Letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush, Monticello art list, and furniture list from [the U.S. ministry, Paris?]

Jefferson, Thomas 1743-1826

Generation date: 2019-10-02


UVA Library ID Information:

Thomas Jefferson Letter to Benjamin Rush, art and furniture lists, 1785, 1803, 182?, Accession #2958-b, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

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N°1. deux tables de la bibliothèque
- plusieurs petites caisses de verre
- 12 rechauds argentés.
* 2. 4 brûlés de terre cuite, 4 3. pieds pour les bougies.
3. une petite table ronde [à fort pied] 2. petites tables guarnizes [empile] 3
pl. plusieurs pieds de table
2. deux profs. [sur coulisses plates]
le dessous du pied du compas pour le télescope.
5. le poêle de la salle à manger
une jatte de la société. poêle et des trouves:
5. 1 petite caisse contenant 5. petites caisses, 12
2. de vases de porphyre
1. de 4 sceaux argentés
2. moules à glace
3. croix plaques un petit serpent
12 madras à chocolat une petite serviette
1. deux bret de cheminées, doux
une monté à Marseille
un petit réchaud à esprit de vin
1. un chandelier doré
2. deux petites plats - chandelles du petit portière.
une grande caisse contenant
un grand réseau pour le salon, 10. table trouée
les queues du Compas pour le télescope.
1. petite caisse de verre de physique
1. petite table pour se coucher la figure
un petit bois de lit [du mobilier]
2. mozaïque des petits table de marbre
un petit masque de fille, une clé
plusieurs lames de poêle
une fontaine d'eau avec une mule
1. un petit paquet de garnitures des flambeaux de 178
- Demi-belle. - un vin de moët
8. 1 caisse de bougies, verte deux pieds dorés, 1.
9. une grande caisse contenant l'objet de la bibliothèque
votre petite rechaussée rangé de cartons
une jatte dont le boute cendrée de bois à coulisse
2. des tables - une grande caisse de gorgonzola un Matelas.
10. Statue de marbre de la commode de la chambre à coucher.
12. Caisse contenant un petit poêle pour l'alambique et plusieurs tasses de poêle.
13. Un petit barrique rempli d'un vin de l'Ancien Régime.
14. Une caisse de tableaux qui devient dans la bibliothèque, à côté de la table à manger.
15. Une grande caisse de tableaux du Salon.
16. Une caisse de tableaux de la salle à manger.
17. Une caisse de tableaux.
18. Une caisse de tableaux.
19. Une caisse de plusieurs tableaux, celui de Louis XVI, celui de Napoléon avec leurs vases, l'athéna de Villeneuve avec ses armes.
20. Une caisse de glaces, glaçons, glaçons.
21. Une caisse de glaces. — Chimney glasses.
22. Une caisse de glaces, glaçons, glaçons.
23. Une caisse de poêle, et plusieurs poêles à four.
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Dear Sir

In some of the delightful conversations with you, in the evenings of 1798, 99, I served as an Anodyne to the affections of the crisis through which our country was then laboring, the Christian religion was sometimes our topic; and I then promised you that one day or other, I would give you my views of it. They are the result of a life of inquiry and reflection, and very different from that Anti-Christian system imparted to me by those who knew nothing of my opinions. To the corruptions of Christianity, I am indeed opposed; but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself. I am a Christian in the only sense in which he wished anyone to be; sincerely attached to his doctrines, in preference to all others; ascribing to himself every human excellence, believing he never claimed any other. At the short intervals, since those conversations, when I could justifiably abstract my mind from public affairs, this subject has been under my contemplation, but the more I considered it, the more it expanded beyond the measure of either my time or information. In the moment of my late departure from Monticello, I received from Dr. Priestley’s little treatise of “Socrates & Jesus compared.” This being a section of the general view I had taken of the field, it became a subject of reflection, while on the road, and unoccupied otherwise. The result was to arrange in my mind a syllabus, or outline of such an estimate of the comparative merits of Christianity, as I wished to see executed by some one of more leisure and information for the task than myself. This I now send you, as the only discharge of my promise. I can probably ever execute, and in confiding it to you, I know it will not be exposed to the malignant perversions of those who make every word from me a text for new misrepresentations & calumnies. I am moreover averse to the communication of my religious tenets to the public; because it would countenance the presumption of those who have endeavored to draw them before that tribunal, and to seduce public opinion to erect itself into that Juncture over the rights of conscience, which the laws have so justly proscribed. It behoves every man, who values liberty of conscience for himself, to resist invasions of it in the case of others; or their case may, by change of circumstances, become his own. It behoves him too, in his own case, to give no example of concession, betraying the common right of independent opinion, by answering questions of faith, which the laws have left between God & himself. Accept my affectionate salutations.

Dott. Benjamin Rush.

Th: Jefferson
The Philosophy of Jesus of Nazareth—extracted from the account of his life and doctrines as given by Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John.

being an abridgement of the New Testament for the use of the Indians unembarrassed with matters of fact or faith beyond the level of their comprehensions.
A Table of the Texts extracted from the Gospel, of the order in which they are arranged into sections, & the heads of each section.

3. 23-38.

II. Matt. 10. 5-31. 42. Precepts for the Priesthood.

John. 13. 4-17. Preachers to be humble.

IV. John 10. 1-16

V. John. 13. 34-35. disciples should love one another.


VIII. Mark. 2. 15-17. Physicians are for the sick.
   Matt. 10. 10. 11. Parables of the lost sheep, the
   Luke 15. 3-9. 22. lost piece of silver the prodigal son.

IX. John 8. 1-11.
   Matt. 18. 15-17. The duty of mutual forgiveness

   7. 1-27.
SYLLABUS OF AN ESTIMATE OF THE MERIT OF THE DOCTRINES OF JESUS COMPARED WITH THOSE OF OTHERS.

In a comparative view of the ethics of the enlightened nations of antiquity, of the Jews, and of Jesus, no notice should be taken of the corruptions of reason, among the ancients; to wit, the idolatry, superstition of the vulgar, nor of the corruptions of Christianity by the learned among its professors.

Let a just view be taken of the moral principles inculcated by the most esteemed of the sects of anti-philosophy, or of their individuals; particularly Pythagorus, Socrates, Epicurus, Cicero, Epictetus, Seneca, Antoninus.

I. Philosophers.

1. Their precepts related chiefly to ourselves, and the government of those passions which, uncontrolled, would disturb our tranquility of mind: in the branch of Philosophy, they were really great.

2. In developing our duties to others, they were short, and defective: they embraced indeed the circle of kindred friends, and inculcated patriotism, or the love of one's country in the aggregate, as a primary obligation.

Towards our neighbors and countrymen, they taught justice; but scarcely viewed them as within the circle of benevolence.

Still life have they inculcated peace, charity, love to our fellows, or embraced all benevolence, the whole family of mankind.

II. Jews.

1. Their system was Deism, that is, the belief of one only God.

But their ideas of him, of his attributes, were degrading, 

Their ethics were not only imperfect, but often

Irreconcilable with the sound dictates of reason. Morality, as they respect intercourse with those around us,

Virtue social, as respecting other nations, they needed reformation, therefore in an eminent degree.

In this state of things among the Jews, Jesus appeared.

His parentage was obscure, his condition poor, his education null, his natural endowments great, his life correct. Venial, he was mild, benevolent, patient, firm, disinterested.

Of the sublimest eloquence.

The disadvantages under which his doctrines appear are remarkable:

1. Like Socrates, Epictetus, he wrote nothing himself.

2. But he had not, like them, a Xenophon or an Arrian to write for him.

On the contrary, all the learned of his country, encouraged in it's powerful riches, were opposed to him;

lest his labours should undermine their advantages,

and the committing to writing his life & doctrines fell on the most unlettered, 

ignorant of men, who wrote too from memory, 

not till long after the transactions had passed.

3. According to the ordinary fate of those who attempt to enlighten and reform mankind,

He fell an easy victim to the jealousy & combination of the altar and the throne.

At about 33 years of age, his reason having pretty attained the maximum of it's energy, 

for the course of his preaching, which was but of about 3 years, presented occasions for developing a complex system of morals.

* To explain, I will exhibit the heads of Seneca: 1. Of Cicero: philosophical works, the most extensive of any we have received from the ancients. 2. Of heads of Seneca, 7 relate to ourselves, to wit, de inv. Consolatio de tranquilitate, de consol. sapientis, de consol. de vita beat. de ventura vitis. 2. Of heads of Cicero, 8 are on passive, viz, de finibus, Tusculana, Academica, Para.

Solea, de Senectute, 3 are on offices, partly to ourselves, partly to others. 1. de amicitia, 1 relates to others: and 4 are on different subjects, to wit, de natura deorum, de divinatione, de fatis, Somnium Scipionis.
1. Hence the doctrines which he really delivered were defective as a whole.

and fragments; only of what he did deliver have come to us, mutilated, mistated, often unintelligible.

2. They have been still more disfigured by the corruptions of scheming followers, who have found an interest in sophisticating and perverting the simple doctrines he taught.

by grafting on them the mysteries of a Gnostian Sophist, flattering them into subtleties, by covering them with jargon, until they have caused good men to reject the whole in disgust, not to view Jesus himself as an impostor.

Notwithstanding these disadvantages, a system of morals is presented to us, which, if filled up in the true style and spirit of the rich fragments he left us, would be the most perfect and sublime that has ever been taught by man.

The question of his being a member of the god-head, or in direct communication with it, claimed for him by some of his followers, and denied by others, is foreign to the present view, which is merely an estimate of the intrinsic merit of his doctrines.

1. He corrected the Deism of the Jews, confirming them in their belief of one only God, and giving them juster notions of his attributes and government.

2. His moral doctrines relating to kindred and friends were more pure and perfect than those of the most correct of the philosophers, and greatly more so than those of the Jews.

and they went far beyond both in inculcating universal philanthropy, not only to kindred and friends, to neighbors and countrymen, but to all mankind, gathering all into one family, under the bonds of love, charity, peace, common wants, and common aids, a development of this head will evince the peculiar superiority of the system of Jesus over all others.

3. The precepts of Philosophy, of the Hebrew code, laid hold of actions only.

he passed his sentinels into the heart of man; erected his tribunal in the region of his thoughts, and purified the waters at the fountain head.

4. He taught, emphatically, the doctrine of a future state: which was either doubted or disbelieved by the Jews.

and wielded it with efficacy, as an important incentive, supplementary to the other motives to moral conduct.
Catalogue of Paintings at Monticello Hall.

1. An Ecce Homo, a bust of Jesus of about the natural size of canvas, he is clothed with a robe of purple, the crown of thorns on his head, copied from Guido.

2. A bust of St. Jerome in meditation, his head reclined on his right hand, and a book in his left. Full size on canvas, copied from Galgani.

3. Jesus driving the money changers out of the temple. A figure of full length, V about half the natural module, the subject, Matthew 21:12. on canvas, copied from Valentin.

4. St. Peter weeping; his hands are pressed together, and near him the cock shows it was in the moment of Matthew 26.75 and Peter remembered the words of Jesus, which said, "before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice." He wept with bitterness. A half-length figure of full size, on canvas, copied from Carlo Lati, purchased from St. Severino collection. Catalogue No. 26.

5. St. John Baptist, a bust of the natural size. The right hand pointing to heaven, the left, deeply shaded, is scarcely pressing his breast, which is covered by his hair flowing thickly over it. It is seen almost in full face, on canvas, copied from Leonardo da Vinci.

6. Jesus among the Doctors, disputing with them. The subject, Luke 2.46. his right hand pointing to heaven, the left pressing his breast, the drapery blue & purple, the hair flowing loose. A half-length figure of full size, seen in profile, on canvas.

7. St. Joseph the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus. A figure of full size on canvas, a book is being opened before him.
hands interlocked with energy, his head and eyes turned up to heaven. His mouth open, as in the act of fervent prayer.
8. Jesus in the Praetorium, stripped of the purple, as naked, with the crown of thorns on his head. He is sitting on a whole length figure of about 9 feet. The persons present seem to be one of his revealers, one of his followers, & the superintendant of the execution. The subject from Mark 15.
16. An original on wood by Poussin.
9. David with the head of Goliath, copied on canvas from Guido, who has given his own picture in the person of St. David. a whole length 2.5 ft.
10. The sacrifice of Isaac. He is seated on the pile, on his knees, his wrists bound. Abraham with his left hand grasping the back of his neck, a naked swan on his right, uplifted and ready to strike the fatal stroke. In that instant an Angel hovering above him, strips his hand, and Abraham looks up with distraction to see by what power his hand is witheld. In a bush on the right hand is seen the ram. The figures are whole length. That of Abraham on a scale of not quite half the natural size. On canvas, an original. The subject Gen. 22.
12. A bust of Indian figures, by Indians, in hard stone.
13. A bust of Turgot in plaitor, by Houdon.
A map of the Southern provinces of the Mississippi, by Rivebouch, on buffalo paint.
18. Lord Bacon.
19. Sir Isaac Newton. Mr. Troumbel (the painter) procured these copies for his from originals in England.
20. John Locke.
23. Democritus & Heracleitus, or the laughing & weeping philosophers, the former smiling, the latter railing, at the follies of mankind. The figures are 3/4 lengths larger than life on canvas, an Original purchased from the collection of S. Severin. Catal. No. 215.
24. Christopher Columbus.
26. Ferdinand Magellan. Lely of Medicis, for B.I.
27. Fernando Cortez.
29. La Fayette. Original done in 1789 for B.I.
30. James Madison. an original by Pine, taken in 1790.
33. The Prodigal Son. he is in rags, kneeling at the feet of his father, who extends his hands to raise him. The mother and sister appear shocked at his condition, but the elder son views him with indignation. The figures of full size on canvas purchased from S. Severin's collection. Catal. 306. an Original.
A Magdalen penitent, sitting, her hair dishevelled, her eyes looking up to heaven, a book in her right hand, & the left resting on a skull. A ¾ length of full size on canvas, by Joseph de Ribera, called Espagnollet, purchased from Sir Severin's collection. Cat. N. 89.

Middle tier.


37. The Baptism of Jesus by John. figures whole length of 10 ft. on wood, from Devoe's. The subject Luke 3. 21, 22.

38. A Crucifixion. whole length figure on wood. an Original by Gerard Seggers. the moment is that of Luke 23. 44, 45.

39. Liberty. a print. designed & engraved by Savage.

40. Daphne transformed into a laurel. Apollo is raising her round the maid to bear her off, but her father, the river-god Peneus, who is present, transforms her in that instant, into a laurel, the branches of which are seen shooting from her fingers. on the left are two female figures, struck with dismay; and above a cupid flying off in consternation. the figures are whole length, that of Daphne of 12 ft. on canvas, an Original, the subject is from Ovid's Metamorphosis L. 1. – tergoque fugacis
Imminet et crinem sparsam cervicibus afflata,
Uribus assumptis expalluit illa: citaque
Victa labore fugacis, spectat Peneidas undas.
Ter, pater, inquit, opem, si flemina numen habetis.
Vix poece finita, torpor gravus alligat artus,
Mollia cinquebus tenui praecordia libro.
In frontem crines, in manus brachia crescent.
41. Severina and the elders. Three figures of about an eighth of the natural module. On canvas, copied from Coppeel.

42. Louis XVI. a print. a present from the king to Mr.

43. Bonaparte. a print.

44. Castrieci Castracani. copied from the originals in the gallery of Medici, for Phil.

45. Hoche. a print.

46. David Bullenhouse. a print.

47. Jesus bearing his cross. a half length on wood. scale about 2/3 of the life. subject John 19. 17.

48. Jephtha leading his daughter Seila to be sacrificed. on one side is the altar & the high priest with the implements of sacrifice. on the other the mother, sisters, & by stations weeping. J. holding the victim by the one hand, while Jephtha pulls her towards the altar by the other. there are 17. figures the principal of which is 16 1/2 I. on canvas, copied from Coppeel. the subject from Judges 11.

Lower Tier.

50. The Prodigal son from West. done on canvas in the manner called Polyplasticam, or the Polygraphic art.

51. A Descent on Copper. The Christ is of about 10 I. behind him is the virgin weeping. on each side angels. it is copied from Vandyke by Diepenbee. see Rubens' management of the same subject 3. Manuel du Museum 483.

52. A Descent from the cross on wood. a group of 5. figures. The body of Jesus is reclined on the ground, the head & shoulders supported in the lap of his mother, who with four other women from Galilee are weeping over him. the figures are whole lengths, the principal one 13 1/2 I. it is an original by Francis Floris.
53. The Cyclops forging thunderbolts, a group of 9 figures of about 8.9 on wood.

54. The surrender of York by Trumbull. It was the first painting and the most famous of his print on that subject, on canvas.

55. The Medals given by the revolutionary Congress to the officers who distinguished themselves on particular occasions. To cite Gen. Washington, Gates, Stewart, Wayne, De Flourney, Paul Jones, Col. Washington, Morgan, Howard, Greene, &

56. Ithica, a print.

57. Hector and Andromache, in water colors, an original by West. The scene is their meeting in Homer's Iliad, given by West to Gen. Washington, & by him to This.

58. Korczynski, a print.

59. Thomas Paine, an original on wood by Trumbull.

60. Count Rumford, a print.

61. Two undated birds of Virginia, & The Snow, formerly water color.

62. The singing birds of Virginia, formerly undated, by Wilson.

63. Volney, in panclu.

64. A cutting in paper.

65. Bonaparte, a bust in Marble.

66. Alexander of Russia, a bust in Plaster.
A fragment reclining on the rocks of Naxos, where the
seas had just abandoned her. She is represented asleep, as in the
moment when Bacchus discovered her; becomes enamoured of her.
her tunic is half loosed, her veil negligently thrown over her head.
The disorder of the drapery in which she is wrapped manifests the anguish
which had preceded this moment of calm: on the upper part of her left
arm is a bracelet in the form of the small serpent called Ophio; this
bracelet, taken for an asp, long occasioned the belief that this figure
represented Cleopatra procuring death by the bite of this reptile.
This statue was placed by Julius II. in the Belvedere of the Vatican
of which it was, for three centuries, the principal ornament.
see Notice de la Galerie des Antiques du Musée Napoléon. N° 60.
Dining room: upper tier.


68. Diogenes in the market of Athens. Laertius in the Life of this philosopher tells us that appearing in a public place in mid-day with a lantern in his hand, he was asked by the crowd what he was doing? he answered that he was seeking if he could find a man. This anecdote is the subject of this piece. It is a groupe of 6 figures, half lengths, of full size on canvas. copied from Rubens. see 3. Manuel du Musée. 290.


70. An Accusation, a groupe of 9 figures of about ½ the natural height. It is an original on canvas, known to be by Solimena, but the subject not certainly known. It is believed however to be taken from Ecclesiastical history, and to be the story of a young woman accusing a young man of violence committed on her, before a bishop. She is sitting in judgment on him and raises a person from the dead to be a witness.


72. An Ascension of St. Paul into the third heaven, from Dominiqvin. on canvas. The original is in the collection of the King of France. The principal figure is 2. 1. the head is inspired, the saint sees the heavens open, and expands his arms towards the glorious light he sees. He is supported by angels. The groupe is no longer ascending, but in a state of rest to give him time to contemplate the scene. see 2 Manuel. 778.
73. The holy family copied from Raphael on canvas. The figures are whole lengths, the Virgin, the infant Jesus, Joseph, Elizabeth and the infant John and 2 angels. See No. 4. Manuel du Musee. Pl. 3.

74. A crucifixion. The instant seized is that of the expiration, then the sun is darkened, the temple rent, the atmosphere huddled with lightning, the tombs open (f) yield their dead. On one side is the Centurion, struck with awe, seeming to say, "verily, this was a righteous man." On the other, the two Marys, one of them her hair bristled with fear, the other in adoration. The subject is taken from Matt. 27. 51. 52. Luke 23. 50. The figures are whole lengths, the largest of 16. I copied on canvas from Vandyke.

75. A Flagellation of Christ. A group of 10 figures, the principal of which is 21. 9. he is bound to a post, two soldiers whipping him with bundles of rods, and a third binding up another bundle. On the right are the spectators. The subject. Matt. 27. 27. 26. It is copied on wood from Devoes. See the same subject treated very similarly by Rubens. 3. Manuel du Musee. 501.

76. A market piece on canvas, with fruit, vegetables, game &c.
77. Vandernot. a print.
78. Washington. a print from a drawing of Madame de Brehan.
79. New Orleans a print.
80. Colebrook-dale bridge. a print.
81. The Natural Bridge of Virginia. on Canvas by Mr. Roberts.
82. The passage of the Potomak through the Blue ridge. &c.
83. A distant view of the falls of Niagara from the Indian ladder.
84. A view of the falls of Niagara from the table rock. Both of
these are prints, from designs of Vanderlin.
85. The President’s house at Washington. in water-colours
by King.
86. Mount Vernon. a print from a design of Burch.
87. An elevation of the house at Monticello. by Mills.
88. The Diocletian Portico. a print. [since the Environs of N. Orleans]
The Tea Room.

Paul Jones.
Franklin, bust in plaster by Houdon.
Washington, size of the life.
Fayette.
Moncada, a print remarkable for its execution.
Le bon Odeur.
Le bon Gout, models of fine execution with the pen.
Dante Alighieri Balsario, a print from Rieberg at Rome.

Infant America protected by Minerva, from the coin, a medal designed by Dr. Franklin.
1st. Botetiou, a medallion in wax.
Franklin, a medal of bronze by Dupré.
Louis XVI, a medal, tin-proof.

The Entry of the King (Louis XVI.) into Paris, a medal bronzed.
The Taking of the Bastile, a medal in bronze.

Dr. Barton, Franklin, Granger, Rodney, Burnes, Gallatin. Miniatures.

Tiberius, a cast bronzed.
Capt. Lewis, Phil. a print, Phil. by Doolittle. Miniatures.
Nero, a cast bronzed.
Otho, a cast bronzed.
J. H. Dripps, Dickerson, Dearborne, miniatures.
Vespasian, a cast bronzed.