1792.

To Col. Hamilton.*

Dear Sir—I return you the report on the mint, which I have read over with a great deal of satisfaction. I concur with you in thinking that the unit must stand on both metals, that the alloy should be the same in both, also in the proportion you establish between the value of the two metals. As to the question on whom the expense of coinage is to fall, I have been so little able to make up an opinion satisfactory to myself, as to be ready to concur in either decision. With respect to the dollar, it must be admitted by all the world, that there is great uncertainty in the meaning of the term, and therefore all the world will have justified Congress for their first act of removing the uncertainty by declaring what they understand by the term, but the uncertainty once removed, exists no longer, and I very much doubt a right now to change the value, and especially to lessen it. It would lead to so easy a mode of paying off their debts. Besides, the parties injured by this reduction of the value would have so much matter to urge in support of the first point of fixation. Should it be thought, however, that Congress may reduce the value of the dollar, I should be for adopting for our unit, instead of the dollar, either one ounce of pure silver, or one ounce of standard silver, so as to keep the unit of money a part of the system of measures, weights and coins. I hazard these thoughts to you extempore and am, dear sir, respectfully and affectionately.

*Father of the Federal Party and Secretary of the Treasury under President Washington.

Hamilton's Financial System; the Funding of the
Revolutionary Debt, and the Origin of the
United States Bank.

From the Anas.

Hamilton's financial system had passed. It had two objects: First, as a puzzle to exclude popular understanding and inquiry; second, as a machine for the corruption of the Legislature; for he avowed the opinion, that man could be governed by one of two motives only, force or interest; force, he observed, in this country was out of the question, and the interests, therefore, of the members must be laid hold of, to keep the Legislature in unison with the Executive. And with grief and shame it must be acknowledged that his machine was not without effect; that even in this, the birth of our government, some members were found sordid enough to bend their duty to their interests and to look after personal rather than public good.

It is well known that during the war, the greatest difficulty we encountered was the want of money or means to pay our soldiers who fought or our farmers, manufacturers, and merchants, who furnished the necessary supplies of food and clothing for them. After the expedient of paper money had exhausted itself, certificates of debt were given to the individual creditors, with assurance of payment, so soon as the United States should be able. But the distresses of these people often obliged them to part with these for the half, the fifth and even a tenth of their value; and speculators had made a trade of cozening them from the holders, by the most fraudulent practices, and persuasions that they would never be paid. In the bill for funding and paying these, Hamilton made no difference between the original holders and the fraudulent purchases of this paper. Great and just repugnance arose at putting these two classes of creditors on the same footing, and great exertions were used to pay the former the full value, and to the latter the price only which they had paid, with interest. But this would have prevented the game

which was to be played and for which the minds of greedy members were already tutored and prepared. When the trial of strength on these several efforts, had indicated the form in which the bill would finally pass, this being known within doors sooner than without, and especially than to those who were in distant parts of the Union, the base scramble began. Couriers and relay horses by land, and swift-sailing pilot boats by sea, were flying in all directions. Active partners and agents were associated and employed in every State, town and country neighborhood, and this paper was bought up at five shillings, and even as low as two shillings in the pound, before the holder knew that Congress had already provided for its redemption at par. Immense sums were thus filched from the poor and ignorant, and fortunes accumulated by those who had themselves been poor enough before. Men thus enriched by the dexterity of a leader, would follow, of course, the chief who was leading them to fortune, and become the zealous instruments of all his enterprises.

This game was over, and another was on the carpet, at the moment of my arrival; and to this I was most ignorantly and innocently made to hold the candle. This fiscal manoeuvre is well known by the name of the Assumption. Independently of the debts of Congress, the States had during the war contracted separate and heavy debts; and Massachusetts particularly, in an absurd attempt, absurdly conducted, on the British post of Penobscott; and the more debt Hamilton could rake up, the more plunder for his mercenaries. This money, whether wisely or foolishly spent, was pretended to have been spent for general purposes, and ought, therefore, to be paid from the general purse. But it was objected, that nobody knew what these debts were, what their amount, or what their proofs. No matter; we will guess them to be twenty millions. But of these twenty millions, we do not know how much should be reimbursed to one State, or how much to another. No matter; we will guess. And so another scramble was set on foot among the several States, and some got much, some little, some

nothing. But the main object was obtained, the phalanx of the Treasury was reinforced by additional recruits. This measure produced the most bitter and angry contest ever known in Congress, before or since the union of the States. I arrived in the midst of it. But a stranger to the ground, a stranger to the actors on it, so long absent as to have lost all familiarity with the subject, and as yet unaware of its object, I took no concern in it. The great and trying question, however, was lost in the House of Representatives. So high were the feuds excited by this subject that on its rejection business was suspended. Congress met and adjourned from day to day without doing anything, the parties being too much out of temper to do business together. The Eastern members particularly, who, with Smith from South Carolina, were the principal gamblers in these scenes, threatened a secession and dissolution. Hamilton was in despair. As I was going to the President's one day, I met him in the street. He walked me backwards and forwards before the President's door for half an hour. He painted pathetically the temper into which the Legislature had been wrought; the disgust of those who were called the creditor States; the danger of the secession of their members, and the separation of the States. He observed that the members of the administration ought to act in concert; that though this question was not of my department, yet a common duty should make it a common concern; that the President was the center on which all administrative questions ultimately rested, and that all of us should rally around him, and support, with joint efforts, measures approved by him; and that the question having been lost by a small majority only, it was probable that an appeal from me to the judgment and discretion of some of my friends, might effect a change in the vote, and the machine of government, now suspended, might be again set into motion. I told him that I was really a stranger to the whole subject; that not having yet informed myself of the system of finances adopted, I knew not how far this was a necessary sequence; that undoubtedly, if its rejection endangered a

dissolution of our Union at this incipient stage, I should deem that the most unfortunate of all consequences, to avert which all partial and temporary evils should be yielded.

There had before been propositions to fix the seat of government either at Philadelphia, or at Georgetown on the Potomac; and it was thought that by giving it to Philadelphia for ten years, and to Georgetown permanently afterwards, this might, as an anodyne, calm in some degree the ferment which might be excited by the other measure alone. So two of the Potomac members (White and Lee, but White with a revulsion of stomach almost convulsive), agreed to change their votes, and Hamilton undertook to carry the other point. In doing this the influence he had established over the Eastern members, with the agency of Robert Morris with those of the middle States, effected his side of the engagement; and so the Assumption was passed, and twenty millions of stock divided among favored States, and thrown in as a pabulum to the stock-jobbing herd. This added to the number of votaries to the Treasury, and made its chief the master of every vote in the Legislature, which might give to the government the direction suited to his political views.

I know well, and so must be understood, that nothing like a majority in Congress had yielded to this corruption. Far from it. But a division, not very unequal, had already taken place in the honest part of that body, between the parties styled Republican and Federal. The latter being monarchists in principle, adhered to Hamilton of course, as their leader in that principle, and this mercenary phalanx added to them, insured him always a majority in both Houses; so that the whole action of Legislature was now under the direction of the Treasury. Still the machine was not complete. The effect of the funding system, and of the Assumption, would be temporary; it would be lost with the loss of the individual members whom it has enriched, and some engine of influence more permanent must be contrived, while these myrmidons were yet in place to carry it through all op-

position. This engine was the Bank of the United States. All that history is known, so I shall say nothing about it. While the government remained at Philadelphia, a selection of members of both Houses were constantly kept as directors who, on every question interesting to that institution, or to the views of the Federal head, voted at the will of that head; and, together with the stockholding members, could always make the Federal vote that of the majority. By this combination, legislative expositions were given to the constitution, and all the administrative laws were shaped on the model of England, and so passed. And from this influence we were not relieved, until the removal from the precincts of the bank, to Washington.

Here then was the real ground of the opposition which was made to the course of administration. Its object was to preserve the Legislature pure and independent of the executive, to restrain the administration to Republican forms and principles, and not permit the constitution to be construed into a monarchy, and to be warped, in practice, into all the principles and pollutions of their favorite English model. Nor was this an opposition to Gen. Washington. He was true to the Republican charge confided to him; and has solemnly and repeatedly protested to me, in our conversations, that he would lose the last drop of his blood in support of it; and he did this the oftener and with the more earnestness, because he knew my suspicions of Hamilton's designs against it, and wished to quiet them. For he was not aware of the drift, or of the effect of Hamilton's schemes. Unversed in financial projects and calculations and budgets, his approbation of them was bottomed on his confidence in the man.

Jefferson Urges Gen. Washington to Serve a Second Term, and He Delineates the Difference Between the Two Parties.

Philadelphia, May 23d, 1792.

To the President of the United States:

Dear Sir—I have determined to make the subject of a

letter what for some time past has been a subject of inquietude to my mind, without having found a good occasion of disburthening itself to you in conversation, during the busy scenes which occupied you here. Perhaps, too, you may be able in your present situation, or on the road, to give it more time and reflection than you could do here at any moment.

When you first mentioned to me your purpose of retiring from the government, though I felt all the magnitude of the event, I was in a considerable degree silent. I knew that, to such a mind as yours, persuasion was idle and impertinent; that before forming your decision you had weighed all the reasons for and against the measure, had made up your mind on full view of them, and that there could be little hope of changing the result. Pursuing my reflections, too, I knew we were some day to try to walk alone, and if the essay should be made while you should be alive and looking on, we should derive confidence from that circumstance, and resource, if it failed. The public mind, too, was calm and confident, and therefore, in a favorable state for making the experiment. Had no change of circumstances intervened, I should not, with any hopes of success, have now ventured to propose to you a change of purpose. But the public mind is no longer confident and serene; and that from causes in which you are no ways personally mixed. Though these causes have been hackneyed in the public papers in detail, it may not be amiss, in order to calculate the effect they are capable of producing, to take a view of them in the mass, giving to each the form, real or imaginary, under which they have been presented.

It has been urged, then, that a public debt, greater than we can possibly pay, before other causes of adding new debt to it will occur, has been artificially created by adding together the whole amount of the debtor and creditor sides of accounts, instead of only taking their balances, which could have been paid off in a short time; that this accumulation of debt has taken forever out of our power those easy sources of revenue which, applied to the ordinary necessities and exigencies of government, would

have answered them habitually, and covered us from habitual murmurings against taxes and tax-gatherers, reserving extraordinary calls for those extraordinary occasions which would animate the people to meet them; that though the calls for money have been no greater than we must expect generally, for the same or equivalent exigencies, yet we are already obliged to stram the impost till it produces clamor, and will produce evasion and war on our own citizens to collect it, and even to resort to an excise law of odious character with the people, partial in its operation, unproductive unless enforced by arbitrary and vexatious means, and committing the authority of the government in parts where resistance is most probable and coercion least practicable. They cite propositions in Congress, and suspect other projects on foot still to increase the mass of debt. They say that by borrowing at two-thirds of the interest, we might have paid off the principal in two-thirds of the time; but that from this we are precluded by its being made irredeemable, but in small portions and long terms; that this irredeemable quality was given it for the avowed purpose of inviting its transfer to foreign countries. They predict that this transfer of the principal, when completed, will occasion an exportation of three millions of dollars annually for the interest, a drain of coin, of which, as there has been no examples, no calculation can be made of its consequences; that the banishment of our coin will be complicated by the creation of ten millions of paper money, in the form of bank bills now issuing into circulation. They think the ten or twelve per cent annual profit paid to the lenders of this paper medium taken out of the pockets of the people, who would have had without interest the coin it is banishing; that all the capital employed in paper speculation is barren and useless, producing, like that on a gaming table, no accession to itself, and is withdrawn from commerce and agriculture, where it would have produced addition to the common mass; that it nourishes in our citizens habits of vice and idleness, instead of industry and morality; that it has furnished effectual means of corrupting such a portion of

the Legislature as turns the balance between the honest voters, whichever way it is directed; that this corrupt squadron, deciding the voice of the Legislature, have manifested their dispositions to get rid of the limitations imposed by the Constitution on the general Legislature, limitations, on the faith of which the States acceded to that instrument; that the ultimate object of all this it to prepare the way for a change from the present Republican form of government to that of monarchy, of which the English constitution is to be the model; that this was contemplated by the convention is no secret, because its partisans have made more of it. To effect it then was impracticable, but they are still eager after their object, and are predisposing everything for its ultimate attainment. So many of them have got into the Legislature, that, aided by the corrupt squadron of paper dealers, who are at their devotion, they make a majority in both Houses. The Republican (Democratic) party, who wish to preserve the government in its present form, are fewer in number; they are fewer even when joined by the two, three or half dozen anti-Federalists, who, though they dare not avow it, are still opposed to any general government; but, being less so to a Republican than a monarchical one, they naturally join those whom they think pursuing the lesser evil.

Of all the mischiefs objected to the system of measures before mentioned, none is so afflicting and fatal to every honest hope, as the corruption of the Legislature. As it was the earliest of these measures, it became the instrument for producing the risk, and will be the instrument for producing in future a king, lords and commons, or whatever else those who direct it may choose. Withdrawn such a distance from the eye of their constituents, and these so dispersed as to be inaccessible to public information, and particularly to that of the conduct of their own representatives, they will form the most corrupt government on earth, if the means of their corruption be not prevented. The only hope of safety hangs now on the numerous representation which is to come forward the ensuing year. Some of the new members will be, proba-

bly, either in principle or interest, with the present majority; but it is expected that the great mass will form an accession to the Republican party. They will not be able to undo all which the two preceding Legislatures, and especially the first, have done. Public faith and right will oppose this. But some parts of the system may be rightfully reformed, a liberation from the rest unremittingly pursued as fast as right will permit, and the door shut in future against similar commitments of the nation. Should the next Legislature take this course, it will draw upon them the whole monarchical and paper interest; but the latter, I think, will not go all lengths with the former, because creditors will never, of their own accord, fly off entirely from their debtors; therefore, this is the alternative least likely to produce convulsion. But should the majority of the new members be still in the same principles with the present, and show that we have nothing to expect but a continuance of the same practices, it is not easy to conjecture what would be the result, nor what means would be resorted to for correction of the evil. True wisdom would direct that they should be temperate and peaceable; but the division of sentiment and interest happens unfortunately to be so geographical, that no mortal can say that what is most wise and temperate would prevail against what is most easy and obvious? I can scarcely contemplate a more incalculable evil than the breaking of the Union into two or more parts. Yet when we consider the mass which opposed the original coalescence; when we consider that it lay chiefly in the Southern quarter; that the Legislature have availed themselves of no occasion of allaying it, but on the contrary, whenever Northern and Southern prejudices have come into conflict, the latter have been sacrificed and the former soothed; that the owners of the debt are in the Southern, and the holders of it in the Northern division; that the anti-Federal champions are now strengthened in argument by the fulfillment of their predictions; that this has been brought about by the monarchical Federalists themselves, who, having been for the new government merely as a stepping stone to monarchy,

have themselves adopted the very constructions of the Constitution, of which, when advocating its acceptance before the tribunal of the people, they declared it unsusceptible; that the Republican Federalists who espoused the same government for its intrinsic merits, are disarmed of their weapons; that which they denied as prophecy, having now become true history, who can be sure that these things may not proselyte the small number which was wanting to place the majority on the other side? And this is the event at which I tremble, and to prevent which I consider your continuing at the head of affairs as of the last importance. The confidence of the whole Union is centered in you. Your being at the helm will be more than an answer to every argument which can be used to alarm and lead the people in any quarter, into violence and secession. North and South will hang together if they have you to hang on; and if the first correction of a numerous representation should fail in its effect, your presence will give time for trying others, not inconsistent with the union and peace of the States.

I am perfectly aware of the oppression under which your present office lays your mind, and of the ardor with which you pant for domestic life. But there is sometimes an eminence of character on which society have such peculiar claims as to control the predilections of the individual for a particular walk of happiness, and restrain him to that alone arising from the present and future benedictions of mankind. This seems to be your condition, and the law imposed on you by Providence in forming your character, and fashioning the events on which it was to operate; and it is to motives like these, and not to personal anxieties of mine or others who have no right to call on you for sacrifices that I appeal and urge a revival of it, on the ground of change in the aspect of things. Should an honest majority result from the new and enlarged representation; should those acquiesce whose principles or interest they may control, your wishes for retirement would be gratified with less danger, as soon as that shall be manifest, without awaiting the completion of the second period of four years.

One or two sessions will determine the crisis; and I can not but hope that you can resolve to add more to the many years you have already sacrificed to the good of mankind.

The fear of suspicion that any selfish motive of continuance in office may enter into this solicitation on my part, obliges me to declare that no such motive exists. It is a thing of mere indifference to the public whether I retain or relinquish my purpose of closing my tour with the first periodical renovation of the government. I know my own measure too well to suppose that my services contribute anything to the public confidence, or the public utility. Multitudes can fill the office in which you have been pleased to place me, as much to their advantage and satisfaction. I have, therefore, no motive to consult but my own inclination, which is bent irresistibly on the tranquil enjoyment of my family, my farm and my books. I should repose among them, it is true, in far greater security, if I were to know that you remained at the watch; and I hope it will be so. To the inducements urged from a view of our domestic affairs, I will add a bare mention of what indeed need only to be mentioned, that weighty motives for your continuance are to be found in our foreign affairs. I think it probable that both the Spanish and English negotiations, if not completed before your purpose is known, will be suspended from the moment it is known, and the latter nation will then use double diligence in fomenting the Indian war.

With my wishes for the future, I shall at the same time express my gratitude for the past, at least my portion of it; and beg permission to follow you, whether in public or private life, with those sentiments of sincere attachment and respect, with which I am unalterably, dear sir, your affectionate friend and humble servant.

The Eastern States in Favor of a King, Lords and Commons.

Philadelphia, June 16th, 1792.

To M. de La Fayette:

Behold you then, my dear friend, at the head of a great army establishing the liberties of your country against a foreign enemy. May heaven favor your cause, and make you the channel through which it may pour its favors. While you are exterminating the monster aristocracy and pulling out the teeth and fangs of its associate, monarchy, a contrary tendency is discovered in some here. A sect has shown itself among us, who declare they espoused our new constitution, not as a good and sufficient thing itself, but only as a step to an English constitution, the only thing good and sufficient in itself, in their eye. It is happy for us that these are preachers without followers, and that our people are firm and constant in their Republican purity. You will wonder to be told that it is from the Eastward chiefly that these champions for a king, lords and commons, come. They get some important associates from New York, and are puffed up by a tribe of stock jobbers which have been hatched in a bed of corruption made up after the model of their beloved England. Too many of these stock jobbers and king jobbers have come into our Legislature, or rather too many of our Legislature have become stock jobbers and king jobbers. However, the voice of the people is beginning to make itself heard, and will probably cleanse their seats at the ensuing election.

The Heads of the Federal Leaders are Itching for Crowns, Coronets and Mitres.

Philadelphia, June 19th, 1792.

To Thomas Paine:

Dear Sir—I received with great pleasure the present of your pamphlets, as well for the thing itself, as that it was a testimony of your recollection. Would you believe it possible that in this country there should be high and important characters who need your lessons in Re-

publicanism, and who do not heed them? It is but too true that we have a sect preaching up and pouting after an English constitution of king, lords and commons, and whose heads are itching for crowns, coronets and mitres. But our people, my good friend, are firm and unanimous in their principles of Republicanism and there is no better proof of it than that they love what you write, and read it with delight. The printers season every newspaper with extracts from your last, as they did before from your first part of the Rights of Man. They have both served here to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to prove that though the latter appears on the surface, it is on the surface only. The bulk below is sound and pure. Go on then in doing with your pen what in other times was done with the sword; show that reformation is more practicable by operating on the mind than on the body of man, and be assured that it has not a more sincere votary nor you a more ardent well-wisher than yours, etc.

Jefferson's Split With Hamilton.

Monticello, September 9th, 1792.

To the President of the United States:

I now take the liberty of proceeding to that part of your letter wherein you notice the internal dissensions which have taken place within our government, and their disagreeable effect on its movements. That such dissensions have taken place is certain, and even among those who are nearest to you in the administration. To no one have they given deeper concern than myself; to no one equal mortification at being myself a part of them. Though I take to myself no more than my share of the general observations of your letter, yet I am so desirous ever that you should know the whole truth, and believe no more than the truth, that I am glad to seize every occasion of developing to you whatever I do or think relative to the government; and shall, therefore, ask permission to be more lengthy now than the occasion particularly calls for, or could otherwise perhaps justify.

When I embarked in the government, it was with a determination to intermeddle not at all with the Legislature, and as little as possible with my co-departments. The first and only instance of variance from the former part of my resolution, I was duped into by the Secretary of the Treasury, and made a tool for forwarding his schemes, not then sufficiently understood by me; and of all the errors of my political life, this has occasioned me the deepest regret. It has ever been my purpose to explain this to you, when, from being actors on the scene, we shall have become uninterested spectators only. The second part of my resolution has been religiously observed with the War Department; and as to that of the Treasury, has never been farther swerved from than by the mere enunciation of my sentiments in conversation, and chiefly among those who, expressing the same sentiments, drew mine from me. If it has been supposed that I have ever intrigued among the members of the Legislature to defeat the plans of the Secretary of the Treasury, it is contrary to all truth. As I never had the desire to influence the members, so neither had I any other means than my friendships, which I valued too highly to risk by usurpation on their freedom of judgment, and the conscientious pursuit of their own sense of duty. That I have utterly, in my private conversations, disapproved of the system of the Secretary of the Treasury, I acknowledge and avow; and this was not merely a speculative difference. His system flowed from principles adverse to liberty, and was calculated to undermine and demolish the Republic, by creating an influence of his department over the members of the Legislature. I saw this influence actually produced, and its first fruits to be the establishment of the great outlines of his project by the votes of the very persons who, having swallowed his bait, were laying themselves out to profit by his plans; and that had these persons withdrawn, as those interested in a question ever should, the vote of the disinterested majority was clearly the reverse of what they made it. These were no longer the votes then of the representatives of the people, but of deserters from the rights and interests of the

people; and it was impossible to consider their decisions, which had nothing in view but to enrich themselves, as the measures of the fair majority, which ought always to be respected. If, what was actually doing, begat uneasiness in those who wished for virtuous government, what was further proposed was not less threatening to the friends of the Constitution. For, in a report on the subject of manufactures (still to be acted on), it was expressly assumed that the General Government has a right to exercise all powers which may be for the general welfare, that is to say, all the legitimate powers of government; since no government has a legitimate right to do what is not for the welfare of the governed. There was, indeed, a sham limitation of the universality of this power to cases where money is to be employed. But about what is it that money can not be employed? Thus the object of these plans, taken together, is to draw all the powers of government into the hands of the general Legislature, to establish means for corrupting a sufficient corps in that Legislature to divide the honest votes, and preponderate, by their own, the scale which suited, and to have the corps under the command of the Secretary of the Treasury, for the purpose of subverting, step by step, the principles of the Constitution which he has so often declared to be a thing of nothing, which must be changed. Such views might have justified something more than mere expressions of dissent, beyond which, nevertheless, I never went. Has abstinence from the department, committed to me, been equally observed by him? To say nothing of other interferences equally known, in the case of the two nations, with which we have the most intimate connection, France and England, my system was to give some satisfactory distinctions to the former, of little cost to us, in return for the solid advantages yielded us by them; and to have met the English with some restrictions which might induce them to abate their severities against our commerce. I have always supposed this coincided with your sentiments. Yet the Secretary of the Treasury, by his cabals with members of the Legislature, and by high-toned declamations on other occa-

sions, has forced down his own system, which was exactly the reverse. He undertook, of his own authority, the conferences with the ministers of those two nations, and was, on every consultation, provided with some report of a conversation with the one or the other of them, adapted to his views. These views, thus made to prevail, their execution fell, of course, to me; and I can safely appeal to you, who have seen all my letters and proceedings, whether I have not carried them into execution as sincerely as if they had been my own, though I ever considered them as inconsistent with the honor and interest of our country. That they have been inconsistent with our interest is but too fatally proved by the stab to our navigation given by the French. So that if the question be by whose fault is it that Col. Hamilton and myself have not drawn together, the answer will depend on that to two other questions, whose principles of administration best justify, by their purity, conscientious adherence? And which of us has, notwithstanding, stepped furthest into the control of the department of the other?

To this justification of opinions, expressed in the way of conversation, against the views of Col. Hamilton, I beg leave to add some notice of his late charges against me in Fenno's Gazette; for neither the style, matter, nor venom of the pieces alluded to, can leave a doubt of their author. Spelling my name and character at full length to the public, while he conceals his own under the signature of "An American," he charges me, first, with having written letters from Europe to my friends to oppose the present Constitution, while depending; second, with a desire of not paying the public debt; third, with setting up a paper to decry and slander the government. I. The first charge is most false. No man in the United States, I suppose, approved of every tittle in the Constitution; no one, I believe, approved more of it than I did, and more of it was certainly disapproved by my accuser than by me, and of its parts most vitally Republican. Of this the few letters I wrote on the subject (not half a dozen I believe) will be a proof; and for my own

satisfaction and justification, I must tax you with the reading of them when I return to where they are. You will there see that my objection to the Constitution was, that it wanted a bill of rights securing freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom from standing armies, trial by jury, and a constant habeas corpus act. Col. Hamilton's was, that it wanted a king and house of lords. The sense of America has approved my objection and added the bill of rights, not the king and lords. I also thought a longer term of service, insusceptible of renewal, would have made a President more independent. My country has thought otherwise, I have acquiesced implicitly. He wishes the General Government should have power to make laws binding the States in all cases whatsoever. Our country has thought otherwise; has he acquiesced? Notwithstanding my wish for a bill of rights, my letters strongly urged the adoption of the Constitution, by nine States at least, to secure the good it contained. I at first thought that the best method of securing the bill of rights would be for four States to hold off till such a bill should be agreed to. But the moment I saw Mr. Hancock's proposition to pass the Constitution as it stood, and give perpetual instructions to the representatives of every State to insist on a bill of rights, I acknowledged the superiority of his plan and advocated universal adoption. 2.-The second charge is equally untrue. My whole correspondence while in France, and every word, letter and act on the subject, since my return, prove that no man is more ardently intent to see the public debt soon and sacredly paid off than I am. This exactly marks the difference between Col. Hamilton's views and mine, that I would wish the debt paid to-morrow; he wishes it never to be paid, but always to be a thing wherewith to corrupt and manage the Legislature. 3. I have never enquired what number of sons, relatives and friends of Senators, Representatives, printers or other useful partisans Col. Hamilton has provided for among the hundred clerks of his department, the thousand excisemen, at his nod, and spread over the Union; nor could ever have imagined that the man who

has the shuffling of millions backwards and forwards from paper into money and money into paper, from Europe to America, and America to Europe, the dealing out of treasury secrets among his friends in what time and measure he pleases, and who never slips an occasion of making friends with his means, that such a one, I say, would have brought forward a charge against me for having appointed the poet, Freneau, translating clerk to my office, with a salary of \$250 a year.

Col. Hamilton can see no motive for any appointment, but that of making a convenient partizan. But you, sir, who have received from me recommendations of a Rittenhouse, Barlow, Paine, will believe that talents and science are sufficient motives with me in appointments to which they are fitted, and that Freneau, as a man of genius might find a preference in my eye to be a translating clerk, and make good title to the little aids I could give him as the editor of a gazette, by procuring subscriptions to his paper, as I did some before it appeared and as I have with pleasure done for the labors of other men of genius. I hold it to be one of the distinguishing excellences of elective over hereditary successions, that the talents which nature has provided in sufficient proportion, should be selected by the society for the government of their affairs, rather than that this should be transmitted through the loins of knaves and fools, passing from the debauches of the table to those of the bed. So much for the past, a word now of the future.

When I came into this office, it was with a resolution to retire from it as soon as I could with decency. It pretty early appeared to me that the proper moment would be the first of those epochs at which the Constitution seems to have contemplated a periodical change or renewal of the public servants. To a thorough disregard of the honors and emoluments of office, I join as great a value for the esteem of my countrymen, and conscious of having merited it by an integrity which can not be reproached, and by an enthusiastic devotion to their rights and liberty, I will not suffer my retirement to be clouded by the slanders of a man whose history, from

the moment at which history can stoop to notice him, is a tissue of machinations against the liberty of the country, which has not only received and given him bread, but heaped its honors on his head. Though little known to the people of America, I believe that as far as I am known, it is not as an enemy to the Republic, nor an intriguer against it, nor a waster of its revenue, nor prostitute of it to the purposes of corruption, as the "American" represents me.

Jefferson Refuses to Engage in a Money-Making Enterprise While in Public Office.

Philadelphia, March 18th, 1793.

To _____*

Dear Sir—I received your kind favor of the 26th ult., and thank you for its contents as sincerely as if I could engage in what they propose. When I first entered the stage of public life (now twenty-four years ago), I came to a resolution never to engage while in public office in any kind of enterprise for the improvement of my fortune, nor to wear any other character than that of a farmer. I have never departed from it in a single instance; and I have in multiplied instances found myself happy in being able to decide and to act as a public servant, clear of all interest, in the multiform questions that have arisen, wherein I have seen others embarrassed and biased by having got themselves into a more interested situation. Thus I have thought myself richer in contentment than I should have been with any increase of fortune. Certainly I should have been much wealthier had I remained in that private condition which renders it lawful and even laudable to use proper efforts to better it. However, my public career is now closing, and I will go through on the principle on which I have hitherto acted. But I feel myself under obligations to repeat my thanks for this mark of your attention and friendship.

We have just received here the news of the decapita-

*No address.

tion of the King of France. Should the present foment in Europe not produce Republics everywhere, it will at least soften the monarchical governments by rendering monarchs amenable to punishment like other criminals, and doing away that rage of insolence and oppression, the inviolability of the King's person. We, I hope, shall adhere to our Republican government, and keep it to its original principles by narrowly watching it. I am, with great and sincere affection, dear sir, your friend and servant.

Jefferson's Retirement from Gen. Washington's Cabinet.
Philadelphia, December 31, 1793.

To the President of the United States:

Dear Sir—Having had the honor of communicating to you in my letter of the last of July, my purpose of retiring from the office of Secretary of State at the end of the month of September, you were pleased, for particular reasons, to wish its postponement to the close of the year. That term being now arrived and my propensities to retirement becoming daily more and more irresistible, I now take the liberty of resigning the office into your hands. Be pleased to accept with it my sincere thanks for all the indulgences which you have been so good as to exercise towards me in the discharge of its duties. Conscious that my need of them has been great, I have still ever found them greater, without any other claim on my part than a firm pursuit of what has appeared to me to be right and a thorough disdain of all means which were not as open and honorable as their object was pure. I carry into my retirement a lively sense of your goodness and shall continue gratefully to remember it. With very sincere prayers for your life, health and tranquility, I pray you to accept the homage of the great and constant respect and attachment with which I have the honor to be, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

An Age of Experiments in Government.

Monticello, Feb. 6, 1795.

To .M. D'Ivernois:

We have chanced to live in an age which will probably be distinguished in history for its experiments in government on a larger scale than has yet taken place. But we shall not live to see the result. The grosser absurdities, such as hereditary magistracies, we shall see exploded in our day, long experience having already pronounced condemnation against them. But what is to be the substitute? This our children or grand-children will answer. We may be satisfied with the certain knowledge that none can ever be tried, so stupid, so unrighteous, so oppressive, so destructive of every end for which honest men enter into government, as that which their forefathers had established and their fathers alone venture to tumble headlong from the stations they have so long abused. It is unfortunate that the efforts of mankind to recover the freedom of which they have been so long deprived will be accompanied with violence, with errors, and even with crimes. But while we weep over the means we must pray for the end.

 Rogues Are Uppermost in the Higher Classes.

Monticello, Aug. 30, 1795.

To Mann Page:

I do not believe with the Rochefoucaults and Montaignes* that fourteen out of fifteen men are rogues; I believe a great abatement from that proportion may be made in favor of general honesty. But I have always found that rogues would be uppermost, and I do not know that the proportion is too strong for the higher orders, and for those who, rising above the swinish multitude, always contrive to nestle themselves into the places of power and profit. These rogues set out with stealing the people's good opinion, and then steal from them the right of withdrawing it, by contriving laws

*Rochefoucault and Montaigne, two French philosophers.

and associations against the power of the people themselves.

1796—1896.

Monticello, August 24th, 1796.

To Philip Mazzei:

The aspect of our politics has wonderfully changed since you left us. In place of that noble love of liberty, and Republican government, which carried us triumphantly through the war, an Anglican monarchical and aristocratical party has sprung up, whose avowed object is to draw over us the substance, as they have already done the forms, of the British government. The main body of our citizens, however, remain true to their Republican principles; the whole landed interest is Republican, and so is a great mass of talents. Against us are the executive, the judiciary, two out of three branches of the Legislature, all the officers of the government, all who want to be officers, all timid men who prefer the calm of despotism to the boisterous sea of liberty, British merchants and Americans trading on British capital, speculators and holders in the banks and public funds, a contrivance invented for the purposes of corruption, and for assimilating us in all things to the rotten as well as the sound parts of the British model. It would give you a fever were I to name to you the apostates who have gone over to these heresies, men who were Samsons in the field and Solomons in the council, but who have had their heads shorn by the harlot England. In short, we are likely to preserve the liberty we have obtained only by unremitting labors and perils. But we shall preserve it; and our mass of weight and wealth on the good side is so great, as to leave no danger that force will ever be attempted against us. We have only to awake and snap the Lilliputian cords with which they have been entangling us during the first sleep which succeeded our labors.

Jefferson Elected Vice-President. The Great Body of
the American Citizens of the Democratic
Sentiment.

Monticello, February 9th, 1797.

To James Sullivan:

Dear Sir—I have many acknowledgments to make for the friendly anxiety you are pleased to express in your letter of January the 12th, for my undertaking the office to which I have been elected. The idea that I would accept the office of President, but not that of Vice-President of the United States, had not its origin with me. I never thought of questioning the free exercise of the right of my fellow citizens, to marshal those whom they call into their service according to their fitness, nor ever presumed that they were not the best judges of that. Had I indulged a wish in what manner they should dispose of me, it would precisely have coincided with what they have done. Neither the splendor, nor the power, nor the difficulties, nor the fame or defamation, as may happen, attached to the first magistracy, have any attractions for me. The helm of a free government is always arduous, and never was ours more so, than at a moment when two friendly people are like to be committed in war by the ill temper of their administrations. I am so much attached to my domestic situation, that I would not have wished to leave it at all. However, if I am to be called from it, the shortest absences and most tranquil station suit me best. I value highly, indeed, the part my fellow citizens gave me in their late vote, as an evidence of their esteem, and I am happy in the information you are so kind as to give, that many in the Eastern quarter entertain the same sentiment.

Where a constitution like ours wears a mixed aspect of monarchy and republicanism, its citizens will naturally divide into two classes of sentiment, according as their tone of body or mind, their habits, connections and callings, induce them to wish to strengthen either the monarchical or the Republican features of the constitution. Some will consider it as an elective monarchy,

which had better be made hereditary, and therefore endeavor to lead towards that all the forms and principles of its administration. Others will view it as an energetic Republic, turning in all its points on the pivot of free and frequent elections. The great body of our native citizens are unquestionably of the Republican (Democratic) sentiment. Foreign education, and foreign connections of interest, have produced some exceptions in every part of the Union, North and South, and perhaps other circumstances in your quarter, better known to you, may have thrown into the scale of exceptions a greater number of the rich. Still there, I believe, and here, I am sure, the great mass is Republican. Nor do any of the forms in which the public disposition has been pronounced in the last half dozen years, evince the contrary. All of them, when traced to their true source, have only been evidences of the preponderant popularity of a particular great character. That influence once withdrawn, and our countrymen left to the operation of their own unbiased good sense, I have no doubt we shall see a pretty rapid return of general harmony, and our citizens moving in phalanx in the paths of regular liberty, order and a sacrosanct adherence to the constitution. Thus I think it will be, if war with France can be avoided. But if that untoward event comes athwart us in our present point of deviation, nobody, I believe, can foresee into what port it will drive us.

Equilibrium Between State and Federal Governments
Necessary.

Philadelphia, February 23d, 1798.

To Peregrine Fitzhugh:

I do not think it for the interest of the general government itself, and still less of the Union at large, that the State governments should be so little respected as they have been. However, I dare say that in time all these as well as their central government, like the planets revolving round their common sun, acting and acted

upon according to their respective weights and distances, will produce that beautiful equilibrium on which our constitution is founded, and which I believe it will exhibit to the world in a degree of perfection, unexampled, but in the planetary system itself. The enlightened statesman, therefore, will endeavor to preserve the weight and influence of every part, as too much given to any member of it would destroy the general equilibrium.

The Alien and Sedition Laws Adopted by the Federals,
and Danger of War with France.

Philadelphia, May 31st, 1798.

To James Madison:

The bill from the Senate for capturing French armed vessels found hovering on our coast was passed in two days by the lower House, without a single alteration; and the Ganges, a twenty-gun sloop, fell down the river instantly to go on a cruise. She has since been ordered to New York, to convoy a vessel from that to this port. The alien (and sedition) bill* will be ready to-

*The alien and sedition law gave the President authority "to order all such aliens as he shall judge dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States, or shall have reasonable grounds to suspect are concerned in any treasonable or secret machinations against the government thereof, to depart out of the territory of the United States within such time as shall be expressed in such order." * * * "And be it further enacted, That if any person shall write, print, utter or publish, or shall cause or procure to be written, printed, uttered or published, or shall knowingly and willingly assist or aid in writing, printing, uttering or publishing any false, scandalous and malicious writing or writings against the Government of the United States, or either House of the Congress of the United States, or the President of the United States, with intent to defame the said Government, or either House of the said Congress, or the said President, or to bring them, or either of them, into contempt or disrepute, or to excite against them, or either or any of them, the hatred of the good people of the United States, or to stir up sedition within the United States, or to excite any unlawful combinations therein, for opposing or resisting any law of the United States, or any act of the President of the United States, done in pursuance of any such law, or of the powers in him vested by the Constitution of the United States, or to resist, oppose or defeat any such law or act, or to aid, encourage or abet any hostile designs of any foreign nation against the United States, their people or government, then such person, being thereof convicted before any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years.

day, probably, for its third reading in the Senate. It has been considerably mollified, particularly by a proviso saving the rights of treaties. Still, it is a most detestable thing. I was glad in yesterday's discussion, to hear it admitted on all hands, that laws of the United States, subsequent to a treaty, control its operation, and that the Legislature is the only power which can control a treaty. Both points are sound beyond doubt. This bill will unquestionably pass the House of Representatives, the majority there being very decisive, consolidated and bold enough to do anything. I have no doubt from the hints dropped they will pass a bill to declare the French treaty void. I question if they will think a declaration of war prudent, as it might alarm, and all its effects are answered by the act authorizing captures. A bill is brought in for suspending all communication with the dominions of France, which will no doubt pass. It is suspected that they mean to borrow money of individuals in London, on the credit of our land tax, and perhaps the guarantee of Great Britain. The land tax was yesterday debated, and a majority of six struck out the thirteenth section of the classification of houses, and taxed them by a different scale from the lands. Instead of this, is to be proposed a valuation of the houses and lands together. Volney* and a ship load of others sail on Sunday next. Another ship load will go off in about three weeks. It is natural to expect they go under irritations calculated to fan the flame. Not so Volney. He is most thoroughly impressed with the importance of preventing war, whether considered with reference to the interests of the two countries, of the cause of republicanism, or of man on the broad scale. But an eagerness to render this prevention impossible, leaves me without any hope. Some of those who have insisted that it was long since war on the part of France, are candid enough to admit that it is now begun on our part also. I enclose for your perusal a poem on the alien bill, written by Mr. Marshall. I do this, as well for your amusement as to get

*A French historian and philosopher.

you to take care of this copy for me till I return; for it will be lost in lending it, if I retain it here, as the publication was suppressed after the sale of a few copies, of which I was fortunate enough to get one.

P. S.—The President, it is said, has refused an Exequator to the Consul-General of France, Dupont.

Political Complexion of Different Sections of the Union,
and the Necessity of Her Maintenance.

Philadelphia, June 1, 1798.

To John Taylor:

Mr. New showed me your letter, which gave me an opportunity of observing what you said as to the effect, with you, of public proceedings, and that it was not unwise now to estimate the separate mass of Virginia and North Carolina, with a view to their separate existence. It is true that we are completely under the saddle of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and that they ride us very hard, cruelly insulting our feelings, as well as exhausting our strength and subsistence. Their natural friends, the three other Eastern States, join them from a sort of family pride, and they have the art to divide certain other parts of the Union, so as to make use of them to govern the whole. This is not new, it is the old practice of despots; to use a part of the people to keep the rest in order. And those who have once got an ascendancy, and possessed themselves of all the resources of the nation, their revenues and officers, have immense means for retaining their advantage. But our present situation is not a natural one. The Republicans (Democrats) through every part of the Union, say that it was the irresistible influence and popularity of Gen. Washington played off by the cunning of Hamilton, which turned the government over to anti-Republican hands, or turned the Republicans chosen by the people into anti-Republicans. He delivered it over to his successor in this State, and very untoward events since, improved with great artifice, have produced on the public mind the impressions we see. But still I repeat it, this is not the

natural state. Time alone would bring round an order of things more correspondent to the sentiments of our constituents. But are there no events impending, which will do it within a few months? The crisis with England, the public and authentic avowal of sentiments hostile to the leading principles of our constitution, the prospect of a war, in which we shall stand alone, land tax, stamp tax, increase of public debt, etc. Be this as it may, in every free and deliberating society, there must, from the nature of man, be opposite parties, and violent dissensions and discords, and one of these, for the most part, must prevail over the other for a longer or shorter time. Perhaps this party division is necessary to induce each to watch and delate to the people the proceedings of the other. But if on a temporary superiority of the one party, the other is to resort to a scission of the Union, no federal government can ever exist. If to rid ourselves of the present rule of Massachusetts and Connecticut, we break the Union, will the evil stop there? Suppose the New England States alone cut off, will our nature be changed? Are we not men still to the South of that, and with all the passions of men? Immediately, we shall see a Pennsylvania and a Virginia party arise in the residuary confederacy, and the public mind will be distracted with the same party spirit. What a game too will the one party have in their hands, by eternally threatening the other that unless they do so and so, they will join their Northern neighbors. If we reduce our Union to Virginia and North Carolina, immediately the conflict will be established between the representatives of these two States, and they will end by breaking into their simple units. Seeing, therefore, that an association of men who will not quarrel with one another is a thing which never yet existed, from the greatest confederacy of nations down to a town meeting or a vestry; seeing that we must have somebody to quarrel with, I had rather keep our New England associates for that purpose, than to see our bickerings transferred to others. A little patience, and we shall see the reign of witches pass over, their spells dissolved, and the people recover-

ing their true sight, restoring their government to its true principles. It is true, that in the meantime, we are suffering deeply in spirit, and incurring the horrors of a war, and long oppressions of enormous public debt. But who can say what would be the evils of a scission, and when and where they would end? Better keep together as we are, haul off from Europe as soon as we can, and from all attachments to any portions of it; and if they show their power just sufficiently to hoop us together, it will be the happiest situation in which we can exist. If the game runs sometimes against us at home, we must have patience till luck turns, and then we shall have an opportunity of winning back the principles we have lost. For this is a game where principles are the stake.

Jefferson's Political Faith.

Philadelphia, January 26th, 1799.

To Elbridge Gerry:

I shall make to you a profession of my political faith, in confidence that you will consider every future imputation on me of a contrary complexion, as bearing on its front the mark of falsehood and calumny. I do then, with sincere zeal, wish an inviolable preservation of our present federal Constitution, according to the true sense in which it was adopted by the States, that in which it was advocated by its friends, and not that which its enemies apprehended, who therefore, became its enemies; and I am opposed to the monarchising its features by the forms of its administration, with a view to conciliate a first transition to a President and Senate for life, and from that to an hereditary tenure of these offices, and thus to worm out the elective principle. I am for preserving to the States the powers not yielded by them to the Union, and to the Legislature of the Union its constitutional share in the division of powers; and I am not for transferring all the powers of the States to the General Government, and all those of that government to the executive branch. I am for a government rigorously

frugal and simple, applying all the possible savings of the public revenue to the discharge of the national debt; and not for a multiplication of officers and salaries merely to make partisans, and for increasing, by every device, the public debt, on the principle of its being a public blessing. I am relying, for internal defense, on our militia solely, till actual invasion, and for such a naval force only as may protect our coasts and harbors from such depredations as we have experienced; and not for a standing army in time of peace, which may overawe the public sentiment; nor for a navy, which, by its own expenses and the eternal wars in which it will implicate us, will grind us with public burdens and sink us under them. I am for free commerce with all nations; political connection with none; and little or no diplomatic establishment. And I am not for linking ourselves by new treaties with the quarrels of Europe; entering that field of slaughter to preserve their balance, or joining in the confederacy of kings to war against the principles of liberty. I am for freedom of religion and against all manoeuvres to bring about a legal ascendancy of one sect over another; for freedom of the press, and against all violations of the Constitution to silence by force and not by reason the complaints or criticisms, just or unjust, of our citizens against the conduct of their agents. And I am for encouraging the progress of science in all its branches; and not for raising a hue and cry against the sacred name of philosophy; for awing the human mind by stories of raw head and bloody bones* to a distrust of its own vision, and to repose implicitly on that of others; to go backwards instead of forwards to look for improvement; to believe that government, religion, morality and every other science were in the highest perfection in ages of the darkest ignorance, and that nothing can ever be devised more perfect than what was established by our forefathers. To these I will add that I was a sincere well-wisher to the success of the French revolution, and still wish it may end in the establish-

* A hobgoblin.

ment of a free and well-ordered Republic; but I have not been insensible under the atrocious depredations they have committed on our commerce. The first object of my heart is my own country. In that is embarked my family, my fortune, and my own existence. I have not one farthing of interest, nor one fibre of attachment out of it, nor a single motive of preference of any one nation to another, but in proportion as they are more or less friendly to us. But though deeply feeling the injuries of France, I did not think war the surest means of redressing them. I did believe that a mission sincerely disposed to preserve peace would obtain for us a peaceable and honorable settlement and retribution; and I appeal to you to say, whether this might not have been obtained, if either of your colleagues had been of the same sentiment with yourself.

These, my friend, are my principles; they are unquestionably the principles of the great body of our fellow citizens, and I know there is not one of them which is not yours also.

The New England States Opposed to Democratic Principles, and in Favor of Centralization.

Monticello, August 13th, 1800.

To Gideon Granger:

I am much comforted by the appearance of a change of opinion in your State,* for though we may obtain, and I believe shall obtain, a majority in the Legislature of the United States, attached to the preservation of the Federal Constitution according to its obvious principles, and those on which it was known to be received; attached equally to the preservation to the States of those rights unquestionably remaining with them; friends to the freedom of religion, freedom of the press, trial by jury and to economical government; opposed to standing armies, paper systems, war, and all connection, other than commerce, with any foreign nation; in short, a

* Connecticut.

majority firm in all those principles which we have espoused and the federalists have opposed uniformly; still, should the whole body of New England continue in opposition to these principles of government, either knowingly or through delusion, our government will be a very uneasy one. It can never be harmonious and solid, while so respectable a portion of its citizens support principles which go directly to a change of the Federal Constitution to sink the State governments, consolidate them into one, and to monarchize that. Our country is too large to have all its affairs directed by a single government. Public servants at such a distance, and from under the eye of their constituents, must, from the circumstance of distance, be unable to administer and overlook all the details necessary for the good government of the citizens, and the same circumstance, by rendering detection impossible to their constituents, will invite the public agents to corruption, plunder and waste. And I do verily believe that if the principle were to prevail of a common law being in force in the United States (which principle possesses the General Government at once of all the powers of the State governments, and reduces us to a single consolidated government), it would become the most corrupt government on the earth. You have seen the practices by which the public servants have been able to cover their conduct, or, where that could not be done, delusions by which they have varnished it for the eye of their constituents. What an augmentation of the field for jobbing, speculating, plundering, office building and office hunting would be produced by an assumption of all the State powers into the hands of the General Government. The true theory of our Constitution is surely the wisest and best, that the States are independent as to everything within themselves, and united as to everything respecting foreign nations. Let the General Government be reduced to foreign concerns only, and let our affairs be disentangled from those of all other nations, except as to commerce, which the merchants will manage the better, the more they are left free to manage for themselves, and our General Government may be

reduced to a very simple organization, and a very un-expensive one; a few plain duties to be performed by a few servants. But I repeat, that this simple and economical mode of government can never be secured, if the New England States continue to support the contrary system. I rejoice, therefore, in every appearance of their returning to those principles which I had always imagined to be almost innate in them.

From Jefferson's First Inauguration Address.

March 4th, 1801.

About to enter, fellow citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper that you should understand what I deem the essential principles of our government, and consequently those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them within the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle, but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political, peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations—entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns and the surest bulwarks against anti-Republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people—a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of the revolution, where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority—the vital principle of Republics, from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia—our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts and sacred

preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information and the arraignment of all abuses at the bar of public reason; freedom of religion; freedom of the press; freedom of person under the protection of the habeas corpus; and trial by juries impartially selected—these principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and the blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment. They should be the creed of our political faith—the text of civil instruction—the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty and safety.

Jefferson, the Originator of the Monroe Doctrine.

Washington, March 21st, 1801.

To Dr. George Logan:

It ought to be the very first object of our pursuits to have nothing to do with the European interests and politics. Let them be free or slaves at will, navigators or agricultural, swallowed into one government or divided into a thousand, we have nothing to fear from them in any form. If, therefore, to take a part in their conflicts, would be to divert our energies from creation to destruction. Our commerce is so valuable to them that they will be glad to purchase it when the only price we ask is to do us justice. I believe we have in our own hands the means of peaceable coercion; and that the moment they see our government so united as that they can make use of it, they will for their own interest be disposed to do us justice. In this way we shall not be obliged by any treaty of confederation to go to war for injuries done to others.

The Public Offices are Not the Family Property of the President.

Washington, March 27th, 1801.

To Mr. George Jefferson:*

Dear Sir—I have to acknowledge the receipt of yours of March 4th, and to express to you the delight with which I found the just, disinterested and honorable point of view in which you saw the proposition it covered. The resolution you so properly approved had long been formed in my mind. The public will never be made to believe that an appointment of a relative is made on the ground of merit alone, uninfluenced by family views; nor can they ever see with approbation offices, the disposal of which they entrust to their Presidents for public purposes, divided out as family property. Mr. Adams degraded himself infinitely by his conduct on this subject, as Gen. Washington had done himself the greatest honor. With two such examples to proceed by, I should be doubly inexcusable to err. It is true that this places the relations of the President in a worse situation than if he were a stranger, but the public good, which can not be affected if its confidence be lost, requires the sacrifice. Perhaps, too, it is compensated by sharing in the public esteem. I could not be satisfied till I assured you of the increased esteem with which this transaction fills me for you. Accept my affectionate expressions of it.

Jefferson's Policy Towards the Federalists.

Washington, October 25th, 1802.

To Levi Lincoln:

The opinion I originally formed has never been changed, that such of the body of the people as thought themselves Federalists, would find that they were in truth Republicans (Democrats) and would come over

*An intelligent and highly respectable kinsman of Thomas Jefferson, and held by him in the highest esteem.

to us by degrees; but that their leaders had gone too far ever to change. Their bitterness increases with their desperation. They are trying slanders now which nothing could prompt but a gall which blinds their judgments as well as their consciences. I shall take no other revenge, than, by a steady pursuit of economy and peace, and by the establishment of Republican principles in substance and in form, to sink Federalism into an abyss from which there shall be no resurrection for it. I still think our original idea as to office is best; that is, to depend, for the obtaining a just participation, on deaths, resignations and delinquencies. This will least affect the tranquility of the people, and prevent their giving in to the suggestion of our enemies, that ours has been a contest for office, not for principle. This is rather a slow operation, but it is sure if we pursue it steadily, which, however, has not been done with the undeviating resolution I could have wished. To these means of obtaining a just share in the transaction of the public business, shall be added one other, to-wit, removal for electioneering activity, or open and industrious opposition to the principles of the present government, legislative and executive. Every officer of the government may vote at elections according to his conscience; but we should betray the cause committed to our care, were we to permit the influence of official patronage to be used to overthrow that cause. Your present situation will enable you to judge of prominent offenders in your State, in the case of the present election. I pray you to seek them, to mark them, to be quite sure of your ground, that we commit no error or wrong, and leave the rest to me.

The Purchase of Louisiana.

Washington, July 11th, 1803.

To Gen. Gates:

Dear General—I accept with pleasure, and with pleasure reciprocate your congratulations on the acquisition of Louisiana, for it is a subject of mutual congratulation, as it interests every man of the nation. The territory

acquired, as it includes all the waters of the Missouri and Mississippi, has more than doubled the area of the United States, and the new part is not inferior to the old in soil, climate, productions and important communications. If our Legislature dispose of it with the wisdom we have a right to expect, they may make it the means of tempting all our Indians on the east side of the Mississippi to remove to the west, and of condensing instead of scattering our population. I find our opposition is very willing to pluck feathers from Monroe, although not fond of sticking them into Livingston's coat. The truth is, both have a just portion of merit; and were it necessary or proper, it would be shown that each has rendered peculiar services, and of important value. These grumblers, too, are very uneasy lest the administration should share some little credit for the acquisition, the whole of which they ascribe to the accident of war. They would be cruelly mortified could they see our files from May, 1801, the first organization of the administration, but more especially from April, 1802. They would see that though we could not say when war would arise, yet we said with energy what would take place when it should arise. We did not, by our intrigues, produce the war; but we availed ourselves of it when it happened. The other party saw the case now existing, on which our representations were predicated, and the wisdom of timely sacrifice. But when these people make the war give us everything, they authorize us to ask what the war gave us in their day? They had a war; what did they make it bring us? Instead of making our neutrality the ground of gain to their country, they were for plunging into the war. And if they were now in place, they would now be at war against the atheists and disorganizers of France. They were for making their country an appendage to England. We are friendly, cordially and conscientiously friendly to England. We are not hostile to France. We will be rigorously just and sincerely friendly to both. I do not believe we shall have as much to swallow from them as our predecessors had.

The United States Bank an Enemy of the Government.

Washington, December 13th, 1803.

To Mr. Gallatin:*

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 can not 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 stockholders; (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,

*Secretary of the Treasury under Jefferson's administration.

**President of the U. S. Bank.

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.

From Jefferson's Second Inaugural Address.

March 4th, 1805.

During this course of administration, and in order to disturb it, the artillery of the press has been leveled against us, charged with whatsoever its licentiousness could devise or dare. These abuses of an institution so important to freedom and science, are deeply to be regretted, inasmuch as they tend to lessen its usefulness, and to sap its safety; they might, indeed, have been corrected by the wholesome punishments reserved and provided by the laws of the several States against falsehood and defamation; but public duties more urgent press on the time of public servants, and the offenders have therefore been left to find their punishment in the public indignation.

Nor was it uninteresting to the world that an experiment should be fairly and fully made, whether freedom of discussion, unaided by power, is not sufficient for the propagation and protection of truth—whether a government, conducting itself in the true spirit of its constitution, with zeal and purity and doing no act which it would be unwilling the whole world should witness, can be written down by falsehood and defamation. The experiment has been tried; you have witnessed the scene; our fellow citizens have looked on, cool and collected;

they saw the latent source from which these outrages proceeded; they gathered around their public functionaries, and when the constitution called them to the decision by suffrage, they pronounced their verdict, honorable to those who had served them, and consolatory to the friend of man, who believes he may be intrusted with his own affairs.

Aaron Burr's Conspiracy, and His Views and Objects.

Washington, July 14th, 1807.

To the Marquis de La Fayette:

Measuring happiness by the American scale, and sincerely wishing that of yourself and family, we had been anxious to see them established 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. 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.

Jefferson Declines a Third Term.

December 10th, 1807.

To the Legislature of Vermont:

I received in due season the address of the Legislature of Vermont, bearing date the 5th of November, 1806, in which, with their approbation of the general course of my administration, they were so good as to express their desire that I would consent to be proposed again, to the public voice, on the expiration of my present term of office. Entertaining, as I do, for the Legislature of Vermont those sentiments of high respect which would have prompted an immediate answer, I was certain, nevertheless, they would approve a delay which had for its object to avoid a premature agitation of the public mind, on a subject so interesting as the election of a chief magistrate.

That I should lay down my charge at a proper period is as much a duty as to have borne it faithfully. If some termination to the services of the chief magistrate be not fixed by the constitution, or supplied by practice,

his office, nominally for years, will, in fact, become for life; and history shows how easily that degenerates into an inheritance. Believing that a representative government, responsible at short periods of election, is that which produces the greatest sum of happiness to mankind, I feel it a duty to do no act which shall essentially impair that principle; and I should unwillingly be the person who, disregarding the sound precedent set by an illustrious predecessor, should furnish the first example of prolongation beyond the second term of office.

Truth, also, requires me to add, that I am sensible of that decline which advancing years bring on; and feeling their physical, I ought not to doubt their mental effect. Happy if I am the first to perceive and to obey this admonition of nature, and to solicit a retreat from cares too great for the wearied faculties of age.

For the approbation which the Legislature of Vermont has been pleased to express of the principles and measures pursued in the management of their affairs, I am sincerely thankful; and should I be so fortunate as to carry into retirement the equal approbation and good will of my fellow citizens generally, it will be the comfort of my future days, and will close a service of forty years with the only reward it ever wished.

“Addresses approving the general course of his administration, were also received from Georgia, December 6th, 1806; from Rhode Island, February 27th, 1807; from New York, March 13th, 1807; from Pennsylvania, March 13th, 1807; and from Maryland, January 3d, 1807; to all which answers like that sent to Vermont were returned.”
—Ed.

Letter of Advice to Jefferson's Grandson.

Washington, November 24th, 1808.

Thomas Jefferson Randolph:

Your situation, thrown at such a distance from us, and alone, can not 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 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-catechising 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 tranquility. 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 saw an instance, of one of two disputants convincing the other by argument. I have seen many, on 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 Dr. Franklin the most amiable of men in society, "never to contradict anybody." 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 Quixotte. to bring all men by force of argument to one opinion? If a fact be mis-stated, 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.

Jefferson Refuses all Presents While President.

Washington, November 30th, 1808.

To Mr. Samuel Hawkius, Kingston:

Your letter of the 3d instant came to hand on the 10th. Mr. Granger, before that, had sent here the very elegant ivory staff of which you wished my acceptance. The motives of your wish are honorable to me, and gratifying, as they evidence the approbation of my public conduct by a stranger who has not viewed it through the partialities of personal acquaintance. Be assured, sir, that I am as grateful for the testimony as if I could have accepted the token of it which you have so kindly offered. On coming into public office, I laid it down as a law of my conduct while I should continue in it, to accept no present of any sensible pecuniary value. A pamphlet, a new book, or an article of new curiosity, have produced no hesitation, because below suspicion. But things of sensible value, however innocently offered in the first examples, may grow at length into abuse, for which I wish not to furnish a precedent. The kindness of the motives which led to this manifestation of your esteem, sufficiently assures me that you will approve of my de-

sire, by a perseverance in the rule, to retain that conscientiousness of a disinterested administration of the public trusts, which is essential to perfect tranquility of mind. Replacing, therefore, the subject of this letter in the hands of Mr. Granger, under your orders, and repeating that the offer meets the same thankfulness as if accepted. I tender you my salutations and assurances of respect.

Farewell Address to Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States.

(Agreed to by both Houses, February 7, 1809.)

Sir—The General Assembly of your native State can not close their session without acknowledging your services in the office which you are just about to lay down, and bidding you a respectful and affectionate farewell.

We have to thank you for the model of an administration conducted on the purest principles of Republicanism; for pomp and state laid aside; patronage discarded; internal taxes abolished; a host of superfluous officers disbanded; the monarchic maxim "that a national debt is a national blessing," renounced and more than thirty-three millions of our debt discharged; the native right to nearly one hundred millions of acres of our national domain extinguished; and, without the guilt or calamities of conquest, a vast and fertile region added to our country, far more extensive than her original possessions, bringing along with it the Mississippi and the port of Orleans, the trade of the West to the Pacific Ocean, and in the intrinsic value of the land itself, a source of permanent and almost inexhaustible revenue. These are points in your administration which the historian will not fail to seize, to expand, and teach posterity to dwell upon with delight. Nor will he forget our peace with the civilized world, preserved through a season of uncommon difficulty and trial, the good will cultivated with the unfortunate aborigines of our country, and the civilization humanely extended among them; the lesson taught the inhabitants of the coast of Barbary, that we have the means of chastising their piratical encroachments, and

awing them into justice; and that theme, on which, above all others, the historic genius will hang with rapture, the liberty of speech, and of the press preserved inviolate, without which genius and science are given to man in vain.

In the principles on which you have administered the government, we see only the continuation and maturity of the same virtues and abilities, which drew upon you in your youth the resentment of Dunmore.* From the first brilliant and happy moment of your resistance to foreign tyranny until the present day we mark with pleasure and with gratitude the same uniform, consistent character, the same warm and devoted attachment to liberty and the Republic, the same Roman love of your country, her rights, her peace, her honor, her prosperity.

How blessed will be the retirement into which you are about to go! How deservedly blessed will it be! For you carry with you the richest of all rewards, the recollection of a life well spent in the service of your country, and proofs the most decisive, of the love, the gratitude, the veneration of your countrymen.

That your retirement may be as happy as your life has been virtuous and useful; that our youth may see in the blissful close of your days, an additional inducement to form themselves on your model, is the devout and earnest prayer of your fellow citizens who compose the General Assembly of Virginia.

The Union of the States the Palladium of Their Safety.

Washington, February 24th, 1809.

To Gov. Tompkins:

By all, I trust, the union of these States will ever be considered as the Palladium of their safety, their prosperity and glory, and all attempts to sever it will be frowned on with reprobation and abhorrence. And I have equal confidence, that all moved by the sacred principles of liberty and patriotism will prepare themselves for any crisis we may be able to meet, and will be ready

*The royal governor of Virginia, 1773.

to co-operate with each other, and with the constituted authorities, in resisting and repelling the aggressions of foreign nations.

Jefferson Expresses Delight at His Retirement from Public Life.

Washington, March 2d, 1809.

To M. Dupont de Nemours:

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 everything 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 meantime with his affectionate salutations and assurances of constant esteem and respect.

Jefferson's Address to the Inhabitants of Albermarle County, in Virginia.

April 3d, 1809.

Returning to the scene 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 wel-

come 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 fulfill 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 theater 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.

Evils of National Debt.

Monticello, October 11th, 1809.

To Albert Gallatin:

I consider the fortunes of our Republic as depending, in an eminent degree, on the extinguishment of the public debt before we engage in any war; because,

that done, we shall have revenue enough to improve our country in peace, and defend it in war, without recurring to new taxes or loans. But if the debt should once more be swelled to a formidable size, its entire discharge will be despaired of, and we shall be committed to the English career of debt, corruption and rottenness, closing with revolution.

The Mental Caliber of the Crownheads of Europe.

Monticello, March 5th, 1810.

To Gov. Langdon:

When I observed, however, that the King of England was a cypher, I did not mean to confine the observation to the mere individual now on that throne. The practice of kings marrying only in the families of kings has been that of Europe for some centuries. Now, take any race of animals, confine them in idleness and inaction, whether in a sty, a stable or a state room, pamper them with high diet, gratify all their sexual appetites, immerse them in sensualities, nourish their passions, let everything bend before them, and banish whatever might lead them to think, and in a few generations they become all body and no mind; and this, too, by a law of nature, by that very law by which we are in the constant practice of changing the characters and propensities of the animals we raise for our own purposes. Such is the regimen in raising kings, and in this way they have gone on for centuries. While in Europe, I often amused myself with contemplating the characters of the then reigning sovereigns of Europe. Louis the XVI. was a fool, of my own knowledge, and in despite of the answers made for him at his trial. The King of Spain was a fool, and of Naples the same. They passed their lives in hunting and dispatched two couriers a week, one thousand miles, to let each other know what game they had killed the preceding days. The King of Sardinia was a fool. All these were Bourbons. The Queen of Portugal, a Braganza, was an idiot by nature. And so was the King of Denmark. Their sons, as regents, exer-

cised the powers of government. The King of Prussia, successor to the great Frederick, was a mere hog in body as well as in mind. Gustavus of Sweden, and Joseph, of Austria, were really crazy, and George of England, you know, was in a straight waistcoat. There remained, then, none but old Catharine,* who had been too lately picked up to have lost her common sense. In this state Bonaparte found Europe; and it was this state of its rulers which lost it with scarce a struggle. These animals had become without mind and powerless; and so will every hereditary monarch be after a few generations. Alexander, the grandson of Catharine, is as yet an exception. He is able to hold his own. But he is only of the third generation. His race is not yet worn out. And so endeth the book of kings, from all of whom the Lord deliver us.

General Education and Division of Counties into Hundreds.

Monticello, May 26th, 1810.

To Gov. Tyler:

You wish to see me again in the Legislature, but this is impossible. I have indeed two great measures at heart, without which no Republic can maintain itself in strength. 1. That of general education, to enable every man to judge for himself what will secure or endanger his freedom. 2. To divide every county into hundreds, of such size that all the children of each will be within reach of a central school in it. But this division looks to many other fundamental provisions. Every hundred, besides a school, should have a justice of the peace, a constable and a captain of militia. These officers, or some others within the hundred, should be a corporation to manage all its concerns, to take care of its roads, its poor, and its police by patrols, etc., (as the select men of the Eastern townships). Every hundred should elect one or two jurors to serve where requisite,

*Empress of Russia. Her father was Prince of a small principality in Germany.

and all other elections should be made in the hundreds separately, and the votes of all the hundreds be brought together. Our present captaincies might be declared hundreds for the present, with a power to the courts to alter them occasionally. These little Republics would be the main strength of the great one. We owe to them the vigor given to our revolution in its commencement in the Eastern States, and by them the Eastern States were enabled to repeal the embargo* in opposition to the Middle, Southern and Western States and their large and lubberly division into counties which can never be assembled. General orders are given out from a center to the foreman of every hundred, as to the sergeants of an army, and the whole nation is thrown into energetic action, in the same direction in one instant and as one man, and becomes absolutely irresistible. Could I once see this I should consider it as the dawn of the salvation of the Republic, and say with old Simeon: "Let me now depart, O, Lord." But our children will be as wise as we are, and will establish in the fullness of time those things not yet ripe for establishment.

Jefferson's Relations with Adams and the Difference
Between Adams' and Hamilton's Political Principles.

Monticello, January 16th, 1811.

To Dr. Benjamin Rush:

I receive with sensibility your observations on the discontinuance of friendly correspondence between Mr. Adams and myself, and the concern you take in its restoration. This discontinuance has not proceeded from me, nor from the want of sincere desire and the effort on my part to renew our intercourse. You know the perfect coincidence of principle and of action, in the early part of the Revolution, which produced a high degree

*In 1807 an embargo act was laid on the sailing, unless by permission of the President, of any vessel in the ports of the United States for foreign ports, except foreign ships in ballast, or with cargoes taken on board before notification of the act, and coast-wise vessels were required to give bonds to land their cargoes in the United States. In 1809 the law was repealed.

of mutual respect and esteem between Mr. Adams and myself. Certainly no man was ever truer than he was, in that day, to those principles of rational Republicanism which, after the necessity of throwing off our monarchy, dictated all our efforts in the establishment of a new government. And although he swerved afterwards towards the principles of the English constitution, our friendship did not abate on that account. While he was Vice-President and I Secretary of State, I received a letter from President Washington, then at Mount Vernon, desiring me to call together the heads of departments, and to invite Mr. Adams to join us (which, by the bye, was the only instance of that being done), in order to determine on some measure which required dispatch; and he desired me to act on it, as decided, without again recurring to him. I invited them to dine with me and after dinner, sitting at our wine, having settled our question, other conversation came on, in which a collision of opinion arose between Mr. Adams and Col. Hamilton on the merits of the British constitution, Mr. Adams giving it as his opinion that, if some of its defects and abuses were corrected, it would be the most perfect constitution of government ever devised by man. Hamilton, on the contrary, asserted that with its existing vices, it was the most perfect model of government that could be formed; and that the correction of its vices would render it an impracticable government. And this you may be assured was the real line of difference between the political principles of these two gentlemen. Another incident took place on the same occasion, which will further delineate Mr. Hamilton's political principles. The room being hung around with a collection of the portraits of remarkable men, among them were those of Bacon, Newton and Locke, Hamilton asked me who they were. I told him they were my trinity of the three greatest men the world had ever produced, naming them. He paused for some time: "The greatest man," said he, "that ever lived, was Julius Caesar." Mr. Adams was honest as a politician, as well as a man; Hamilton honest as a man, but as a politician, believing in the necessity of

either force or corruption to govern men. You remember the machinery which the Federalists played off about that time, to beat down the friends to the real principles of our constitution, to silence by terror every expression in their favor, to bring us into war with France and alliance with England, and finally to homologize our constitution with that of England. Mr. Adams, you know, was overwhelmed with feverish addresses, dictated by the fear, and often by the pen, of the bloody buoy; and was seduced by them into some open indications of his new principles of government, and in fact, was so elated as to mix with his kindness a little superciliousness towards me. Even Mrs. Adams, with all her good sense and prudence, was sensibly flushed. And you recollect the short suspension of our intercourse, and the circumstance which gave rise to it, which you were so good as to bring to an early explanation, and have set to rights, to the cordial satisfaction of us all. The nation at length passed condemnation on the political principles of the Federalists, by refusing to continue Mr. Adams in the presidency. On the day on which we learned in Philadelphia the vote of the city of New York, which it was well known would decide the vote of the State, and that, again, the vote of the Union, I called on Mr. Adams on some official business. He was very sensibly affected, and accosted me with these words: Well, I understand that you are to beat me in this contest, and I will only say that I will be as faithful a subject as any you will have." "Mr. Adams," said I, "this is no personal contest between you and me. Two systems of principles on the subject of government divide our fellow citizens into two parties. With one of these you concur, and I with the other. As we have been longer on the public stage than most of those now living, our names happen to be more generally known. One of these parties, therefore, has put your name at its head, the other mine. Were we both to die to-day, to-morrow two other names would be in the place of ours, without any change in the motion of the machinery. Its motion is from its principle, not from you or myself." "I

believe you are right," said he, "that we are but passive instruments, and should not suffer this matter to affect our personal dispositions." But he did not long retain this just view of the subject. I have always believed that the thousand calumnies which the Federalists, in bitterness of heart, and mortification at their ejection, daily invented against me, were carried to him by their busy intriguers, and made some impression. When the election between Burr and myself was kept in suspense by the Federalists, and they were meditating to place the President of the Senate at the head of the government, I called on Mr. Adams with a view to have this desperate measure prevented by his negative. He grew warm in an instant, and said with a vehemence he had not used towards me before: "Sir, the event of the election is within your own power. You have only to say you will do justice to the public creditors, maintain the navy and not disturb those holding offices and the government will instantly be put into your hands. We know it is the wish of the people it should be so." "Mr. Adams," said I, "I know not what part of my conduct, in either public or private life, can have authorized a doubt of my fidelity to the public engagements. I say, however, I will not come into the government by capitulation. I will not enter on it, but in perfect freedom to follow the dictates of my own judgment." I had before given the same answer to the same intimation from Gov. Morris. "Then," said he, "things must take their course." I turned the conversation to something else, and soon took my leave. It was the first time in our lives we had ever parted with anything like dissatisfaction. And then followed those scenes of midnight appointment, which have been condemned by all men. The last day of his political power, the last hours, and even beyond the midnight, were employed in filling all offices and especially permanent ones, with the bitterest Federalists, and providing for me the alternative, either to execute the government by my enemies, whose study it would be to thwart and defeat all my measures, or to incur the odium of such numerous removals from office,

as might bear me down. A little time and reflection effaced in my mind this temporary dissatisfaction with Mr. Adams, and restored me to that just estimate of his virtues and passions, which a long acquaintance had enabled me to fix. And my first wish became that of making his retirement easy by any means in my power; for it was understood he was not rich. I suggested to some Republican (Democratic) members of the delegation from his State, the giving him, either directly or indirectly, an office, the most lucrative in that State, and then offered to be resigned, if they thought he would not deem it affrontive. They were of opinion he would take great offense at the offer; and moreover, that the body of Republicans would consider such a step in the outset as arguing very ill of the course I meant to pursue. I dropped the idea, therefore, but did not cease to wish for some opportunity of renewing our friendly understanding.

Duties of the Press and of Members of Political Parties.

Monticello, April 30th, 1811.

To Col William Duane:

I think an editor should be independent, that is of personal influence, and not be moved from his opinions on the mere authority of any individual. But, with respect to the general opinion of the political section with which he habitually accords, his duty seems very like that of a member of Congress. Some of these indeed think that independence requires them to follow always their own opinion, without respect for that of others. This has never been my opinion, nor my practice, when I have been of that or any other body. Differing on a particular question from those whom I knew to be of the same political principles with myself, and with whom I generally thought and acted; a consciousness of the fallibility of the human mind, and of my own in particular, with a respect for the accumulated judgment of my friends, has induced me to suspect erroneous impressions in myself, to suppose my own opinion wrong, and

to act with them on theirs. The want of this spirit of compromise, or of self-distrust, proudly, but falsely called independence, is what gives the Federalists victories which they could never obtain, if these brethren could learn to respect the opinions of their friends more than of their enemies, and prevents many able and honest men from doing all the good they otherwise might do. I state these considerations because they have often quieted my own conscience in voting and acting on the judgment of others against my own; and because they may suggest doubts to yourself in the present case. Our executive and legislative authorities are the choice of the nation, and possess the nation's confidence. They are chosen because they possess it, and the recent elections prove it has not been abated by the attacks which have for some time been kept up against them. If the measures which have been pursued are approved by the majority, it is the duty of the minority to acquiesce and conform. It is true indeed that dissentients have a right to go over to the minority, and to act with them. But I do not believe your mind has contemplated that course, that it has deliberately viewed the strange company into which it may be led, step by step, unintended and unperceived by itself. The example of John Randolph is a caution to all honest and prudent men, to sacrifice a little of self-confidence, and to go with their friends, although they may sometimes think they are going wrong. After so long a course of steady adherence to the general sentiments of the Republicans, it would afflict me sincerely to see you separate from the body, become auxiliary to the enemies of our government, who have to you been the bitterest enemies, who are now chuckling at the prospect of division among us, and, as I am told, are subscribing for your paper. The best indication of error which my experience has tested, is the approbation of the Federalists. Their conclusions necessarily follow the false bias of their principles. I claim, however, no right of guiding the conduct of others; but have indulged myself in these observations from the sincere feelings of my heart.

Friendly Relations Restored Between Jefferson and
John Adams.

Monticello, January 21st, 1812.

To John Adams:

A letter from you calls up recollections very dear to my mind. It carries me back to the times when, beset with difficulties and dangers, we were fellow laborers in the same cause, struggling for what is most valuable to man, his right of self-government. Laboring always at the same oar, with some wave ever ahead, threatening to overwhelm us, and yet passing harmless under our bark, we knew not how we rode through the storm with heart and hand, and made a happy port. Still we did not expect to be without rubs and difficulties; and we have had them. Sometimes, indeed, I look back to former occurrences, in remembrance of our old friends and fellow laborers, who have fallen before us. Of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, I see now living not more than half a dozen on your side of the Potomac, and on this side, myself alone. You and I have been wonderfully spared, and myself with remarkable health, and a considerable activity of body and mind. I am on horseback three or four hours of every day; visit three or four times a year a possession I have ninety miles distant, performing the winter journey on horseback. I walk little, however, a single mile being too much for me, and I live in the midst of my grand children, one of whom has lately promoted me to be a great grandfather. I have heard with pleasure that you also retain good health, and a greater power of exercise in walking than I do. But I would rather have heard this from yourself, and that writing a letter like mine, full of egotisms, and of details of your health, your habits, occupations and enjoyments, I should have the pleasure of knowing that in the race of life, you do not keep in its physical decline the same distance ahead of me which you have done in political honors and achievements. No circumstances have lessened the interest I feel in these particulars respecting yourself; none have sus-

pended for one moment my sincere esteem for you, and I now salute you with unchanged affection and respect.

Parties in United States and Washington's political Principles.

Monticello, January 13th, 1813.

To Mr. Melish:

That each party endeavors to get into the administration of the government and exclude the other from power, is true and may be stated as a motive of action; but this is only secondary; the primary motive being a real and radical difference of political principle. I sincerely wish our differences were but personally who should govern and that the principles of our constitution were those of both parties. Unfortunately, it is otherwise; and the question of preference between monarchy and Republicanism, which has so long divided mankind elsewhere, threatens a permanent division here.

Among that section of our citizens called Federalists, there are three shades of opinion. Distinguishing between the leaders and people who compose it, the leaders consider the English constitution as a model of perfection, some with a correction of its vices, others, with all its corruptions and abuses. This last was Alexander Hamilton's opinion, which others, as well as myself, have often heard him declare, and that a correction of what are called its vices, would render the English an impracticable government. This government they wished to have established here, and only accepted and held fast, at first, to the present constitution, as a stepping stone to the final establishment of their favorite model. This party has therefore always clung to England as their prototype, and great auxiliary in promoting and effecting this change. A weighty minority, however, of these leaders, considering the voluntary conversion of our government into a monarchy as too distant, if not desperate, wish to break off from our Union its Eastern fragment, as being, in truth, the hot bed of American monarchism, with a view to a commencement of their

favorite government, from whence the other States may gangrene by degrees, and the whole be thus brought finally to the desired point. For Massachusetts, the prime mover in this enterprise, is the last State in the Union to mean a final separation, as being of all the most dependent on the others. Not raising bread for the sustenance of her own inhabitants, not having a stick of timber for the construction of vessels, her principal occupation, nor an article to export in them, where would she be, excluded from the ports of the other States, and thrown into dependence on England, her direct and natural, but now insidious rival? At the head of this minority is what is called the Essex Junto* of Massachusetts. But the majority of these leaders do not aim at separation. In this, they adhere to the known principle of Gen. Hamilton, never, under any views, to break the Union. Anglomany, monarchy and separation, then, are the principles of the Essex Federalists. Anglomany and monarchy, those of the Hamiltonians and Anglomany alone, that of the portion among the people who call themselves Federalists. These last are as good Republicans as the brethren whom they opposed, and differ from them only in their devotion to England and hatred of France which they have imbibed from their leaders. The moment that these leaders should avowedly propose a separation of the Union, or the establishment of regal government, their popular adherents would quit them to a man, and join the Republican standard; and the partisans of this change, even in Massachusetts, would thus find themselves an army of officers without a soldier.

The party called Republican is steadily for the support of the present constitution. They obtained at its commencement all the amendments to it they desired. These reconciled them to it perfectly, and if they have any ulterior view, it is only, perhaps, to popularize it further, by shortening the senatorial term and devising a process for the responsibility of judges, more practica-

*Essex Cabal.

ble than that of impeachment. They esteem the people of England and France equally, and equally detest the governing powers of both.

This I verily believe, after an intimacy of forty years with the public councils and characters, is a true statement of grounds on which they are at present divided, and that it is not merely an ambition for power. An honest man can feel no pleasure in the exercise of power over his fellow citizens. And considering as the only offices of power those conferred by the people directly, that is to say, the executive and legislative functions of the general and State governments, the common refusal of these, and multiplied resignations, are proofs sufficient that power is not alluring to pure minds, and is not, with them, the primary principle of contest. This is my belief of it, it is that on which I have acted; and had it been a mere contest who should be permitted to administer the government according to its genuine Republican principles, there has never been a moment of my life in which I should have relinquished for it the enjoyments of my family, my farm, my friends and books.

You expected to discover the difference of our party principles in Gen. Washington's valedictory, and my inaugural address. Not at all. Gen. Washington did not harbor one principle of Federalism. He was neither an Angloman, a monarchist, nor a separatist. He sincerely wished the people to have as much self-government as they were competent to exercise themselves. The only point on which he and I ever differed in opinion, was that I had more confidence than he had in the natural integrity and discretion of the people, and in the safety and extent to which they might trust themselves with a control over their government. He has asseverated to me a thousand times his determination that the existing government should have a fair trial, and that in support of it he would spend the last drop of his blood. He did this the more repeatedly, because he knew Gen. Hamilton's political bias, and my apprehensions from it. It is a mere calumny, therefore, in the

monarchists, to associate Gen. Washington with their principles. But that may have happened in this case which has been often seen in ordinary cases, that, by oft repeating an untruth, men come to believe it themselves. It is a mere artifice in this party to bolster themselves up on the revered name of that first of our worthies. If I have dwelt longer on this subject than was necessary, it proves the estimation in which I hold your ultimate opinions, and my desire of placing the subject truly before them. In so doing, I am certain I risk no use of the communication which may draw me into contention before the public. Tranquility is the highest happiness of a man of seventy.

Jefferson's Views on Finance.

Monticello, June 24th, 1813.

To John W. Eppes:

It is a wise rule, and should be fundamental in a government disposed to cherish its credit, and at the same time to restrain the use of it within the limits of its faculties, never to borrow a dollar without laying a tax in the same instant for paying the interest annually, and the principle within a given term; and to consider that tax as pledged to the creditors on the public faith. On such a pledge as this, sacredly observed, a government may always command, on a reasonable interest, all the lendable money of their citizens, while the necessity of an equivalent tax is a salutary warning to them and their constituents against oppressions, bankruptcy, and its inevitable consequence, revolution. But the term of redemption must be moderate, and at any rate within the limits of their rightful powers. But what limits, it will be asked, does this prescribe to their powers? What is to hinder them from creating a perpetual debt? The laws of nature, I answer. The earth belongs to the living, not to the dead. The will and the power of man expire with his life, by nature's law. Some societies give it an artificial continuance, for the encouragement of industry; some refuse it, as our aboriginal neighbors,

whom we call barbarians. The generations of men may be considered as bodies of corporations. Each generation has the usufruct of the earth during the period of its continuance. When it ceases to exist, the usufruct passes on to the succeeding generation, free and unincumbered, and so on, successively, from one generation to another forever. We may consider each generation as a distinct nation, with a right, by the will of its majority, to bind themselves, but none to bind the succeeding generation, more than the inhabitants of another country. Or the case may be likened to the ordinary one of a tenant for life, who may hypothecate the land for his debts, during the continuance of his usufruct; but at his death, the reversioner, (who is also for life only) receives it exonerated from all burthen. The period of a generation, or the term of its life, is determined by the laws of mortality, which, varying a little only in different climates, offer a general average, to be found by observation. I turn, for instance, to Buffon's tables, of twenty-three thousand nine hundred and ninety-four deaths, and the ages at which they happened, and I find that of the numbers of all ages living at one moment, half will be dead in twenty-four years and eight months. But (leaving out minors, who have not the power of self-government) of the adults (of twenty-one years of age), living at one moment, a majority of whom act for the society, one-half will be dead in eighteen years and eight months. At nineteen years then from the date of a contract, the majority of the contractors are dead, and their contract with them. Let this general theory be applied to a particular case. Suppose the annual births of the State of New York to be twenty-three thousand nine hundred and ninety-four, the whole number of its inhabitants, according to Buffon, will be six hundred and seventeen thousand seven hundred and three, of all ages. Of these there would constantly be two hundred and sixty-nine thousand two hundred and eighty-six minors, and three hundred and forty-eight thousand four hundred and seventeen adults, of which last, one hundred and seventy-four

thousand two hundred and nine will be a majority. Suppose that majority, on the first day of the year 1794, had borrowed a sum of money equal to the fee simple value of the State, and to have consumed it in eating, drinking and making merry in their day; or, if you please, in quarreling and fighting with their unoffending neighbors. Within eighteen years and eight months, one-half of the adult citizens were dead. Till then, being the majority, they might rightfully levy the interest of their debt annually on themselves and their fellow revellers, or fellow champions. But at that period, say at this moment, a new majority have come into place, in their own right, and not under the rights, the conditions or laws of their predecessors. Are they bound to acknowledge the debt, to consider the preceding generation as having had a right to eat up the whole soil of their country, in the course of a life, to alienate it from them (for it would be an alienation to the creditors), and would they think themselves either legally or morally bound to give up their country and emigrate to another for subsistence? Every one will say no; that the soil is the gift of God to the living, as much as it had been to the deceased generation; and that the laws of nature impose no obligation on them to pay the debt. And although, like some other natural rights, this has not yet entered into any declaration of rights, it is no less a law, and ought to be acted on by honest governments. It is, at the same time, a salutary curb on the spirit of war and indebtment, which, since the modern theory of the perpetuation of debt, has drenched the earth with blood, and crushed its inhabitants under burthens ever accumulating. Had this principle been declared in the British bill of rights, England would have been placed under the happy disability of waging eternal war, and of contracting her thousand millions of public debt. In seeking, then, for an ultimate term for the redemption of our debts, let us rally to this principle, and provide for their payment within the term of nineteen years at the farthest. Our government has not, as yet, begun to act on the rule of loans and taxation go-

ing hand in hand. Had any loan taken place in my time I should have strongly urged a redeeming tax. For the loan which has been made since the last session of Congress, we should now set the example of appropriating some particular tax, sufficient to pay the interest annually, and the principle within a fixed term, less than nineteen years. And I hope yourself and your committee will render the immortal service of introducing this practice. Not that it is expected that Congress should formally declare such a principle. They wisely enough avoid deciding on abstract questions. But they may be induced to keep themselves within its limits. I am sorry to see our loans begin at so exorbitant an interest. And yet, even at that you will soon be at the bottom of the loan bag. We are an agricultural nation. Such a one employs its sparings in the purchase or improvement of land or stocks. The lendable money among them is chiefly that of orphans and wards in the hands of executors and guardians, and that which the farmer lays by till he has enough for the purchase in view. In such a nation there is one and one only resource for loans, sufficient to carry them through the expense of a war; and that will always be sufficient, and in the power of an honest government, punctual in the preservation of its faith. The fund I mean, is the mass of circulating coin. Every one knows that although not literally it is nearly true, that every paper dollar emitted banishes a silver one from the circulation. A nation, therefore, making its purchases and payments with bills fitted for circulation, thrusts an equal sum of coin out of circulation. This is equivalent to borrowing that sum, and yet the vendor receiving payment in a medium as effectual as coin for his purchases or payments, has no claim to interest. And so the nation may continue to issue its bills as far as its wants require, and the limits of the circulation will admit. Those limits are understood to extend with us at present, to two hundred millions of dollars, a greater sum than would be necessary for any war. But this, the only resource which the government could command with certainty, the States

have unfortunately fooled away, nay, corruptly alienated to swindlers and shavers, under the cover of private banks. Say, too, as an additional evil, that the disposal funds of individuals, to this great amount, have thus been withdrawn from improvement and useful enterprise, and employed in the useless, usurious and demoralizing practices of bank directors and their accomplices. In the war of 1755, our State availed itself of this fund by issuing a paper money, bottomed on a specific tax for its redemption, and to insure its credit, bearing an interest of 5 per cent. Within a very short time, not a bill of this emission was to be found in circulation. It was locked up in the chests of executors, guardians, widows, farmers, etc. We then issued bills bottomed on a redeeming tax, but bearing no interest. These were readily received, and never depreciated a single farthing. In the revolutionary war, the old Congress and the States issued bills without interest, and without tax. They occupied the channels of circulation very freely, till those channels were overflowed by an excess beyond all the calls of circulation. But although we have so improvidently suffered the field of circulating medium to be filched from us by private individuals, yet I think we may recover it in part, and even in the whole, if the States will co-operate with us. If treasury bills are emitted on a tax appropriated for their redemption in fifteen years, and (to insure preference in the first moments of competition), bearing an interest of 6 per cent, there is no one who would not take them in preference to the bank paper now afloat, on a principle of patriotism as well as interest; and they would be withdrawn from circulation into private hoards to a considerable amount. Their credit once established, others might be emitted, bottomed also on a tax, but not bearing interest; and if ever their credit faltered, open public loans, on which these bills alone should be received as specie. These, operating as a sinking fund, would reduce the quantity in circulation, so as to maintain that in an equilibrium with specie. It is not easy to estimate the obstacles which, in the beginning, we should en-

counter in ousting the banks from their possession of the circulation; but a steady and judicious alternation of emissions and loans, would reduce them in time. But while this is going on, another measure should be pressed, to recover ultimately our right to the circulation. The States should be applied to, to transfer the right of issuing circulating paper to Congress exclusively forever, if possible, but during the war at least, with a saving of charter rights. I believe that every State west and south of Connecticut River, except Delaware, would immediately do it; and the others would follow in time. Congress would, of course, begin by obliging unchartered banks to wind up their affairs within a short time, and the others as their charters expired, forbidding the subsequent circulation of their paper. This they would supply with their own, bottomed, every emission, on an adequate tax, and bearing or not bearing interest, as the state of the public pulse should indicate. Even in the non-complying States, these bills would make their way, and supplant the unfunded paper of their banks, by their solidity, by the universality of their currency, and by their receivability for customs and taxes. It would be in their power, too, to curtail those banks to the amount of their actual specie, by gathering up their paper, and running it constantly on them. The national paper might thus take place even in the non-complying States. In this way, I am not without a hope, that this great, this sole resource for loans in an agricultural country, might yet be recovered for the use of the nation during war; and if obtained forever, it would always be sufficient to carry us through any war; provided, that in the interval between war and war, all the outstanding paper should be called in, coin be permitted to flow in again, and to hold the field of circulation until another war should require its yielding place again to the national medium.

But it will be asked are we to have no banks? Are merchants and others to be deprived of the resource of short accommodations, found so convenient? I answer let us have banks; but let them be such as are alone to

be found in any country on earth, except Great Britain. There is not a bank of discount on the continent of Europe (at least there was not one when I was there), which offers anything but cash in exchange for discounted bills. No one has a natural right to the trade of a money lender, but he who has the money to lend. Let those then among us, who have a monied capital, and who prefer employing it in loans rather than otherwise, set up banks and give cash or national bills for the notes they discount. Perhaps, to encourage them, a larger interest than is legal in the other cases might be allowed them, on the condition of their lending for short periods only. It is from Great Britain we copy the idea of giving paper in exchange for discounted bills; and while we have derived from that country some good principles of government and legislation, we unfortunately run into the most servile imitation of all her practices, ruinous as they prove to her, and with the gulf yawning before us into which these very practices are precipitating her.

Jefferson's Views of the National Bank Proposed in 1813.

Monticello, November 6th, 1813.

To John W. Eppes:

The scheme is for Congress to establish a national bank,* suppose of thirty millions capital, of which they shall contribute ten millions, the States ten millions and individuals ten millions; the whole, however, to be under the exclusive management of the individual subscribers, who are to name all the directors; neither Congress nor the States having any power of interference in its administration. The charter is proposed to be for forty or fifty years, and if any future augmentations should take place, the individual proprietors are to have the privilege of being the sole subscribers for that. They (the Congress) authorize this bank to throw

*The charter of the United States Bank had expired in 1811 and it was urged in Congress to recharter it for twenty years, which was done in 1816. In 1836 the bank closed its doors, having twenty thousand dollars assets and one hundred millions liabilities.

into circulation ninety millions of dollars (fiat paper money). The individual subscribers, on paying their own five millions of cash to Congress, become the depositories of ten millions of stock belonging to Congress, five millions belonging to the States, and five millions to themselves, say twenty millions, with which, as no one has ever a right to see their books, or to ask a question, they may choose their time for running away, after adding to their booty the proceeds of as much of their own notes as they shall be able to throw into circulation. The subscribers may be one, two or three or more individuals (many single individuals being able to pay in the five millions), whereupon the bank oligarchy or monarchy enters the field with ninety millions of dollars, to direct and control the politics of the nation; and of the influence of these institutions on our politics and into what scale it will be thrown, we have had abundant experience. Indeed, England herself may be the real, while her friend and trustee here shall be the nominal and sole subscriber. This state of things is to be fastened on us, without the power of relief, for forty or fifty years. That is to say, the eight millions of people now existing for the sake of receiving one dollar and twenty-five cents apiece, at 5 per cent interest, are to subject the fifty millions of people who are to succeed them within that term, to the payment of forty-five millions of dollars, principal and interest, which will be payable in the course of the fifty years.

It is a litigated question, whether the circulation of paper, rather than of specie, is a good or an evil. In the opinion of England and of English writers it is a good; in that of all other nations it is an evil, and excepting England and her copyist, the United States, there is not a nation existing, I believe, which tolerates a paper circulation. The experiment is going on, however desperately in England, pretty boldly with us, and at the end of the chapter, we shall see which opinion experience approves; for I believe it to be one of those cases where mercantile clamor will bear down reason, until it is corrected by ruin.

At the time we were funding our national debt, we heard much about "a public debt being a public blessing;" that the stock representing it was a creation of active capital for the aliment of commerce, manufactures and agriculture. This paradox was well-adapted to the minds of believers in dreams and the gulls of that size entered bona fide in it. But the art and mystery of banks is a wonderful improvement on that. It is established on the principle that "private debts are a public blessing." That the evidences of those private debts, called bank notes, become active capital, and aliment the whole commerce, manufactures and agriculture of the United States. Here are a set of people, for instance, who have bestowed on us the great blessing of running in our debt about two hundred millions of dollars, without our knowing who they are, where they are, or what property they have to pay this debt when called on; nay, who have made us so sensible of the blessings of letting them run in our debt, that we have exempted them by law from the repayment of these debts beyond a given proportion (generally estimated at one-third). And to fill up the measure of blessing, instead of paying, they receive an interest on what they owe from those to whom they owe; for all the notes, or evidences of what they owe, which we see in circulation, have been lent to somebody on an interest which is levied again on us through the medium of commerce. And they are so ready still to deal out their liberalities to us, that they are now willing to let themselves run in our debt ninety millions more, on our paying them the same premium of 6 or 8 per cent interest, and on the same legal exemption from the repayment of more than thirty millions of the debt, when it shall be called for. But let us look at this principle in its original form, and its copy will then be equally understood. "A public debt is a public blessing." That our debt was juggled from forty-three up to eighty millions, and funded at that amount, according to this opinion was a great public blessing, because the evidences of it could be vested in commerce, and thus converted into active

capital, and then the more the debt was made to be, the more active capital was created. That is to say, the creditors could now employ in commerce the money due them from the public, and make from it an annual profit of 5 per cent, or four millions of dollars. But observe that the public were at the same time paying on it an interest of exactly the same amount of four millions of dollars. Where then is the gain to either party, which makes it a public blessing? If the debt which the banking companies owe be a blessing to anybody, it is to themselves alone, who are realizing a solid interest of 8 or 10 per cent on it. As to the public, these companies have banished all our gold and silver medium, which, before their institution, we had without interest, which never could have perished in our hands, and would have been our salvation now in the hour of war; instead of which they have given us two hundred millions of froth and bubble, on which we are to pay them heavy interest, until it shall vanish into air.

It is said that our paper (these bank notes) is as good as silver, because we may have silver for it at the bank where it issues. This is not true. One, two or three persons might have it; but a general application would soon exhaust their vaults, and leave a ruinous proportion of their paper in its intrinsic worthless form. It is a fallacious pretence, for another reason. The inhabitants of the banking cities might obtain cash for their paper, as far as the cash of the vaults would hold out, but distance puts it out of the power of the country to do this. A farmer having a note of a Boston or Charleston bank, distant hundreds of miles, has no means of calling for the cash. And while these calls are impracticable for the country, the banks have no fear of their being made from the towns; because their inhabitants are mostly on their books, and there on sufferance only, and during good behavior.

Evil of the System of Banks.

Monticello, January 16th, 1814.

To Dr. Thomas Cooper:

Everything predicted by the enemies of banks, in

the beginning, is now coming to pass. We are to be ruined now by the deluge of bank paper, as we were formerly by the old Continental paper. It is cruel that such revolutions in private fortunes should be at the mercy of avaricious adventurers, who, instead of employing their capital, if any they have, in manufactures, commerce and other useful pursuits, make it an instrument to burden all the interchanges of property with their swindling profits, profits which are the price of no useful industry of theirs. Prudent men must be on their guard in this game of Robin's alive, and take care that the spark does not extinguish in their hands. I am an enemy to all banks discounting bills or notes for anything but coin. But our whole country is so fascinated by this Jack lantern wealth, that they will not stop short of its total and fatal explosion.*

Jefferson's Hostility to Banks.

Monticello, January 24th, 1814.

To John Adams:

I have ever been the enemy of banks, not of those discounting for cash, but of those foisting their own paper into circulation, and thus banishing our cash. My zeal against those institutions was so warm and open at the establishment of the Bank of the United States, that I was derided as a maniac by the tribe of bank mongers, who were seeking to filch from the public their swindling and barren gains. But the errors of that day can not be recalled. The evils they have engendered are now upon us, and the question is how we are to get out of them? Shall we build an altar to the old paper money of the revolution, which ruined individuals, but saved the Republic, and burn on that all the bank charters, present and future, and their notes with them? For these are to ruin both Republic and individuals. This can not be done. The mania is too strong. It has seized, by its delusions and corruptions, all the members of our governments, general, special and individual.

*This took place, as predicted, four years later.

Our circulating paper of the last year was estimated at two hundred millions of dollars. The new banks now petitioned for, to the several legislatures, are for about sixty millions additional capital, and of course, one hundred and eighty millions of additional circulation, nearly doubling that of the last year, and raising the whole mass to near four hundred millions, or forty for one, of the wholesome amount of circulation for a population of eight millions circumstanced as we are, and you remember how rapidly our money went down after our forty for one establishment in the revolution. I doubt if the present trash can hold as long. I think the three hundred and eighty millions must blow all up in the course of the present year, or certainly it will be consummated by the re-duplication to take place, of course, at the legislative meetings of the next winter. Should not prudent men, who possess stock in any monied institution, either draw and hoard the cash now while they can, or exchange it for canal stock, or such other as being bottomed on immovable property, will remain unhurt by the crush? I have been endeavoring to persuade a friend in our Legislature to try and save this State from the general ruin by timely interference. But it will not be done. You might as well, with the sailors, whistle to the wind, as suggest precautions against having too much money. We must bend then before the gale, and try to hold fast ourselves by some plank of the wreck.

Social Condition of the United States Compared with
That of England and the Suspension of Banks.

Monticello, September 10th, 1814.

To Thomas Cooper, Esq.:

A comparison of the conditions of Great Britain and the United States, which is the subject of your letter of August 17th, would be an interesting theme indeed. To discuss it minutely and demonstratively would be far beyond the limits of a letter. I will give you, therefore, in brief only, the result of my reflections on

the subject. I agree with you in your facts, and in many of your reflections. My conclusion is without doubt, as I am sure yours will be, when the appeal to your sound judgment is seriously made. The population of England is composed of three descriptions of persons (for those of minor note are too inconsiderable to affect a general estimate). These are: 1. The aristocracy, comprehending the nobility, the wealthy commoners, the high grades of priesthood, and the officers of government. 2. The laboring class. 3. The eleemosynary class, or paupers, who are about one-fifth of the whole. The aristocracy, which has the laws and government in their hands, have so managed them as to reduce the third description below the means of supporting life, even by labor; and to force the second, whether employed in agriculture or the arts, to the maximum of labor which the construction of the human body can endure, and to the minimum of food, and of the meanest kind, which will preserve it in life, and in strength sufficient to perform its functions. To obtain food enough, and clothing, not only their whole strength must be unremittingly exerted, but the utmost dexterity also which they can acquire; and those of great dexterity only can keep their ground, while those of less must sink into the class of paupers. Nor is it manual dexterity alone, but the acutest resources of the mind also which are impressed into this struggle for life; and such as have means a little above the rest, as the master workmen, for instance, must strengthen themselves by acquiring as much of the philosophy of their trade as will enable them to compete with their rivals, and keep themselves above ground. Hence the industry and manual dexterity of their journeymen and day laborers and the science of their master workmen keep them in the foremost ranks of competition with those of other nations; and the less dexterous individuals, falling into the eleemosynary ranks, furnish materials for armies and navies to defend their country, exercise piracy on the ocean, and carry conflagration, plunder and devastation on the shores of all those who endeavor to with-

stand their aggressions. A society thus constituted possesses certainly the means of defense. But what does it defend? The pauperism of the lowest class, the abject oppression of the laboring, and the luxury, the riot, the domination and the vicious happiness of the aristocracy. In their hands, the paupers are used as tools to maintain their own wretchedness, and to keep down the laboring portion by shooting them whenever the desperation produced by the cravings of their stomachs drives them into riots. Such is the happiness of scientific England; now let us see the American side of the medal.

And, first, we have no paupers, the old and crippled among us, who possess nothing and have no families to take care of them, being too few to merit notice as a separate section of society, or to affect a general estimate. The great mass of our population is of laborers; our rich, who can live without labor, either manual or professional, being few, and of moderate wealth. Most of the laboring class possess property, cultivate their own lands, have families, and from the demand for their labor are enabled to exact from the rich and the competent such prices as enable them to be fed abundantly, clothed above mere decency, to labor moderately and raise their families. They are not driven to the ultimate resources of dexterity and skill, because their wares will sell, although not quite so nice as those of England. The wealthy, on the other hand, and those at their ease, know nothing of what the Europeans call luxury. They have only somewhat more of the comforts and decencies of life than those who furnish them. Can any condition of society be more desirable than this? Nor in the class of laborers do I mean to withhold from the comparison that portion whose color has condemned them, in certain parts of our Union, to a subjection to the will of others. Even these are better fed in these States, warmer clothed and labor less than the journeymen or day laborers of England. They have the comfort, too, of numerous families, in the midst of whom they live without want, or fear of it; a

solace which few of the laborers of England possess. They are subject, it is true, to bodily coercion, but are not the hundreds of thousands of British soldiers and seamen subject to the same, without seeing, at the end of their career, when age and accident shall have rendered them unequal to labor, the certainty, which the other has, that he will never want? And has not the British seaman, as much as the African, been reduced to this bondage by force, in flagrant violation of his own consent, and of his natural right in his own person? And with the laborers of England generally, does not the moral coercion of want subject their will as despotically to that of their employer, as the physical constraint does the soldier, the seaman, or the slave? But do not mistake me. I am not advocating slavery. I am not justifying the wrongs we have committed on a foreign people, by the example of another nation committing equal wrongs on their own subjects. On the contrary, there is nothing I would not sacrifice to a practicable plan of abolishing every vestige of this moral and political depravity. But I am at present comparing the condition and degree of suffering to which oppression has reduced the man of one color, with the condition and degree of suffering to which oppression has reduced the man of another color; equally condemning both. Now let us compute by numbers the sum of happiness of the two countries. In England happiness is the lot of the aristocracy only; and the proportion they bear to the laborers and paupers, you know better than I do. Were I to guess that they are four in every hundred, then the happiness of the nation would be to its misery as one in twenty-five. In the United States it is as eight millions to zero, or as all to none. But it is said they possess the means of defense, and that we do not. How so? Are we not men? Yes; but our men are so happy at home that they will not hire themselves to be shot at for a shilling a day. Hence we can have no standing armies for defense, because we have no paupers to furnish the materials. The Greeks and Romans had no standing

armies, yet they defended themselves. The Greeks by their laws, and the Romans by the spirit of their people, took care to put into the hands of their rulers no such engine of oppression as a standing army. Their system was to make every man a soldier, and oblige him to repair to the standard of his country whenever that was reared. This made them invincible, and the same remedy will make us so. In the beginning of our government we were willing to introduce the least coercion possible on the will of the citizen. Hence a system of military duty was established too indulgent to his indolence. This is the first opportunity we have had of trying it, and it has completely failed; an issue foreseen by many, and for which remedies have been proposed. That of classing the militia according to age, and allotting each age to the particular kind of service to which it was competent, was proposed to Congress in 1805, and subsequently; and, on the last trial, was lost, I believe, by a single vote only. Had it prevailed what has now happened would not have happened. Instead of burning our capitol, we should have possessed theirs in Montreal and Quebec. We must now adopt it, and all will be safe.

The crisis, then, of the abuses of banking is arrived.* The banks have pronounced their own sentence of death. Between two and three hundred millions of dollars of their promissory notes are in the hands of the people, for solid produce and property sold, and they formally declare they will not pay them. A fearful tax! If equalized on all, but overwhelming and convulsive by its partial fall. From the establishment of the United States Bank, to this day, I have preached against this system, but have been sensible no cure could be hoped, but in the catastrophe now happening. The remedy was to let banks drop gradually at the expiration of their charters, and for the State governments to relinquish the power of establishing others. This would not, as it should not, have given the power of

*In 1814 the banks suspended specie payment.

establishing them to Congress. But Congress could then have issued treasury notes payable within a fixed period, and founded on a specific tax, the proceeds of which as they came in, should be exchangeable for the notes of that particular emission only. Their (banks) paper was received on a belief that it was cash on demand. Themselves have declared it was nothing, and such scenes are now to take place as will open the eyes of credulity and of insanity itself, to the dangers of a paper medium abandoned to the discretion of avarice and of swindlers. It is impossible not to deplore our past follies, and their present consequences, but let them at least be warnings against like follies in future.

Jefferson Tenders His Library to Congress.

Monticello, September 24th, 1814.

To the President of the United States:

Learning by the papers the loss of the library of Congress,* I have sent my catalogue to S. H. Smith, to make to their library committee the offer of my collection, now of about nine or ten thousand volumes, which may be delivered to them instantly, on a valuation by persons of their own naming, and be paid for in any way, and at any term they please; in stock, for example, of any loan they have unissued, or of any one they may institute at this session; or in such annual installments as are at the disposal of the committee. I believe you are acquainted with the condition of the books, should they wish to be ascertained of this. I have long been sensible that my library would be an interesting possession for the public, and the loss Congress has recently sustained, and the difficulty of replacing it, while our intercourse with Europe is so obstructed, renders this the proper moment for placing it at their service.

*It was wantonly destroyed by the British in 1814.

Successful Termination of War With England.

Monticello, June 12th, 1815.

To Mr. Leiper:

I rejoice exceedingly that our war with England was single-handed. In that of the Revolution, we had France, Spain and Holland on our side, and the credit of its success was given to them. On the late occasion, unprepared and unexpected war, we were compelled to declare it, and to receive the attack of England, just issuing from a general war, fully armed and freed from all other enemies, and have not only made her sick of it, but glad to prevent, by peace, the capture of her adjacent possessions, which one or two campaigns more would infallibly have made ours. She has found that we can do her more injury than any other enemy on earth, and henceforward will better estimate the value of our peace. But whether her government has power, in opposition to the aristocracy of her navy, to restrain their piracies within the limits of national rights, may well be doubted. I pray, therefore, for peace, as best for all the world, best for us, and best for me, who have already lived to see three wars, and now pant for nothing more than to be permitted to depart in peace.

Evil of the System of Banks.

Monticello, October 16th, 1815.

To Mr. Gallatin:

We are undone, my dear sir, if this banking mania be not suppressed. The war,* had it proceeded, would have upset our government, and a new one, whenever tried, will do it. And so it must be while our money, the nerve of war, is much or little, real or imaginary, as our bitterest enemies choose to make it. Put down the banks, and if this country could not be carried through the longest war against her most powerful enemy, without ever knowing the want of a dollar,

*The war with England in 1812.

without dependance on the traitorous classes of her citizens, without bearing hard on the resources of the people, or loading the public with an indefinite burden of debt, I know nothing of my countrymen. Not by any novel project, not by any charlatanerie, but by ordinary and well-experienced means; by the total prohibition of all private paper at all times, by reasonable taxes in war aided by the necessary emissions of public paper of circulating size, this bottomed on special taxes, redeemable annually as this special tax comes in, and finally within a moderate period—even with the flood of private paper by which we were deluged would the treasury have ventured its credit in bills of circulating size, as of five or ten dollars, etc., they would have been greedily received by the people in preference to bank paper. But unhappily the towns of America were considered as the nation of America, the dispositions of the inhabitants of the former as those of the latter, and the treasury, for want of confidence in the country, delivered itself bound hand and foot to bold and bankrupt adventurers and pretenders to be money holders, whom it could have crushed at any moment. Yet there is no hope of relief from the Legislatures who have immediate control over this subject. As little seems to be known of the principles of political economy as if nothing had ever been written or practiced on the subject, or as was known in old times, when the Jews had their rulers under the hammer. It is an evil, therefore, which we must make up our minds to meet and to endure as those of hurricanes, earthquakes and other casualties.

Jefferson's Faith in the People, and His Hostility to the Banks.

Monticello, May 28th, 1816.

To John Taylor:

On the import of the term Republic, instead of saying, as has been said, "that it may mean anything or nothing," we may say with truth and meaning, that governments are more or less Republican as they have

more or less of the element of popular election and control in their composition; and believing, as I do, that the mass of the citizens is the safest depository of their own rights, and especially that the evils flowing from the duperies of the people, are less injurious than those from the egoism of their agents, I am a friend of that composition of government which has in it the most of this ingredient. And I sincerely believe, with you, that banking establishments are more dangerous than standing armies; and that the principle of spending money to be paid by posterity, under the name of funding, is but swindling futurity on a large scale.

Jefferson's Views on Government.

Monticello, June 7th, 1816.

To Francis W. Gilmer:

Our legislators are not sufficiently apprized of the rightful limits of their power, that their true office is to declare and enforce only our natural rights and duties, and to take none of them from us. No man has a natural right to commit aggression on the equal rights of another; and this is all from which the laws ought to restrain him; every man is under the natural duty of contributing to the necessities of the society; and this is all the laws should enforce on him; and, no man having a natural right to be the judge between himself and another, it is his natural duty to submit to the umpirage of an impartial third. When the laws have declared and enforced all this, they have fulfilled their functions; and the idea is quite unfounded, that on entering into society we give up any natural right. The trial of every law by one of these texts, would lessen much the labors of our legislators, and lighten equally our municipal codes. There is an error into which most of the speculators on government have fallen, and which the well-known state of society of our Indians ought, before now, to have corrected. In their hypothesis of the origin of government, they suppose it to have commenced in the patriarchal or monarchical form. Our Indians are

evidently in that state of nature which has passed the association of a single family; and not yet submitted to the authority of positive laws, or of any acknowledged magistrate. Every man, with them, is perfectly free to follow his own inclinations. But if, in doing this, he violates the rights of another, if the case be slight, he is punished by the disesteem of his society, or, as we say, by public opinion; if serious, he is tomahawked as a dangerous enemy. Their leaders conduct them by the influence of their character only; and they follow, or not, as they please, him of whose character for wisdom or war they have the highest opinion. Hence the origin of the parties among them adhering to different leaders, and governed by their advice, not by their command. The Cherokees, the only tribe I know to be contemplating the establishment of regular laws, magistrates, and government, propose a government of representatives, elected from every town. But of all things, they least think of subjecting themselves to the will of one man. This, the only instance of actual fact within our knowledge, will be then a beginning by Republican, and not by partriarchal or monarchical government, as speculative writers have generally conjectured.

Perpetual Debt Ruinous to the Country; Government
Should be Remodelled from Time to Time,
It Being Progressive.

Monticello, July 12th, 1816.

To Samuel Kerchival:

I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom. And to preserve their independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty, or profusion and servitude. If we run into such debts, as that we must be taxed in our meat and in our drink, in our necessaries and our comforts, in our labors and our amusements, for our callings and our creeds, as the

people of England are, our people, like them, must come to labor sixteen hours in the twenty-four, give the earnings of fifteen of these to the government for their debts and daily expenses, and the sixteenth being insufficient to afford us bread, we must live as they now do, on oatmeal and potatoes; have no time to think, no means to call the mismanagers to account; but be glad to obtain subsistence by hiring ourselves to rivet their chains on the necks of our fellow sufferers. Our land holders, too, like theirs, retaining indeed the title and stewardship of estates called theirs, but held really in trust for the treasury, must wander, like theirs, in foreign countries, and be contented with penury, obscurity, exile and the glory of the nation. This example reads to us the salutary lesson, that private fortunes are destroyed by public as well as by private extravagance. And this is the tendency of all human governments. A departure from principle in one instance becomes a precedent for a second; that second for a third; and so on, till the bulk of the society is reduced to be mere automaton of misery to have no sensibilities left but for sinning and suffering. Then begins, indeed, the "war of all against all," which some philosophers observing to be so general in this world, have mistaken it for the natural, instead of the abusive state of man. And the fore horse of this frightful team is public debt. Taxation follows that, and in its train wretchedness and oppression.

Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. I knew that age well; I belonged to it, and labored with it. It deserved well of its country. It was very like the present, but without experience of the present and forty years of experience in government is worth a century of book reading; and this they would say themselves, were they to rise from the dead. I am certainly not an advocate for frequent and untried changes in

laws and constitutions. I think moderate imperfections had better be borne with, because when once known, we accommodate ourselves to them, and find practical means of correcting their ill effects. But I know also, that laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors. It is this preposterous idea which has lately deluged Europe in blood. Their monarchs, instead of wisely yielding to the gradual change of circumstances, of favoring progressive accommodation to progressive improvement, have clung to old abuses, entrenched themselves behind steady habits, and obliged their subjects to seek through blood and violence rash and ruinous innovations, which, had they been referred to the peaceful deliberations and collected wisdom of the nation, would have been put into acceptable and salutary forms. Let us follow no such examples, nor weakly believe that one generation is not as capable as another of taking care of itself, and of ordering its own affairs. Let us, as our sister States have done, avail ourselves of our reason and experience, to correct the crude essays of our first and unexperienced, although wise, virtuous, well-meaning councils. And lastly, let us provide in our constitution for its revision at stated periods. What these periods should be, nature herself indicates. By the European tables of mortality, of the adults living at any one moment of time, a majority will be dead in about nineteen years. At the end of that period then, a new majority is come into place, or, in other words, a new generation. Each generation is as independent of the one preceding, as that was of all which had gone before. It has then, like them, a right to choose for itself the form of government it believes most promi-

tive of its own happiness; consequently, to accommodate to the circumstances in which it finds itself, that received from its predecessors; and it is for the peace and good of mankind, that a solemn opportunity of doing this every nineteen or twenty years, should be provided by the constitution; so that it may be handed on, with periodical repairs, from generation to generation, to the end of time, if anything human can so long endure. If this avenue be shut to the call of sufferance, it will make itself heard through that of force, and we shall go on, as other nations are doing, in the endless circle of oppression, rebellion, reformation; and oppression, rebellion, reformation, again; and so on forever.

Emancipation of Slaves.

Monticello, February 8th, 1817.

To Dr. Thomas Humphreys:

I concur entirely in your leading principles of gradual emancipation, of establishment on the coast of Africa, and the patronage of our nation until the emigrants shall be able to protect themselves. The subordinate details might be easily arranged. But the bare proposition of purchase by the United States generally, would excite infinite indignation in all the States north of Maryland. The sacrifice must fall on the States alone which hold them; and the difficult question will be how to lessen this so as to reconcile our fellow citizens to it. Personally I am ready and desirous to make any sacrifice which shall ensure their gradual, but complete retirement from the State, and effectually, at the same time, establish them elsewhere in freedom and safety. But I have not perceived the growth of this disposition in the rising generation, of which I once had sanguine hopes. No symptoms inform me that it will take place in my day. I leave it, therefore, to time, and not at all without hope that the day will come, equally desirable and welcome to us as to them. Perhaps the proposition now on the carpet at Washington to provide an establishment on the coast of Africa for voluntary

emigrations of people of color, may be the corner stone of this future edifice.

Disadvantage of the United States Becoming Carriers
of Foreign Nations, and Evils of the
Banking System.

Monticello, May 10th, 1817.

To Dr. Josephus B. Stuart:

I hope with you that the policy of our country will settle down with as much navigation and commerce only as our own exchanges will require, and that the disadvantage will be seen of our undertaking to carry on that of other nations. This, indeed, may bring gain to a few individuals, and enable them to call off from our farms more laborers to be converted into lackeys and grooms for them, but it will bring nothing to our country, but wars, debt and dilapidation. This has been the course of England, and her examples have fearful influence on us. In copying her we do not seem to consider that like premises induce like consequences. The bank mania is one of the most threatening of these imitations. It is raising up a monied aristocracy in our country which has already set the government at defiance, and although forced at length to yield a little on this first essay of their strength, their principles are unyielded and unyielding. These have taken deep root in the hearts of that class from which our legislators are drawn, and the sop to Cerberus from fable has become history. Their principles lay hold of the good, their pelf of the bad, and thus those whom the constitution had placed as guards to its portals, are sophisticated or suborned from their duties. That paper money has some advantages is admitted. But that its abuses also are inevitable and, by breaking up the measure of value, makes a lottery of all private property can not be denied. Shall we ever be able to put a constitutional veto on it?

The Total and Fatal Explosion of the Banks in 1818,
as Predicted by Jefferson in 1814.

Monticello, March 12th, 1820.

To H. Nelson:

This State is in a condition of unparalleled distress.* The sudden reduction of the circulating medium from a plethora to all but annihilation is producing an entire revolution of fortune. In other places I have known lands sold by the sheriff for one year's rent; beyond the mountain we hear of good slaves selling for one hundred dollars, good horses for five dollars, and the sheriffs generally the purchasers. Our produce is now selling at market for one-third of its price, before this commercial catastrophe, say flour at three and a quarter and three and a half dollars the barrel. We should have less right to expect relief from our legislators if they had been the establishers of the unwise system of banks. A remedy to a certain degree was practicable, that of reducing the quantum of circulation gradually to a level with that of the countries with which we have commerce, and an eternal abjuration of paper. But they have adjourned without doing anything. I fear local insurrections against these horrible sacrifices of property.

*Colonel Benton vividly portrays the country's financial condition of that period in his "Thirty Years' View:" "The years of 1819 and 1820 were a period of gloom and agony. No money, either gold or silver. The local banks (all but those of New England), after a brief resumption of specie payments, again sunk into a state of suspension. The bank of the United States, created as a remedy for all the evils, now at the head of the evil, prostrate and helpless, with no power left but that of suing its debtors, and selling their property, and purchasing for itself at its own nominal price. No price for property or produce. No sales but those of the sheriff and the marshal. No purchases at execution sales but the creditor, or some hoarder of money. No employment for industry—no demand for labor—no sale for the product of the farm—no sound of the hammer, but that of the auctioneer, knocking down property. Stop laws—property laws—replevin laws—stay laws—loan-office laws—the intervention of the legislator between the creditor and the debtor; this was the business of legislation in three-fourths of the States of the Union—of all South and West of New England. No medium of exchange but depreciated paper; no change even, but little bits of foul paper, marked so many cents, and signed by some tradesman, barber or innkeeper; exchanges deranged to the extent of fifty or one hundred per cent. Distress the universal cry of the people; relief the universal demand thundered at the doors of all legislatures, State and Federal."

Jefferson the Father of the "Monroe Doctrine."*

August 4th, 1820.

To William Short:

From many conversations with him (M. Correa, appointed Minister to Brazil, by the Government of Portugal), I hope he sees, and will promote in his new situation, the advantages of a cordial fraternization among all the American nations, and the importance of their coalescing in an American system of policy, totally independent of and unconnected with that of Europe. The day is not distant, when we formally require a meridian of partition through the ocean which separates the two hemispheres, on the hither side of which no European gun shall ever be heard, nor an American on the other; and when, during the rage of the eternal wars of Europe, the lion and the lamb, within our regions, shall lie down together in peace. The principles of society there and here, then, are radically different, and I hope no American patriot will ever lose sight of the essential policy of interdicting in the seas and territories of both Americas, the ferocious and sanguinary contests of Europe. I wish to see this coalition begun.

Jefferson's Views on the "Missouri Compromise."**

Monticello, September 30th, 1820.

To William Pinkney:

The Missouri question is a mere party trick. The leaders of Federalism, defeated in their schemes of obtaining power by rallying partisans to the principle

*James Monroe inserted the so-called "Monroe Doctrine" in his seventh annual message, 2d December, 1823. The occasion of proclaiming this doctrine was the rumored intervention of the "Holy Alliance" to aid Spain to reconquer her American colonies.

**In 1820 Maine and Missouri were admitted into the Union, the latter as a slave State, Congress having previously agreed that slavery should be prohibited forever in all territories north of the parallel of 36 deg. 30 min., which was the southern boundary of Missouri. This was called the "Missouri Compromise."

of monarchism, a principle of personal not of local division, have changed their tack, and thrown out another barrel to the whale. They are taking advantage of the virtuous feelings of the people to effect a division of parties by a geographical line; they expect that this will insure them, on local principles, the majority they could never obtain on principles of Federalism; but they are still putting their shoulder to the wrong wheel; they are wasting Jeremiads on the miseries of slavery, as if we were advocates for it. Sincerity in their declamations should direct their efforts to the true point of difficulty, and unite their councils with ours in devising some reasonable and practicable plan of getting rid of it. Some of these leaders, if they could attain the power, their ambition would rather use it to keep the Union together, but others have ever had in view its separation. If they push it to that, they will find the line of separation very different from their 36 degrees of latitude, and as manufacturing and navigating States, they will have quarreled with their bread and butter, and I fear not that after a little trial they will think better of it, and return to the embraces of their natural and best friends. But this scheme of party I leave to those who are to live under its consequences. We who have gone before have performed an honest duty, by putting in the power of our successors a state of happiness which no nation ever before had within their choice. If that choice is to throw it away, the dead will have neither the power nor the right to control them. I must hope, nevertheless, that the mass of our honest and well-meaning brethren of the other States, will discover the use which designing leaders are making of their best feelings, and will see the precipice to which they are led, before they take the fatal leap.

Organization of the University of Virginia.

Monticello, December 27th, 1820.

To Mr. Roscoe:

Your Liverpool institution will aid us in the or-

ganization of our new university, an establishment now in progress in this State, and to which my remaining days and faculties will be devoted. When ready for its professors, we shall apply for them chiefly to your island. Were we content to remain stationary in science, we should take them from among ourselves; but, desirous of advancing, we must seek them in countries already in advance, and identity of language points to our best resource. To furnish inducements, we provide for the professors separate buildings, in which themselves and their families may be handsomely and comfortably lodged, and to liberal salaries will be added lucrative perquisites. This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it.

The Judiciary the Corps of Sappers and Miners,
Steadily Undermining the Independent Rights
of the States.

(From Jefferson's Autobiography.)

Monticello, January 6th, 1821.

But there was another amendment, of which none of us thought at the time,* and in the omission of which, lurks the germ that is to destroy this happy combination of national powers in the General Government, for matters of national concern, and independent powers in the States, for what concerns the States severally. In England, it was a great point gained at the revolution, that the commissions of the judges, which had hitherto been during pleasure, should thenceforth be made during good behavior. A judiciary, dependent on the will of the king, had proved itself the most oppressive of all tools, in the hands of that magistrate. Nothing, then,

*Jefferson refers to the convention that met at Philadelphia on the 25th day of May, 1787 for the purpose of agreeing on a Constitution for the United States.

could be more salutary, than a change there, to the tenure of good behavior; and the question of good behavior, left to the vote of a simple majority in the two Houses of Parliament. Before the revolution, we were all good English Whigs, cordial in their free principles, and in their jealousies of their executive magistrate. These jealousies are very apparent in all our State constitutions; and, in the General Government in this instance, we have gone even beyond the English caution, by requiring a vote of two-thirds, in one of the Houses, for removing a judge; a vote so impossible, where any defense is made, before men of ordinary prejudices and passions, that our judges are effectually independent of the nation. But this ought not to be. I would not, indeed, make them dependent on the executive authority as they formerly were in England, but I deem it indispensable to the continuance of this government, that they should be submitted to some practical and impartial control; and that this, to be imparted, must be compounded of a mixture of State and Federal authorities. It is not enough that honest men are appointed judges. All know the influence of interest on the mind of man, and how unconsciously his judgment is warped by that influence. To this bias add that of the "esprit de corps," of their peculiar maxim and creed, that "it is the office of a good judge to enlarge his jurisdiction," and the absence of responsibility; and how can we expect impartial decision between the General Government, of which they are themselves so eminent a part, and an individual State, from which they have nothing to hope or fear? We have seen, too, that contrary to all correct example, they are in the habit of going out of the question before them, to throw an anchor ahead, and grapple farther hold for future advances of power. They are then, in fact, the corps of sappers and miners, steadily working to undermine the independent rights of the States, and to consolidate all powers in the hands of that government in which they have so important a freehold estate. But it is not by the consolidation, or concentration of powers, but by their distribution, that

good government is effected. Were not this great country already divided into States, that division must be made, that each might do for itself what concerns itself directly; and what it can so much better do than a distant authority. Every State again is divided into counties, each to take care of what lies within its local bounds; each county again into townships or wards, to manage minuter details; and every ward into farms, to be governed each by its individual proprietor. Were we directed from Washington when to sow, and when to reap, we should soon want bread. It is by this partition of cares, descending in gradation from general to particular, that the mass of human affairs may be best managed, for the good and prosperity of all. I repeat, that I do not charge the judges with wilful and ill-intentioned error; but honest error must be arrested, where its toleration leads to public ruin. As, for the safety of society, we commit honest maniacs to Bedlam, so judges should be withdrawn from their bench, whose erroneous biases are leading us to dissolution. It may, indeed, injure them in fame or in fortune; but it saves the Republic, which is the first and supreme law.

Danger to Our System from Encroachments of the Federal Judiciary.

Monticello, August 18th, 1821.

To Mr. C. Hammond:

It has long been my opinion, and I have never shrunk from its expression (although I do not choose to put it into a newspaper, nor, like a Priam in armor, offer myself its champion), that the germ of dissolution of our Federal government is in the constitution of the Federal judiciary; an irresponsible body, (for impeachment is scarcely a scarecrow), working like gravity by night and by day, gaining a little to-day and a little to-morrow, and advancing its noiseless step like a thief, over the field of jurisdiction, until all shall be usurped from the States, and the government of all be consolidated into one. To this I am opposed; because, when

all government, domestic and foreign, in little as in great things, shall be drawn to Washington as the center of all power, it will render powerless the checks provided of one government on another, and will become as venal and oppressive as the government from which we separated. It will be as in Europe, where every man must be either pike or gudgeon, hammer or anvil. Our functionaries and theirs are wares from the same workshop; made of the same materials, and by the same hand. If the States look with apathy on this silent descent of their government into the gulf which is to swallow all, we have only to weep over the human character formed uncontrolable, but by a rod of iron, and the blasphemers of man, as incapable of self-government, become his true historians.

The Civil Revolution of 1801 and Danger from
Encroachments of the Federal Judiciary.

Monticello, July 2d, 1822.

To William T. Barry:

Your favor ascribes to me merits which I do not claim. I was only of a band devoted to the cause of independence, all of whom exerted equally their best endeavors for its success, and have a common right to the merits of its acquisition. So also is the civil revolution of 1801. Very many and very meritorious were the worthy patriots who assisted in bringing back our government to its Republican tack. To preserve it in that, will require unremitting vigilance. Whether the surrender of our opponents, their reception into our camp, their assumption of our name, and apparent accession to our objects, may strengthen or weaken the genuine principles of Republicanism, may be a good or an evil, is yet to be seen. I consider the party division of Whig and Tory the most wholesome which can exist in any government, and well worthy of being nourished, to keep out those of a more dangerous character. We already see the power, installed for life responsible to no authority (for impeachment is not even

a scarecrow), advancing with a noiseless and steady pace to the great object of consolidation. The foundations are already deeply laid by their decisions, for the annihilation of constitutional State rights, and the removal of every check, every counterpoise to the engulfing power of which themselves are to make a sovereign part. If ever this vast country is brought under a single government, it will be one of the most extensive corruption, indifferent and incapable of a wholesome care over so wide a spread of surface. This will not be borne, and you will have to choose between reformation and revolution. If I know the spirit of this country, the one or the other is inevitable. Before the canker is become inveterate, before its venom has reached so much of the body politic as to get beyond control, remedy should be applied. Let the future appointments of judges be for four or six years, and renewable by the President and Senate. This will bring their conduct, at regular periods, under revision and probation, and may keep them in equipoise between the general and special governments. We have erred in this point, by copying England, where certainly it is a good thing to have the judges independent of the king. But we have omitted to copy their caution also, which makes a judge removable on the address of both legislative Houses. That there should be public functionaries independent of the nation, whatever may be their demerit, is a solecism in a Republic, of the first order of absurdity and inconsistency.

Danger from the Federal Judiciary.

Monticello, March 4th, 1823.

To Judge Johnson:

I can not lay down my pen without recurring to one of the subjects of my former letter, for in truth there is no danger I apprehend so much as the consolidation of our government by the noiseless, and therefore unalarming, instrumentality of the Supreme Court. This is the form in which Federalism now ar-

rays itself, and consolidation is the present principle of distinction between Republicans and the pseudo Republicans, but real Federalists. I must comfort myself with the hope that the judges will see the importance and the duty of giving their country the only evidence they can give of fidelity to its constitution and integrity in the administration of its laws; that is to say, by every one's giving his opinion seriatim and publicly on the cases he decides. Let him prove by his reasoning that he has read the papers, that he has considered the case, that in the application of the law to it he uses his own judgment independently and unbiased by party views and personal favor or disfavor. Throw himself in every case on God and his country; both will excuse him for error and value him for his honesty. The very idea of cooking up opinions in conclave, begets suspicions that something passes which fears the public ear, and this, spreading by degrees, must produce at some time abridgment of tenure, facility of removal, or some other modification which may promise a remedy. For in truth there is at this time more hostility to the Federal judiciary, than to any other organ of the government.

I should greatly prefer, as you do, four judges to any greater number. Great lawyers are not over abundant, and the multiplication of judges only enable the weak to outvote the wise, and three concurrent opinions out of four gives a strong presumption of right.

Evils of the Cheapness of Whiskey. Taxes Must Be Uniform.

Monticello, May 3d, 1823.

To Gen. Samuel Smith:

I am rendered a slow correspondent by the loss of the use, totally of the one, and almost totally of the other wrist,* which renders writing scarcely and painfully practicable. I learn with great satisfaction

*On the 4th of September, 1786. Jefferson, while walking with a friend in Paris, fell and fractured his wrist, the use of which he never recovered.

that wholesome economies have been found, sufficient to relieve us from the ruinous necessity of adding annually to our debt by new loans. The deviser of so salutary a relief deserves truly well of his country. I shall be glad, too, if an additional tax of one-fourth of a dollar a gallon on whiskey shall enable us to meet all our engagements with punctuality. Viewing that tax as an article in a system of excise, I was once glad to see it fall with the rest of the system, which I considered as prematurely and unnecessarily introduced. It was evident that our existing taxes were then equal to our existing debts. It was clearly foreseen also that the surplus from excise would only become alimnt for useless offices, and would be swallowed in idleness by those whom it would withdraw from useful industry. Considering it only as a fiscal measure, this was right. But the prostration of body and mind which the cheapness of this liquor is spreading through the mass of our citizens, now calls the attention of the legislator on a very different principle. One of his important duties is as guardian of those who from causes susceptible of precise definition, can not take care of themselves. Such are infants, maniacs, gamblers, drunkards. The last, as much as the maniac, requires restrictive measures to save him from the fatal infatuation under which he is destroying his health, his morals, his family, and his usefulness to society. One powerful obstacle to his ruinous self-indulgence would be a price beyond his competence. As a sanatory measure, therefore, it becomes one of duty in the public guardians. Yet I do not think it follows necessarily that imported spirits should be subjected to similar enhancement, until they become as cheap as those made at home. A tax on whiskey is to discourage its consumption; a tax on foreign spirits encourages whiskey by removing its rival from competition. The price and present duty throw foreign spirits already out of competition with whiskey and accordingly they are used but to a salutary extent. You see no persons besotting themselves with imported spirits, wines, liquors, cordials, etc. Whiskey claims

to itself alone the exclusive office of sotmaking. Foreign spirits, wines, teas, coffee, segars, salt are articles of as innocent consumption as broadcloths and silks; and ought, like them to pay but the average ad valorem duty of other imported comforts. All of them are ingredients in our happiness, and the government which steps out of the ranks of the ordinary articles of consumption to select and lay under disproportionate burthens a particular one, because it is a comfort, pleasing to the taste, or necessary to health, and will therefore be bought, is, in that particular, a tyranny. Taxes on consumption like those on capital or income, to be just must be uniform. I do not mean to say that it may not be for the general interest to foster for awhile certain infant manufactures, until they are strong enough to stand against foreign rivals; but when evident that they will never be so, it is against right, to make the other branches of industry support them. When it was found that France could not make sugar under 6h a lb., was it not tyranny to restrain her citizens from importing at 1h, or would it not have been so to have laid a duty of 5h on the imported? The permitting an exchange of industries with other nations is a direct encouragement of your own, which without that, would bring you nothing for your comfort, and would of course cease to be produced.

History of Parties in United States.

Monticello, June 12th, 1823.

To Judge Johnson:

I learn with great pleasure that you have resolved on continuing your history of parties. Our opponents are far ahead of us in preparations for placing their cause favorably before posterity. Yet I hope even from some of them the escape of precious truths, in angry explosions or effusions of vanity, which will betray the genuine monarchism of their principles. They do not themselves believe what they endeavor to inculcate, that we were an opposition party, not on princi-

ple, but merely seeking for office. The fact is, that at the formation of our government, many had formed their political opinions on European writings and practices, believing the experience of old countries, and especially of England, abusive as it was, to be a safer guide than mere theory. The doctrines of Europe were, that men in numerous associations can not be restrained within the limits of order and justice, but by forces physical and moral, wielded over them by authorities independent of their will. Hence their organization of kings, hereditary nobles and priests. Still further to constrain the brute force of the people, they deem it necessary to keep them down by hard labor, poverty and ignorance, and to take from them, as from bees, so much of their earnings, as that unremitting labor shall be necessary to obtain a sufficient surplus barely to sustain a scanty and miserable life. And these earnings they apply to maintain their privileged orders in splendor and idleness, to fascinate the eyes of the people, and excite in them an humble adoration and submission, as to an order of superior beings. Although few among us had gone all these lengths of opinion, yet many had advanced, some more, some less, on the way. And in the convention which formed our government, they endeavored to draw the cords of power as tight as they could obtain them, to lessen the dependence of the general functionaries on their constituents, to subject to them those of the States, and to weaken their means of maintaining the steady equilibrium which the majority of the convention had deemed salutary for both branches, general and local. To recover, therefore, in practice the powers which the nation had refused, and to warp to their own wishes those actually given, was the steady object of the Federal party. Ours, on the contrary, was to maintain the will of the majority of the convention, and of the people themselves. We believed, with them, that man was a rational animal, endowed by nature with rights, and with an innate sense of justice; and that he could be restrained from wrong and protected in right, by moderate powers, confided

to persons of his own choice, and held to their duties by dependence on his own will. We believed that the complicated organization of kings, nobles and priests was not the wisest nor best to effect the happiness of associated man; that wisdom and virtue were not hereditary; that the trappings of such a machinery, consumed by their expense, those earnings of industry, they were meant to protect, and by the inequalities they produced, exposed liberty to sufferance. We believed that men, enjoying in ease and security the full fruits of their own industry, enlisted by all their interests on the side of law and order, habituated to think for themselves, and to follow their reason as their guide, would be more easily and safely governed, than with minds nourished in error, and vitiated and debased, as in Europe, by ignorance, indigence and oppression. The cherishment of the people then was our principle, the fear and distrust of them, that of the other party. Composed, as we were, of the landed and laboring interests of the country, we could not be less anxious for a government of law and order than were the inhabitants of the cities, the strongholds of Federalism. And whether our efforts to save the principles and form of our constitution have not been salutary, let the present Republican freedom, order and prosperity of our country determine. History may distort truth, and will distort it for a time, by the superior efforts at justification of those who are conscious of needing it most. Nor will the opening scenes of our present government be seen in their true aspect, until the letters of the day, now held in private hoards, shall be broken up and laid open to public view. What a treasure will be found in Gen. Washington's cabinet, when it shall pass into the hands of as candid a friend to truth as he was himself! When no longer, like Caesar's notes and memorandums in the hands of Anthony, it shall be open to the high priests of Federalism only, and garbled to say so much, and no more, as suits their views!

I have stated above, that the original object of the Federalists were, first, to warp our government more

to the form and principles of monarchy, and, second, to weaken the barriers of the State governments as co-ordinate powers. In the first they have been so completely foiled by the universal spirit of the nation, that they have abandoned the enterprise, shrunk from the odium of their old appellation, taken to themselves a participation of ours, and under the pseudo Republican mask, are now aiming at their second object, and strengthened by unsuspecting or apostate recruits from our ranks, are advancing fast towards an ascendancy. I have been blamed for saying, that a prevalence of the doctrines of consolidation would one day call for reformation or revolution. I answer by asking if a single State of the Union would have agreed to the constitution, had it given all powers to the General Government? If the whole opposition to it did not proceed from the jealousy and fear of every State, of being subjected to the other States in matters merely its own? And if there is any reason to believe the States more disposed now than then, to acquiesce in this general surrender of all their rights and powers to a consolidated government, one and undivided?

But the Chief Justice says, "there must be an ultimate arbiter somewhere." True, there must; but does that prove it is either party? The ultimate arbiter is the people of the Union, assembled by their deputies in convention, at the call of Congress, or of two-thirds of the States. Let them decide to which they mean to give an authority claimed by two of their organs. And it has been the peculiar wisdom and felicity of our constitution, to have provided this peaceable appeal, where that of other nations is at once to force.

Cuba Should Not Be Allowed to Pass to England.

Monticello, June 23d, 1823.

To President Monroe:

Dear Sir—I have been lately visited by a Mr. Miralla, a native of Buenos Ayres, but resident in Cuba for the last seven or eight years; a person of intelligence, of

much information, and frankly communicative. I believe, indeed, he is known to you. I availed myself of the opportunity of learning what was the state of public sentiment in Cuba as to their future course. He says they would be satisfied to remain as they are; but all are sensible that that can not be; that whenever circumstances shall render a separation from Spain necessary, a perfect independence would be their choice, provided they could see a certainty of protection; but that, without that prospect, they would be divided in opinion between an incorporation with Mexico, and with the United States—Columbia being too remote for prompt support. The considerations in favor of Mexico are that the Havana would be the emporium for all the produce of that immense and wealthy country, and, of course, the medium of all its commerce; that having no ports on its Eastern coast, Cuba would become the depot of its naval stores and strength, and, in effect would, in a great measure, have the sinews of the government in its hands. That in favor of the United States is the fact that three-fourths of the exportations from Havana come to the United States, that they are a settled government, the power which can most promptly succor them, rising to an eminence promising future security; and of which they would make a member of the sovereignty, while as to England, they would be only a colony, subordinated to her interest, and that there is not a man in the island who would not resist her to the bitterest extremity. Of this last sentiment I had not the least idea at the date of my late letters to you. I had supposed an English interest there quite as strong as that of the United States, and therefore, that, to avoid war, and keep the island open to our own commerce, it would be best to join that power in mutually guaranteeing its independence. But if there is no danger of its falling into the possession of England, I must retract an opinion founded on an error of fact. We are surely under no obligation to give her, gratis, an interest which she has not; and the whole inhabitants being averse to her, and the climate mortal

to strangers, its continued military occupation by her would be impracticable. It is better then to lie still in readiness to receive that interesting incorporation when solicited by herself. For, certainly, her addition to our confederacy is exactly what is wanting to round our power as a nation to the point of its utmost interest.

Europe Should Not Be Suffered to Intermeddle With
Cis-Atlantic Affairs, and Cuba Should Belong
to the United States.

• Monticello, October 24th, 1823.

To the President:

Dear Sir—The question presented by the letters you have sent me, is the most momentous which has ever been offered to my contemplation since that of Independence. That made us a nation, this sets our compass and points the course which we are to steer through the ocean of time opening on us. And never could we embark on it under circumstances more auspicious. Our first and fundamental maxim should be, never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe. Our second, never to suffer Europe to intermeddle with cis-Atlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should, therefore, have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicil of despotism, our endeavor should surely be, to make our hemisphere that of freedom. One nation, most of all, could disturb us in this pursuit; she now offers to lead, aid and accompany us in it. By acceding to her proposition, we detach her from the bands, bring her mighty weight into the scale of free governments, and emancipate a continent at one stroke, which might otherwise linger long in doubt and difficulty. Great Britain is the nation which can do us the most harm of any one, or all on earth; and with her on our side we need not fear the whole world. With her, then, we should most sedulously cherish a cordial friendship; and nothing

would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more, side by side, in the same cause. Not that I would purchase even her amity at the price of taking part in her wars. But the war in which the present proposition might engage us, should that be its consequence, is not her war, but ours. Its object is to introduce and establish the American system, of keeping out of our land all foreign powers, of never permitting those of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations. It is to maintain our own principle, not to depart from it. And if, to facilitate this, we can effect a division in the body of the European powers, and draw over to our side its most powerful member, surely we should do it. But I am clearly of Mr. Canning's* opinion that it will prevent instead of provoking war. With Great Britain withdrawn from their scale and shifted into that of our two continents, all Europe combined would not undertake such a war. For how would they propose to get at either enemy without superior fleets? Nor is the occasion to be slighted which this proposition offers, of declaring our protest against the atrocious violation of the rights of nations, by the interference of any one in the internal affairs of another, so flagitiously begun by Bonaparte and now continued by the equally lawless Alliance, calling itself Holy.** But we have first to ask ourselves a question. Do we wish to acquire to our own confederacy any one or more of the Spanish provinces? I candidly confess, that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States. The control which, with Florida Point, this island would give us over the Gulf of Mexico and the countries and isthmus bordering on it, as well as all those whose waters flow into it, would fill up the measure of our political well-being. Yet, as I am sensible that this can never be obtained, even with her own consent, but by

*George Canning (1770-1827) one of the greatest of English statesmen and orators.

**The so-called Holy Alliance was formed in 1815 between Russia, Austria and Prussia for the maintenance of peace and the establishment of the existing dynasties.

war; and its independence, which is our second interest (and especially its independence of England), can be secured without it, I have no hesitation in abandoning my first wish to future chances, and accepting its independence, with peace and the friendship of England, rather than its association, at the expense of war and her enmity.

I could honestly, therefore, join in the declaration proposed, that we aim not at the acquisition of any of those possessions, that we will not stand in the way of any amicable arrangement between them and the mother country; but that we will oppose, with all our means, the forcible interposition of any other power, as auxiliary, stipendiary, or under any other form or pretext, and most especially, their transfer to any power by conquest, cession, or acquisition in any other way. I should think it, therefore, advisable that the executive should encourage the British government to a continuance in the dispositions expressed in these letters by an assurance of his concurrence with them as far as his authority goes; and that as it may lead to war, the declaration of which requires an act of Congress, the case shall be laid before them for consideration at their first meeting, and under the reasonable aspect in which it is seen by himself.

A Government Should Reflect the Will of the People
in All Its Departments.

Monticello, October 31st, 1823.

To M. Coray:

The equal rights of man, and the happiness of every individual, are now acknowledged to be the only legitimate objects of government. Modern times have the signal advantage, too, of having discovered the only device by which these rights can be secured, to-wit: government by the people, acting not in person, but by representatives chosen by themselves, that is to say, by every man of ripe years and sane mind, who either contributes by his purse or person to the support of

his country. The small and imperfect mixture of representative government in England, impeded as it is by other branches, aristocratical and hereditary, shows yet the power of the representative principle towards improving the condition of man. With us, all the branches of the government are elective by the people themselves, except the judiciary, of whose science and qualifications they are not competent judges. Yet, even in that department, we call in a jury of the people to decide all controverted matters of fact, because to that investigation they are entirely competent, leaving thus as little as possible, merely the law of the case, to the decision of the judges. And true it is that the people especially when moderately instructed, are the only safe, because the only honest, depositories of the public rights, and should therefore be introduced into the administration of them in every function to which they are sufficient; they will err sometimes and accidentally, but never designedly, and with a systematic and persevering purpose of overthrowing the free principles of the government. Hereditary bodies, on the contrary, always existing, always on the watch for their own aggrandizement, profit of every opportunity of advancing the privileges of their order, and encroaching on the rights of the people.

A Strong Monarchical Party at the Beginning of Our Government.

Monticello, January 8th, 1825.

To William Short:

When I arrived at New York in 1790, to take a part in the administration, being fresh from the French revolution, while in its first and pure stage, and consequently somewhat whetted up in my own Republican principles, I found a state of things, in the general society of the place, which I could not have supposed possible. Being a stranger there, I was feasted from table to table, at large set dinners, the parties generally from twenty to thirty. The revolution I had left, and that

we had just gone through in the recent change of our own government, being the common topics of conversation, I was astonished to find the general prevalence of monarchical sentiments, insomuch that in maintaining those of Republicanism, I had always the whole company on my hands, never scarcely finding among them a single co-advocate in that argument, unless some old member of Congress happened to be present. The farthest that any one would go in support of the Republican features of our new government, would be to say, "the present constitution is well as a beginning, and may be allowed a fair trial, but it is, in fact, only a stepping stone to something better." Among their writers, Denny, the editor of the Portfolio, who was a kind of oracle with them, and styled the Addison of America, openly avowed his preference of monarchy over all other forms of government, prided himself on the avowal, and maintained it by argument freely and without reserve, in his publications. I do not, myself, know that the Essex junto of Boston were monarchists, but I have always heard it so said, and never doubted.

These, my dear sir, are but detached items from a great mass of proofs then fully before the public. They are unknown to you, because you were absent in Europe, and they are now disavowed by the party. But, had it not been for the firm and determined stand then made by a counter party, no man can say what our government would have been at this day. Monarchy, to be sure, is now defeated, and they wish it should be forgotten that it was ever advocated. They see that it is desperate, and treat its imputation to them as a calumny, and I verily believe that none of them have it now in direct aim. Yet the spirit is not done away. The same party takes now what they deem the next best ground, the consolidation of the government; the giving to the Federal member of the government, by unlimited constructions of the constitution, a control over all the functions of the States, and the concentration of all power ultimately at Washington.

A Decalogue of Canons for Observation in Practical
Life.

Monticello, February 21st, 1825.

To Thomas Jefferson Smith:

1. Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day.
2. Never trouble another for what you can do yourself.
3. Never spend your money before you have it.
4. Never buy what you do not want, because it is cheap; it will be dear to you.
5. Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst and cold.
6. We never repent of having eaten too little.
7. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.
8. How much pain have cost us the evils which have never happened.
9. Take things always by their smooth handle.
10. When angry, count ten, before you speak; if very angry a hundred.

A Moneyed Aristocracy Riding and Ruling Over the
Plundered Ploughman and Beggared Yeomanry.

Monticello, December 26th, 1825.

To Wiliam B. Giles:

The younger generation having nothing in them of the feelings or principles of 1776, now look to a single and splendid government of an aristocracy, founded on banking institutions, and moneyed incorporations under the guise and cloak of their favored branches of manufactures, commerce and navigation, riding and ruling over the plundered ploughman and beggared yeomanry. This will be to them a next best blessing to the monarchy of their first aim, and perhaps the surest stepping stone to it.

A Summary of Jefferson's Public Services.

February, 1826.

(From Thoughts on Lotteries.)

I may more readily than others, suggest the offices in which I have served. I came of age in 1764, and was soon put into the nomination of justice of the county in which I live, and at the first election following I became one of its representatives in the Legislature. I was thence sent to the old Congress. Then employed two years with Mr. Pendleton and Mr. Wythe, on the revisal and reduction to a single code of the whole body of the British statutes, the acts of our Assembly, and certain parts of the common law.

Then elected Governor.

Next to the Legislature, and to Congress again.

Sent to Europe as Minister Plenipotentiary.

Appointed Secretary of State to the new government.

Elected Vice-President and President. And lastly, a Visitor and Rector of the University.

In these different offices, with scarcely any interval between them, I have been in the public service now sixty-one years; and during the far greater part of the time, in foreign countries, or in other States. There is one service, however, the most important in its consequences, of any transaction in any portion of my life; to-wit, the head I personally made against the Federal principles and proceedings, during the administration of Mr. Adams. Their usurpations and violations of the constitution at that period, and their majority in both Houses of Congress, were so great, so decided, and so daring, that after combating their aggressions, inch by inch, without being able in the least to check their career, the Republican leaders thought it would be best for them to give up their useless efforts there, go home, get into their respective Legislatures, embody whatever of resistance they could be formed into, and if ineffectual, to perish there as in the last ditch. All therefore, retired, leaving Mr. Gallatin alone in the House of Representatives, and myself in the Senate,

where I then presided as Vice-President. Remaining at our posts, and bidding defiance to the brow beatings and insults by which they endeavored to drive us off also, we kept the mass of Republicans in phalax together, until the Legislature could be brought up to the charge; and nothing on earth is more certain, than that if myself particularly, placed by my office of Vice-President at the head of the Republicans, had given way and withdrawn from my post, the Republicans throughout the Union would have given up in despair, and the cause would have been lost forever. By holding on, we obtained time for the Legislature to come up with their weight; and those of Virginia and Kentucky particularly, but more especially the former, by their celebrated resolutions, saved the constitution at its last gasp. No person who was not a witness of the scenes of that gloomy period, can form any idea of the afflicting persecutions and personal indignities we had to brook. They saved our country however.

If legislative services are worth mentioning, and the stamp of liberality and equality, which was necessary to be imposed on our laws in the first crisis of our birth as a nation, was of any value, they will find that the leading and most important laws of that day were prepared by myself, and carried chiefly by my efforts; supported, indeed, by able and faithful coadjutors from the ranks of the House, very effective as seconds, but who would not have taken the field as leaders.

The prohibition of the further importation of slaves was the first of these measures in time.

This was followed by the abolition of entails, which broke up the hereditary and high-handed aristocracy, which, by accumulating immense masses of property in single lines of families, had divided our country into two distinct orders, of nobles and plebeians.

But further to complete the equality among our citizens so essential to the maintenance of Republican government, it was necessary to abolish the principle of primogeniture. I drew the law of descents, giving equal

inheritance to sons and daughters, which made a part of the revised code.

The attack on the establishment of a dominant religion, was first made by myself. It could be carried at first only by a suspension of salaries for one year, by battling it again at the next session for another year, and so from year to year, until the public mind was ripened for the bill for establishing religious freedom, which I had prepared for the revised code also. This was at length established permanently, and by the efforts chiefly of Mr. Madison, being myself in Europe at the time that work was brought forward. The feature of a sixty years' service, as no other instance has yet occurred in our country, so it probably never may again.

Jefferson's Answer to an Invitation to Attend a
Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the
Declaration of Independence.

Monticello, June 24th, 1826.

To Mr. Weightman:

Respected Sir—The kind invitation I receive from you, on the part of the citizens of the City of Washington, to be present with them at their celebration on the fiftieth anniversary of American Independence, as one of the surviving signers of an instrument pregnant with our own, and the fate of the world, is most flattering to myself and heightened by the honorable accompaniment proposed for the comfort of such a journey. It adds sensibly to the sufferings of sickness, to be deprived by it of a personal participation in the rejoicings of that day. But acquiescence is a duty, under circumstances not placed among those we are permitted to control. I should, indeed, with peculiar delight, have met and exchanged there congratulations personally with the small band, the remnant of that host of worthies, who joined with us on that day, in the bold and doubtful election we were to make for our country, between submission or the sword; and to have enjoyed with them the consola-

tory fact that our fellow citizens, after half a century of experience and prosperity, continue to approve the choice we made. May it be to the world, what I believe it will be (to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all), the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self-government. That from which we have substituted, restores the free right to the unbounded exercise of reason and freedom of opinion. All eyes are opened, or opening, to the rights of man. The general spread of the light of science has already laid open to every view the palpable truth, that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately, by the grace of God. These are grounds of hope for others. For ourselves, let the annual return of this day forever refresh our recollections of these rights, and an undiminished devotion to them.

I will ask permission here to express the pleasure with which I should have met my ancient neighbors of the City of Washington and its vicinities, with whom I passed so many years of a pleasing social intercourse; an intercourse which so much relieved the anxieties of the public cares, and left impressions so deeply engraved in my affections, as never to be forgotten. With my regret that ill-health forbids me the gratification of an acceptance, be pleased to receive for yourself, and those for whom you write, the assurance of my highest respect and friendly attachments.

• Such was the devoted, self-sacrificing love for his country and the people; such the pure and lofty character of Thomas Jefferson, than whom a greater statesman never lived.

On July 4th, 1826, at fifty minutes past meridian, Jefferson, without a struggle, ceased to breathe. His last words were: "This is the Fourth of July."

SHORT EXCERPTS.

(The following excerpts are from letters, the main body of which would be of no interest to the general reader.)

Paris, October 26th, 1786.

I receive none into my esteem, till I know they are worthy of it. Wealth, title, office, are no recommendations to my friendship. On the contrary, great good qualities are requisite to make amends for their having wealth, title, and office.

Paris, August 14th, 1787.

The wealth acquired by speculation and plunder, is fugacious in its nature, and fills society with the spirit of gambling. The moderate and sure income of husbandry begets permanent improvement, quiet life and orderly conduct, both public and private.

Paris, December 20th, 1787.

When we get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, we shall become corrupt as in Europe, and go to eating one another as they do there.

Paris, August 28th, 1789.

I know but one code of morality for men, whether acting singly or collectively: He who says I will be a rogue when I act in company with a hundred others, but an honest man when I act alone, will be believed in the former assertion, but not in the latter.

Monticello, September 9th, 1792.

No government ought to be without censors; and when the press is free, no one ever will. If virtuous, it need not fear the fair operation of attack and defense. Nature has given to man no other means of sifting the truth, either in religion, law or politics. I think it as

honorable to the government neither to know, nor notice, its sycophants or censors, as it would be undignified and criminal to pamper the former and persecute the latter.

Philadelphia, May 13th, 1797.

Whatever follies we may be led into as to foreign nations, we shall never give up our Union, the last anchor of our hope, and that alone which is to prevent this heavenly country from becoming an arena of gladiators.

Washington, February 2d, 1801.

One thing I will say, that as to the future, interferences with elections whether of the State or General Government, by officers of the latter, should be deemed cause of removal, because the constitutional remedy by the elective principle becomes nothing, if it may be smothered by the enormous patronage of the General Government.

Washington, March 23d, 1801.

The elective franchise, if guarded as the act of our safety, will peaceably dissipate all combinations to subvert a constitution dictated by the wisdom, and resting on the will of the people. That will is the only legitimate foundation of any government, and to protect its free expression should be our first object.

Washington, May 26th, 1801.

To preserve the peace of our fellow citizens, promote their prosperity and happiness, reunite opinion, cultivate a spirit of candor, moderation, charity and forbearance towards one another, are objects calling for the efforts and sacrifices of every good man and patriot. Our religion enjoins it; our happiness demands it; and no sacrifice is requisite but of passions hostile to both.

Monticello, March 31st, 1809.

If, in my retirement to the humble station of a private

citizen, I am accompanied with the esteem and approbation of my fellow citizens, trophies obtained by the blood-stained steel, or the tattered flags of the tented field, will never be envied. The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government.

Monticello, August 26th, 1816.

My most earnest wish is to see the Republican element of popular control pushed to the maximum of its practicable exercise. I shall then believe that our government may be pure and perpetual.

Monticello, June 16th, 1817.

That we should wish to see the people of other countries free, is as natural, and at least as justifiable as that one king should wish to see the kings of other countries maintained in their despotism. Right to both parties, innocent favor to the juster cause, is our proper sentiment.

Poplar Forest, September 6th, 1819.

It should be remembered, as an axiom of eternal truth in politics, that whatever power in any government is independent, is absolute also; in theory only, at first, while the spirit of the people is up, but in practice, as fast as that relaxes. Independence can be trusted nowhere but with the people in mass. They are inherently independent of all but moral law.

Monticello, September 28th, 1820.

I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power.

Monticello, December 25th, 1820.

A judiciary independent of a king or executive alone, is a good thing; but independence of the will of the nation is a solecism, at least in a Republican government.

Monticello, March 9th, 1821.

The great object of my fear is the Federal judiciary. That body, like gravity, ever acting, with noiseless foot, and unalarming advance, giving ground step by step and holding what it gains, is engulfing insidiously the special governments into the jaws of that which feeds them.

Monticello, September 12th, 1821.

And even should the cloud of barbarism and despotism again obscure the science and liberties of Europe, this country remains to preserve and restore light and liberty to them. In short, the flames kindled on the 4th of July, 1776, have spread over too much of the globe to be extinguished by the feeble engines of despotism, on the contrary, they will consume these engines and all who work them.

Monticello, 1821.

Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people* are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, can not live in the same government. Nature, habit, opinion have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them. It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation, peaceably, and in such slow degree, as that the evil will wear off insensibly, and their place be equally filled up by free white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up. We should in vain look for an example in the Spanish deportation or deletion of the Moors. This precedent would fall short of our case.

*Colored.

APHORISMS.

(The following aphorisms were carefully collected from Jefferson's writings. They are eternal truths forcibly expressed in a few words.)

Abuse.

1.

It is unfortunate for our peace, that unmerited abuse wounds, while unmerited praise has not the power to heal.

Actions.

2.

Evil, as well as good actions, recoil on the doers.

3.

The waters must always be what are the fountains from which they flow.

Agriculture.

4.

With honesty and self-government for her portion, agriculture may abandon contentedly to others the fruits of commerce and corruption.

Blessing.

5.

An honest heart being the first blessing, a knowing head is the second.

Chord of Compact.

6.

However strong the chord of compact may be, there is a point of tension at which it will break.

Disease.

7.

Where the disease is most deeply seated, there it will be slowest in eradication.

Duty.

8.

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.

9.

There is a debt of service due from every man to his country, proportioned to the bounties which nature and fortune have measured to him.

Education and Discussion.

10.

Bigotry is the disease of ignorance, of morbid minds; enthusiasm of the free and buoyant. Education and free discussion are the antidotes of both.

Enemy.

11.

An enemy generally says and believes what he wishes.

Error.

12.

It is safer to suppress an error in its first conception, than to trust to any after correction.

13.

Error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.

Employment.

14.

An unprincipled man, let his other fitnesses be what they will, ought never to be employed.

Exercise of Power.

15.

An honest man can feel no pleasure in the exercise of power over his fellow citizens.

Foreign Intermeddling.

16.

Wretched, indeed, is the nation, in whose affairs foreign powers are once permitted to intermeddle.

Government.

17.

The whole art of government consists in the art of being honest.

18.

Where the law of majority ceases to be acknowledged, there government ends, the law of the strongest takes its place, and life and property are his who can take them.

19.

No government has a legitimate right to do what is not for the welfare of the governed.

20.

Responsibility is a tremendous engine in a free government.

21.

Governments are Republican only in proportion as they embody the will of their people and execute it.

22.

The people are the only censors of their governors.

Health.

23.

The most uninformed mind, with a healthy body, is happier than the wisest valetudinarian.

Hope.

24.

Hope is sweeter than despair.

APHORISMS.

Insult.

25.

An insult unpunished is the parent of many others.

26.

Acquiescence under insult is not the way to escape war.

Isolation.

27.

Nobody will care for him who cares for nobody.

Liberty.

28.

Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

29.

The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time, with the blood of patriots and tyrants.

30.

The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground.

31.

Light and liberty are on steady advance.

Mind.

32.

In peace as well as in war, the mind must be kept in motion.

Mischief.

33.

Mischief may be done negatively as well as positively.

Misery.

34.

This world abounds indeed with misery; to lighten its burden, we must divide it with one another.

 Modesty.

35.

There is modesty often, which does itself injury.

Office.

36.

Every office becoming vacant, every appointment made, gives one ingrate and hundred enemies.

Oppression.

37.

Where there is no oppression there will be no pauper hirelings.

38.

Enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppressions of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day.

Perverseness.

39.

The brier and bramble can never become the vine and olive.

Pleasure.

40.

Pleasure is always before us, but misfortune is at our side; while running after that, this arrests us.

41.

Do not bite at the bait of pleasure, till you know there is no hook beneath it.

42.

Those which depend on ourselves, are the only pleasures a wise man will count on; for nothing is ours, which another may deprive us of. Hence the inestimable value of intellectual pleasures.

Praise.

43.

To give praise where it is not due might be well from the venal, but would ill beseem those who are asserting the rights of human nature.

Press.

44.

Our printers raven on the agonies of their victims, as wolves do on the blood of the lamb.

45.

Where the press is free, and every man able to read, all is safe.

Punishment.

46.

All excess of punishment is a crime.

Reason.

47.

Every man's own reason must be his oracle.

48.

Conviction is the effect of our own dispassionate reasoning.

Reformation.

49.

Reformation is more practicable by operating on the mind than on the body of man.

50.

Politics, like religion, hold up the torches of martyrdom to the reformers of error.

Repentance.

51.

We often repent of what we have said, but never, never of that which we have not.

Reputation.

52.

Nations, like individuals, wish to enjoy a fair reputation.

53.

A regard for reputation, and the judgment of the world, may sometimes be felt where conscience is dormant, or indolence inexcitable.

Reward.

54.

The approving voice of our fellow citizens, for endeavors to be useful, is the greatest of all earthly rewards.

Right.

55.

There is a law in our hearts, and a power in our hands, given for righteous employment in maintaining right, and redressing wrong.

Ripeness of Age.

56.

Man, like the fruit he eats, has his period of ripeness.

Science.

57.

Science is progressive, and talents and enterprise on the alert.

58.

Men of high learning and abilities are few in every country.

Selfishness.

59.

Those who want the dispositions to give, easily find reasons why they ought not to give.

Speeches.

60.

Speeches by the hour, die with the hour.

Strength.

61.

We confide in our own strength, without boasting of it; we respect that of others, without fearing it.

Truth.

62.

Truth advances, and error recedes step by step only.

63.

Truth and reason are eternal.

64.

Difference of opinion leads to inquiry, and inquiry to truth.

65.

Truth is mighty and will prevail.

66.

Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into a polluted vehicle.

67.

A fair and honest narrative of the bad, is a voucher for the truth of the good.

Verdict of the Future.

68.

Wisdom and duty dictate an humble resignation to the verdict of our future peers.

Virtue.

69.

The essence of virtue is doing good to others.

70.

If no action is to be deemed virtuous for which malice can imagine a sinister motive, then there never was a virtuous action.

Weakness.

71.

The wise know their weakness too well to assume infallibility; and he who knows most, knows best how little he knows.

72.

We can not always do what is absolutely best.

73.

Man is not made to be trusted for life, if secured against all liability to account.

Wrong Doing.

74.

To do wrong is a melancholy resource even where retaliation renders it indispensably necessary.

Liberty or Servitude.

75.

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