

Columbia Mo 29th 1839

My Father being absent on a visit to the State of
Louisiana at present, I take the liberty of answering a letter
just received from you & addressed to him. I do this the more
readily, from the fact, that it has been my intention for some
months past, to write to you. I have had the pleasure of reading a
"Cah Msa" communication from you to my friend Sam Miller,
and also one to the Rev. J. M. Allen; so you see, I am familiar
with all that has taken place so far, relating to your
the Presidency of the Missouri University, with other "in modo," as
this the medium of a number of your friends in this part of
the State, not unfrequently mentioned, in connection with
above referred to; and I am led to believe from the
"times" at present, that you must probably visit the
the next meeting of Board of Directors, to provide for our
institutions. Of this however I am not allowed to speak with any
assurance of certainty, as there are other gentlemen, whose claims are
also urged by their respective friends. In any case, a knowledge of our
literary prospects here, may not be uninteresting to you, which, I will
endeavor to give you, and before I close, answer the questions
propounded in your letter to Father. First as to the Endowment. We
have a permanent fund between \$90 & 100,000, at present invested
in Bank Stock, and yielding an annual interest of from 8
to 12 per centum. This fund was created by the sale of land donated by
the U.S. Gov. to the State of Missouri, for the support and endowment

of a State Seminary." A portion of the land is yet undisposed of, the value of which I suppose to be 20 or \$30,000. This is the whole of our literary fund: besides the however we have something upwards of \$100,000, to be appropriated to the erection of suitable buildings, and the improvement of the surrounding ground: this sum was subscribed by the people of the County, in consideration of the college location here. The plan of the main College edifice was adopted at the last meeting of the Board of Location: the building will cost about \$75,000, and will combine convenience & elegance, tho' I think the sum is entirely too large, to be converted into brick & mortar. There are 300 acres of land

immediately adjoining the town of Columbia, fifty of which, bearing some relation to the town, as did the old College Campus to ~~Washington~~ are ~~the~~ ^{one} of the most enchanting and beautiful spots. The Curators have fixed the Salary of the President at \$3.

I am of opinion that it will be reduced to 2,500 at their approaching meeting. Columbia is a pleasant village, containing a population of 900, ^{which} nine miles from the Mississippi river, and near the centre of the County. Boone County is not far from the centre of the State, contains a substantial population of 15,000 inhabitants, (which is rapidly increasing,) and for health, is unsurpassed by any country on the globe. Our Society is good company principally of Methodists & Unitarians, with an occasional Quaker & Swedenborgian: it is of a high caste contrary to the Society about Bloomington. ^{tho'} I am very mistaken, there is here much more intelligence, more you have there, more liberty, more enlightened social intercourse, a purer morality, as much religion and less hypocrisy. People meet you here with an open frankness, they are

neither afraid, nor suspicious of great men. You would have no such contempt-
-ible a-l to deal with here as H.C. Foster, nor a "common endorser of
false & hazardous charges, like Joshua Horner's wife. On the contrary the
leading intelligent, influential citizens of every sect & party would receive
you with open arms, and would sustain you in every attempt to build
up amongst them a great institution, and to elevate the standards of
education, religion & morals. The people here would expect a good deal from the
Puritan of the University, both in the learned & social world: in the former
you would suit them exactly, in the latter, if you had a little more of the Plunket
-ian in you, for the sake of effort, it would be better. Perhaps however I mistake
you in the respect, that you have enough fully of the "Quaker in mood," as
that I am expressing the opinion of the little worldly School-boy, who
receives the stern eye and tightened rein, to square to end.

the opinion which I might have formed in the half-restaurant view
of maternal years. Unfortunately ours is a State institution, and although its doors
will be thrown open, under the most auspicious circumstances, without a
single cloud in the most distant horizon, calculated to obscure the brilliancy
of her rising sun, yet all experience teaches me, that I should not be
without some misgivings as to its permanent success. Almost every where else
we see sectarian strife, and meddling demagogues undermining
the very foundation of such institutions, and to think that
we are to steer clear of such poisonous influences, would
be expecting too much, for in this country as well as every where
else, we will have, if they are not to be found already
narrow-minded bigots, and political knaves. But now we
have a clear sky: ample means, a country ripe for sustaining

and building up a splendid college, no rivals to contend
with, in short every-thing to keep us forward, without
a single obstacle to retard our progress. Under such
a state of things, it does seem to me that under
the guidance of an efficient faculty, our
college in a very short time could be placed
upon a foundation too stable, to be shaken
either by religious partyism or political malignity.
Our Board of Curators is not at present composed of as
good selections as might have been made; from them
ever such as they are, I entertain no doubt
their cordial co-operation in every ^{thing} bearing

prosperity of the College. Under the law organizing
the University, the Curators have but little power, compared
with the Board of Trustees of Indiana College. The Systems
are entirely different, ours is taken from the N. York
System, and that from the English System I believe.
The law contemplates diverse colleges as composing
University, and each college under the direction
management of its particular board of Trustees, so
that further than the appointment of President
of the University, the Curators have no power
in the choice of professors: nor further than the

appointment of curators, has the legislature
any voice in choosing trustees for the different
colleges. This I think an admirable feature in
the law, in as much, as the legislature has given it
much of its power, ~~and will therefore~~
to be constantly meddling with what should alone
concern the faculty of the college. We have already
one college of the University established here (Columbia
College) and the only one probably that will be
established for the next half-century, and we the
trustees of Columbia College (Miller & I are the Board,
have the selection of our own faculty. At present
we suppose that the President of the University
~~should~~ discharge the duties properly incumbent
President of Columbia College, and therefore would
appoint no one to that office. Our object is to
call a Professor of Languages, & Mathematics,
addition to a Professor of Chemistry and
& Astronomy, whom we have already chosen
Hudson formerly of the University of Alabama) and
when the curators fill the Presidential chair, we
~~shall have~~ ~~a~~ ~~more~~ ~~the~~ country can enjoy
and will present as much facility in
acquiring education as most of the
literary institutions of the country. The law for the
organization & support of the University is

lengthy; I have barely glanced at ^{some of} the provisions;
that you may understand if ^{entire}, I have
forwarded to you a copy ~~in~~ which you
will receive at the same time with this letter.
I ~~right and much more~~ but have already
said enough to tell your father; I hope
as you will find enough to satisfy
the enquiries which you made in your
letter to Father. I regret his absence, for from
him, you might have received opinions, formed
from a more enlarged experience, and a better
knowledge of men & things in this country. He
will not likely be home before spring; on his
return, unless the customs ~~will~~ ^{will} be
some one other than yourself, you may expect
to hear from him. I have written to you
in the spirit of freedom & candor: perhaps with
too much freedom, but to an old preceptor a
valued and esteemed friend, in whose success
and happiness I shall ever continue to
feel a deep and abiding interest, I did
~~not deem~~ ^{not deem} myself
of good-breeding or pardonable
liberty.

A word in relation to myself might
not be uninteresting to you. Well Sir altho

Ms. 71. was meeting off the B. & O. Car. Trs. letter place on the 1st Monday in
July 1860. By - time I shall have to have from a son.

incredible probably to you, so familiar with my
unpromising disposition, "earlier life, I have become
a more industrious & good citizen. I have
been lawyer, farmer, Real Estate Politician and have
fraped this all ~~the~~ of ~~the~~ militia
from corporal up to Major, since I last saw
you. Unlike my old enemy at college, ^{& I} contrary to
the custom of young men generally, still hang
together, and are doing about as well as
one industrious man and an abandoned
lazy one, might be expected to do united.

In addition I must add, that fortune has
me, with a charming and excellent son
for my wife, and as a natural consequence
upon our holy union, an innocent and
beautiful little daughter is now smiling
sweetly upon me.

I should be much pleased to hear
from you, upon the reception of this letter. Please
my best respects to Mrs. Tyler & family, and
accept the good wishes, of

Yrs. Obedient, father
James P. Collins

Rev. A. Tyler.

25-

Rev. A. Hyde C. H.

Bloomington

Indiana



1889 Dec 29
Jas. J. Rollins