

Dear Sir,

Washington, Jan'y 11. 1841.

Though we have been sadly, cruelly disappointed by your absence, I can't resist the pleasure of writing to you. Expectation was on tiptoe. The Methodists, the Catholics, the Presbyterians—every body intended to hear you. Our women had prepared their mincepies, their sauces, their jellies, their sweetmeats. Our men had anticipated "the feast of reason and the flow of soul". Our boys were in breathless anxiety to see the man who might, at some future time, "teach their young idea how to shoot". Even the chickens seemed to anticipate with delight the moment when they should be, sans ceremonie, beheaded to please the appetite and inhabit the abdominal regions of a great man. Inanimate nature itself seemed to sympathize on the occasion; for Boreas, tho' he had, a few days before, frowned on us rather severely, turned his chariot towards the frozen North—the Earth was much wrought upon and softened, and the clouds dropped down in many a tear. Yet man, and fowl, and inanimate nature were doomed to disappointment. Dock 42 came not. I was really very sorry, but I cannot blame you. Indeed, aside from the consideration of the sickness of your son (of which I regret to hear) the badness of the roads itself would have formed a reasonable excuse.

The young gentlemen whom you sent are, I think, excellent men. They gave very general satisfaction to such as heard them. But when it was known that you would not be here, the people would not turn out, and so they had few hearers; nor could any body but yourself have satisfied public expectations. Mr. Matthes will tell you what sport we had about the Presbyterian church.

The Presbyterians here will never forgive your sending them these two Campbellitish preachers in your stead. That was the "unkindest cut of all". It is, with them, your unpardonable sin, "worse than witchcraft". It was not indeed fleeing from the flock on sight of the wolf, and giving him the opportunity to "leap o'er the fence with ease into the fold"; but it was actually opening the gate and volens volens driving him in. And all this in the face and teeth of that scripture which saith that "Campbellism and every other ism, [do I quote correctly?] not 200 years old, are damnable heresies— that the Presbyterians, the Round-heads, the Fifth-monarchy-men, and those other sects that rose up about the time of the Rump parliament, are the only true Saints, and that the confession o' faith is 'the only point where human bliss stands still'"!

To change the subject, you ought to come and preach for us. Such an intention is, I am glad, intimated in your letter. I sincerely hope you will not neglect it. I know that advice by me to you may look impertinent. Nor do I pretend to be either your guardian or your bosom and confidential friend. Permit me, nevertheless, to say, that you ought, in my opinion, to spend more time in visits to the various parts of the State. I do think you owe this alike to the University, to the friends of liberal principles, and to yourself. I feel assured that such a course would greatly tend to remove the foolish prejudice that has been but too fatally brought to bear against that institution, and against yourself. Nobody, that sees and hears you, deems you that monster with seven heads and ten horns spoken of in the Apocalypse. You know what Pope says of the progress of vice. If you will go out more and see the people, "Familiar with your face, First they'll endure, then pity, then embrace".

I am exceedingly gratified to learn that the prospects of your University begin to brighten. The Legislature, I trust, will not disturb it. From this quarter I think you have nothing to fear. In this, however, I may err. Some men are not easily tamed. Why do not that joint Committee report? 'Tis strange. I have waited anxiously to hear what they had to say. We feel an interest in the matter here; for aside from your welfare, since Bloomington is the nearest point to us at which we can hope for any thing like a University, we are anxious to see it prosper, and remain where it is.

I have seen your 4th. of July Address. Orators have long complained that nothing new could be woven into an address for that day. Your speech has shown me their error. The Van Burenites hereabouts think your Address savors a "leetle" of Whiggery.

I shall, Deo volente, be at Bloomington at the first of March. Then we will arrange the matter about your visiting us during your next vacation. My regards to Mr. Wylic.

Truly yours

David M' Donald

A. Wylie D.D.

Bloomington

Indiana

Mr. Mathis

