

1815
Oct 17

th
Richmond 17 October 1815

Sir,

The ruin of my family and the consequent
wretchedness of my declining years, produced by an
exercise of arbitrary power in your hands, together
with the active malignity of certain advocates of your
infallibility, should have been born with consistent
resignation, were it not that an unoffending hapless
offspring are likely to be deprived of their only inheritance,
— their fathers well earned reputation. Hence Sir, I take
leave, in the unfeigned spirit of affectionate regard
for former recollections and family intimacy, to
apprize you of my intention (in due season) to effect
an issue between us through the medium of the
public press. Mindful of the maxim "that no man's
character is the better for handling; and, at the
same time, the exalted station you equivoally
hold in the community, I am equally sensible, that
monstrous fame like the monstrous Mammoth,
when

taunted, will generate greater nausea than simple
report, or the pretence of a Dormouse —
And, however impious to the shafts of Truth,
you may conceive your Party - panoply of fraud
and factum to be, yet will I not shrink from
any process of fact and reason, however tortuous,
or doubt of a favourable issue to my purpose.
Order upon this fraud - occasion, is especially
requisite to my conclusions. You therefore Sir,
will be pleased to recall the factitious Scenes
opened by the Secretary of State to the Marshal
of Virginia: the public favour, and the
insidious conversations advanced in August
1793, as well in your Cabinet, as at your Country
residence: when from distinguished privileges
granted the Marshal, and the fervid observations
addressed to him, the most profound respect was
converted into jealous indignation! When the
Secretary of the Treasury, more particularly,
furnished the fertile topics of the most unworthy
and malicious: when characters of minor
consideration,

and, even the President too, were introduced as the
precious objects, on whom to lavish your illiberal
impressions, even to the excitement of congenial
responses from the other four poorer members
of your festive board on the banks of the Schuylkill.
Thus it is Sir, I would fain stimulate your
remembrance. And, whilst no one more truly
laments the death of my personal and esteemed
friend D.^r Park than myself, or, can be
more indifferent to the fame of the deceased
Governor of Tennessee, I would, with every degree
of justice to the honorable characters of Pierre
Butterfield, (and, I believe) Colo. Tho^s. B. Bunt,
challenge your appeal to their memories for
the correctness of these few hints, to shew the
source of those details, among others, which
I shall hereafter unfold. And, believe me Sir,
I would "nothing of temerity, or set down aught in
malice", in the progress of an odious, ^{task} imposed
on me as an indispensable duty.

I beg leave to assure you more over, that
this

Randolph David Meade Richm^d Oct. 17. 15.

rec^d Oct. 24.

immersion will remain wholly unknown
to others, until the final result of a similar
affair at Law, instituted for an equally
necessary purpose.

Yours with appropriate sensitivity

Yours Hum^l Serv^t

R. M. Meade

Thomas Jefferson