

TO GOVERNOR WILLIAM H. CABELL.

Washington, June 29, 1807.

Sir,--Your favor by Express was safely received on Saturday night, and I am thankful to you for th attention of which it is a proof. Considering the General and State governments as co-operators in the same holy concerns, the interest and happiness of our country, the interchange of mutual aid is among the most pleasing of the exercises of our duty. Captain Gordon, the second in command of the Chesapeake, has arrived here with the details of that affair. Yet as the precaution you took of securing us against the accident of wanting information, was entirely proper, and the expense of the express justly a national one, I have directed him to be paid here, so that he is enabled to refund any money you may have advanced him. Mr. Gallatin and General Dearborn happening to be absent, I have asked their immediate attendance here, and I expect them this day. We shall ~~then~~ determine on the course which the exigency and our constitutional powers call for. Whether the outrage is a proper cause of war, belonging exclusively to Congress, it is our duty not to commit them by doing anything which would be to be retracted. We may, however, exercise the powers entrusted to us for preventing future insults within our harbors, and claim firmly ~~satisfaction~~ satisfaction for the past. This will leave Congress free to decide whether war is the most efficacious mode of redress in our case, or whether, having taught so many other useful lessons to Europe, we may not add that of showing them that there are peaceable means of repressing injustice, by making it the interest of the agressor to do what is just, and abstain from future wrong. It is probable you will hear from us in the course of the week. I salute you with great esteem and respect.

From the Writings of Thomas Jefferson Vol. XI, p.256