The following letters relate to Thomas Jefferson’s persistent attempts to establish a botanical garden at the University of Virginia. In 1826, Jefferson himself wrote at least seven letters on the subject, primarily during the month of May. Jefferson began the ensuing correspondence on April 27, 1826, with a letter to John Patton Emmet, Professor of Natural History, describing his instructions for the teaching garden in detail. In addition to Professor Emmet, who was the intended director of the garden, Jefferson also ventured to involve in the project both John Hartwell Cocke, a friend and fellow board member, as well as the University’s Proctor Arthur Spicer Brockenbrough. Soon after Jefferson’s death on July 4, 1826, the correspondence ended with Professor Emmet’s resignation of his duty as director of the botanical garden in October of that year.

The 1826 correspondence, transcribed by Lily Fox-Bruguiere, has been assembled with permission from various collections, including The Thomas Jefferson Papers of the Library of Congress, the Coolidge Collection of Thomas Jefferson Manuscripts of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Thomas Jefferson collection of The Huntington Library, as well as the following collections from the University of Virginia Library’s Special Collections: The Jefferson Papers of the University of Virginia, The Papers of the Proctors of the University of Virginia, and the Cocke Family Papers. For full citations, please see the historical narrative “An Uncultivated Legacy: Jefferson’s Botanical Garden at the University of Virginia,” by Lily Fox-Bruguiere.

In transcribing these letters, I have attempted to remain as true to the original writings as possible. As a result, period spellings and writing styles have been retained, along with errors in grammar and spelling. In the case of Jefferson, he customarily began the first word of each sentence with a lower case letter, which I have also done. The letters are reproduced in full.
Monticello, April 27, 1826

Dear Sir,

It is time to think of the introduction of the school of Botany into our Institution. not that I suppose the lectures can be begun in the present year, but that we may this year make the preparations necessary for commencing them the next. for that branch, I presume, can be taught advantageously only during the short season while Nature is in general bloom, say during a certain portion of the months of April and May, when, suspending the other branches of your department, that of Botany may claim your exclusive attention. of this however you are to be the judge, as well as of what I may now propose on the subject of the preparation. I will do this in writing, while sitting at my table, and at ease, because I can rally there, for your consideration, with more composure than in extempore conversation, my thoughts on what we have to do in the present season.

I suppose you were well acquainted, by character if not personally, with the late Abbe Correa, who past some time among us, first as a distinguished Savant of Europe, and afterwards as Ambassador of Portugal, resident with our government. profoundly learned in several branches of science, he was so, above all others, in that of Botany, in which he preferred an amalgamation of the methods of Linnaeus and of Jussieu, to either of them exclusively. our Institution being then on hand, in which that was of course to be one of the subjects of instruction, I availed myself of his presence and friendship to obtain from him a general idea of the extent of ground we should employ, and the number and character of the plants we should introduce into it. he accordingly sketched for me a mere

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1 Dr. John Patton Emmet was the University of Virginia’s first Professor of Natural History, appointed in 1825. Professor Emmet’s specialty was chemistry but he was also required to teach botany, mineralogy, geology, zoology, and rural economy. While the subjects taught by Professor Emmet changed over the years, he remained a professor at the University until his death in 1842.
outline of the scale he would recommend, restrained altogether to objects of use, and indulging not at all in things of mere curiosity, and especially not yet thinking of a hot house, or even of a Green-house. I inclose you a copy of his paper which was the more satisfactory for me, as it coincided with the moderate views to which our endowments as yet confine us. I am still the more satisfied as it seemed to be confirmed by your own way of thinking, as I understood it in our conversation of the other day. to your judgment altogether his ideas will be submitted, as well as my own. now to be suggested as to the operations of the present year, preparatory to the commencement of the school in the next.

1. our 1st operation must be the selection of a piece of ground of proper soil and site, suppose of about 6. acres, as M. Correa proposes. in choosing this we are to regard the circumstances of soil, water, and distance. I have diligently examined all our grounds with this view and think that that on the public road, at the upper corner of our possessions, where the stream issues from them, has more of the requisite qualities than any other spot we possess. *170. yds square, taken at that angle would make the 6. acres we want. but the angle at the road is acute, and the form of the ground will be trapezoid, not square. I would take therefore, for it’s breadth, all the ground between the road and the dam of the brick ponds, extending Eastwardly up the hill, as far and as wide as our quantity would require. the bottom ground would suit for the garden of plants, hill-sides for the trees.

*to wit 19, 360 sq. yards= 4 acres for the garden of plants
\[
\begin{align*}
9,680^* & = 2. a. \quad \text{for the plants of trees} \\
29,040 & = 6. a. \quad \text{in the whole}
\end{align*}
\]

2d operation. inclose the ground with a serpentine brick wall 7. f. high. this would take about 80,000 bricks, and cost 800.D. and it must depend on our finances whether they will afford that immediately, or allow us, for awhile, but an enclosure of posts and rails.

3d operation. form all the hill sides into level terrasses of convenient breadth curving with the hill, and the level ground into beds and allies.

4th operation. make out a list of the plants thought necessary and sufficient for botanical purposes, and of the trees we propose to introduce, and take measures in time for procuring them.
As to the seeds of plants, much may be obtained from the gardeners of our own country. I have moreover a special resource. for three and twenty years of the last twenty five, my good old friend, Thouin, Superintendent of the garden of plants at Paris, has regularly sent me a box of seeds, of such exotics, as to us, as would suit our climate, and containing nothing indigenous to our country. these I regularly sent to the public and private gardens of the other states, having as yet no employment for them here. but during the last two years this envoi has been intermitted, I know not why. I will immediately write and request a recommencement of that kind office, on the ground that we can now employ them ourselves. they can be here in early spring.

The trees I should propose would be exotics of distinguished usefulness, and accomodated to our climate. such as the Larch, Cedar of Libanus, Cork-oak, the Maronnier, Mahogany ? the Catachu or Indian rubber tree of Napul [30 degrees] Teak tree, or Indian oak of Burman [23 degrees] the various woods of Brazil etc.

The seed of the Larch can be obtained from a tree at Monticello. cones of the Cedar of Libanus are in most of our seed shops, but may be had fresh from the trees in the English gardens. the Maronnier and Cork-oak, I can obtain from France. there is a Maronnier at Mount Vernon, but it is a seedling, and not therefore select. the others may be got thro’ the means of out Ministers and Consuls in the countries where they grow, or from the seed shops of England where they may very possibly be found.

Lastly, a gardener of sufficient skill must be obtained.

This, dear Sir, is the sum of what occurs to me at present; think of it, and let us at once enter on the operations.

Accept my friendly and respectful salutations.

Th Jefferson

Doctor Emmet

Professor of Nat. Hist at the Univ. of Virginia
My dear Sir,

I have just received your letter in relation to the Botanic garden, accompanied by suggestion, as to its economy, from the late Abbe Correa. I need not say how much I approve of those suggestions as they obviously comprehend the most philosophical rules for making Botany an useful, & therefore important, study, and for freeing it from its present immense and cumbersome dress of technicality. Such a garden as will illustrate vegetable physiology is the one best suited to general instruction, and when this object is overlooked, in the pursuit after useless species, it is too often succeeded by a perplexing display of terms and names. This is even the case at present, notwithstanding the great revolution affected by the natural arrangement of Jussieu. But even when viewed under the strictest limitations, the scheme will inspire an active and practical Botanist; for natural affinities are by no means sufficient to lead to the recognition of plants seen for the 1st time, and general rules are not always practiced. Here then my duty bids me stop to enquire what degree of botanical knowledge is required from the Professor of Nat. History and candidly to state my very insignificant pretensions to the character of a practiced Botanist. It is due to myself to add that this is not my first declaration to the same effect. During my very first interview with the late F. Gilmer, I expressly stated that Zoology, Botany, and Rural Economy were the studies of which I knew but general principles. That Gentleman gave me to understand that elementary instruction upon those branches would only be required and led me to hope, also, that I would have full leisure to prepare the Lectures. Let me add that such an understanding seems to me implied by your first letter to me wherein you specify Chemistry in particular as the characteristic study of the School. I never would have had the boldness to come forward to so enviable a station without such an explanation neither can I now, that the duty begins to press me seriously, omit to state my want of practical knowledge. You must be aware, dear Sir, that my department is one requiring the
most exact memory unassisted by any regular operation of reason, hence I am called upon constantly to read & study not only elementary works but an infinite number of periodicals which are perpetually announcing revolutions and systematic inroads upon the substance of these sciences. The ends of being well read upon modern improvements and of being practical upon more than one of these branches seem almost to the unattainable. I have written this much with the candour which I have even felt & expressed respecting the extent of my qualifications nor can I feel satisfied with the single plea of want of time which no doubt would have answered as an artifice. But, Sir, I must, now add to my foregoing declaration this secondary and highly important consideration. I actually have not time even to pass a few hours in my garden or engage in any other recreation. This no doubt will diminish after my course of lectures has been made complete. The labour required of me at present, is perhaps unknown to you; yet there is no Professor here, who encounters even 1/3 of it. Preparations to meet my Class require me to pass 3 or 4 hours of the morning in actual manual labour which is rendered doubly inconvenient by the absence of an assistant. This is absolutely necessary to prevent my becoming useless as an Instructor, for as I have before remarked, I have little else than memory to assist me. I am at present also giving instruction upon 3 of the most useful and only connected branches of my Department. These are Chemistry, Mineralogy, and Geology. I consider them not only of the utmost importance to practical studies but esteem them as the true alphabet whereby to study the science of animated matter. Yet sir these will hardly be completed during our long session, and, I am sure, I need not notice the disappointment and depression which an Instructor in experimental science must feel whose utmost exertions cannot carry him thro’ elementary rules to teach the Philosophy or point out the utility of his labours. By the enactment, I am expected to teach Botany, Zoology, Mineralogy, Chemistry, Geology and Rural Economy. But these, if I may so express myself, are all Continents of Science or at least interminable Boundaries of Kingdoms whose only association can be defined by the terms animate & inanimate matter! As a proof of this reasonable view, I may add that there are no less than eleven totally different and generally defective nomenclatures required even for elementary instruction. Here then is the oppressive tax upon the memory of one person. In Zoology and Botany, moreover, where trivial names are not to be found for at least 9/10 of objects, it becomes necessary to introduce synonyms which always require
previous study, and while great value is still set upon the system and nomenclatures of Linnaeus, the diffusive character of N. Henry[?] has raised to equal authority those of Jussieu, La Marck, La Cepede, Dumeril, Cuvier and a host of other distinguished names. I confess, sir, that my hair almost stands on end when I think of the herculean task which requires but the development of such Sciences, and which expressing but a just sense of my own inability, I feel bold enough to add, that there is hardly an Individual in this or the Old World who is practically familiar with more than two or three of the six sciences included under the School of Nat. History. Those bright and distant stars which illuminate the scientific sphere are seen but on one side, and in fact generally excel others only in that point of view. This however I do not state with any intent to support my self, and to conclude a letter which contains honest and honorable sentiments fully told, I may remark that if it is your pleasure, I will cheerfully act upon your suggestions respecting the Botanic garden in the hope that the Authorities will, at some future period, release me from a part of the immense amount of practical instruction now expected from me. If however it be determined that the Professor of Natural History shall fully teach all the Sciences specified in the Enactments, then a painful but impervious sense of duty will compel me to retire from a situation which I shall even esteem, not only honorable in itself, but far more valuable, from being associated with the Patronage and name of Thomas Jefferson.

I beg, dear Sir, that you will give my sentiments full consideration and be firmly assured of the warm and sincere interest which I feel in every thing connected with the University.

John P. Emmet
Monticello May 2, 26

Dear Sir

The difficulties suggested in your favor of the 28th ult. are those which must occur at the commencement of every undertaking. A full view of the subject however will, I think, solve them. In every meditated enterprise, the means we can employ are to be estimated, and to these must be proportioned our expectations of effect. If, for example, to the cultivation of a given field we can devote but 100 dollars, we are not to expect the product which 1000 dollars would extract from it. Applying this principle to the present subject of education; from a revenue of 15,000 dollars and with 8 professors, we cannot expect to obtain that grade of instruction to our youth which 15,000 guineas and 30 or 40 instructors would give. Reviewing then the branches of science in which we wish our youth to obtain some instruction, we must distribute them into so many groups as we can employ professors, and as equally too as practicable. We must take into account also the time which our youths can generally afford to the whole circle of education, and proportion the extent of instruction in each branch to the quota of that time, and of the Professor's attention which may fall to its share. In the smallest of our academies, 2 professors alone can be afforded, one of languages, another of sciences, or of philosophy, as he is generally styled. The degree of instruction which can be given in each branch, at these schools, must be very moderate. Yet there are youths whose means can afford no more, and who nevertheless are glad even of that. The most highly endowed of our Seminaries has a revenue of perhaps 25,000 or 30,000 dollars. They consequently may subdivide the sciences into 12 or 15 schools, and give a proportionally more minute degree of instruction in each. It has enabled them, for example, to have 5 or 6 professors of Theology. In Europe some of their literary institutions can afford to employ 20, 30, or 40. Professors. Our Legislature, contemplating their means, took their stand at a revenue of 15,000 dollars meant for an establishment of 10 professors, but equal in fact to 8 only. Accommodating ourselves therefore to their views, we
had to distribute into 8. groups those sciences in which we wished our youth should receive
instruction, and to content ourselves with the portion which that number could give. on the
Professors it would of course devolve to form their lectures on such a scale of extension
only, as to give to each of the sciences allotted them it's due share of their time.

But another material question is, What is the whole term of time which the
students can give to the whole course of instruction? I should say that 3. years should be
allowed to general education, and 2. or rather 3. to the particular profession, for which they
are destined. We receive our Students at the age of sixteen, expected to be previously so far
qualified in the languages, antient and modern, as that one year in our schools shall suffice
for their last polish. A Student then with us may give his 1.\textsuperscript{st} year here to languages and
mathematics. his 2.\textsuperscript{d} to mathematics and Physics; his 3.\textsuperscript{d} to Physics and Chemistry with the
other objects of that school. I particularise this distribution merely for illustration, and not
as that which either is, or perhaps ought to be established. this would ascribe 1. year to
languages, 2. to mathematics, 2. to Physics, and 1. to Chemistry and it's associates. let us
see next how the items of your school may be accommodated to this scale; but by way of
illustration only, as before. the allotments to your school are Botany, zoology, mineralogy,
chemistry, geology, and rural economy. this last however need not be considered as a
distinct branch, but as one which may be sufficiently treated by seasonable alliances with
the kindred subjects of chemistry, botany, and zoology. suppose then you give 12. dozen
lectures a year; say 2. doz. to botany and zoology, 2. doz. to mineralogy and geology, and 8.
doz. to chemistry. or should I think that mineralogy, geology, and chemistry might be
advantageously blended in the same course. then your year would be formed into two grand
divisions, 1/3 to botany and zoology, and 2/3 to it's associates mineralogy and geology. to
the last indeed I would give the least possible time. to learn, as far as observation has
informed us, the ordinary arrangement of the different strata of minerals in the earth, to
know from their habitual collocations, and proximities, where we find one mineral, whether
another, for which we are seeking, may be expected to be in it's neighborhood, is useful. but
the dreams about the modes of creation, enquiries whether our globe has been formed by
the agency of fire or water, how many millions of years it has cost Vulcan or Neptune to
produce what the fiat of the Creator would effect by a single act of will, is too idle to be
worth a single hour of any man's life. you will say that 2/3 of a year, or any better estimated
partition of it, can give but an inadequate knolege of the whole science of Chemistry. but consider that we do not expect our schools to turn out their alumni already enthroned on the pinnacles of their respective sciences; but only so far advanced in each as to be able to pursue them by themselves and to become Newtons and Laplaces by energies and perseverances to be continued thro' life. I have said that our original plan comprehended 10. professors, and we hope to be able ere long to supply the other two. one should relieve the Medical professor from Anatomy and Surgery. & a school for the other would be made up of the surcharges of your, and that of Physics.

From these views of the subject, dear Sir, your only difficulty appears to be so to proportion the time you can give to the different branches committed to you, as to bring, within the compas of a year, for example, that degree of instruction in each which the year will afford. this may require some experience, and continued efforts at condensation. but, once effected, it will place your mind at ease, and give to our country a result proportioned to the means it furnishes, & which ought, to satisfy, and will satisfy, all reasonable men. I am certain it will those to whom the charge and direction of this institution have been particularly confided, and to none assuredly more than to him, from whom your doubts have drawn this unauthoritative exposition of the public expectations. and, with this assurance, be pleased to accept that of my sincerely friendly esteem and respect.

Th Jefferson

Dear Sir

After sealing the inclosed letter, it occurred to me that being on a general subject, and one equally applicable to the cases of your colleagues, the other Professors, I should wish it to be read by them also. it may produce an union of views, and harmony of action, which may be useful to the institution.

Your’s affectionately

Th Jefferson

Dear Sir

I have perceived in some of our Professors a disinclination to the preparing themselves for entering on the branches of science with which they are charged additionally to their principal one. I took occasion therefore lately to urge one of them (Dr. Emmet) to begin preparations for his Botanical school, for which the previous works necessary furnished unoffensive ground. his answer confirming my doubts, gave me a favb oppy of going into explanns which might be communicated to the others also without particular umbrage to them. the case being fundamentally interesting to our institution, & lest any thing further should grow out of it, I pray you to read and return me the letters inclosed and if you can suggest any thing either additional or corrective, to do so. I am anxious you should be intimately possessed of whatever material passes here as a more peculiar attention to it, must ere long devolve on you.

In comparison with my sufferings of the last year, altho n restored, my health is greatly better. could I be permitted to employ myself in what would be most agreeable to myself, which would be the passive occupation of reading I should probably wear on in tolerable ease and tranquility. but the unceasing drudgery of writing keeps me in unceasing pain & peevishness. I must still however rest on the hitherto illusive hope that the discretion of those who have no claims upon me will at length advert to the circumstances of my age and ill health and feel the duty of sparing both. the correspondence of my bosom friends is still very dear, and welcome and consolatory. yours among the most, being ever and the most affectionately yours

ThJ
Sunday 9th

Dear Sir

As Mr. Jefferson is anxious that the Botanic Garden should be commenced immediately I have to request that you will furnish me with hands and one cart or waggon at least. The ground is at present so irregular that the mere leveling and clearing away impediments such as the two brick kilns &c will steadily occupy as many as 5 or 6 hands. Drains must also be cut to clear the low ground and the hills must be terraced. As all these operations will require great labour, the sooner I get the hands at work, the better.

Yours,

John P. Emmet

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2 Arthur Spicer Brockenbrough served as Proctor of the University of Virginia from 1819 to 1831.
3 Emmet did not indicate the month in which he wrote this letter. The calendar of 1826 reveals that the 9th fell on a Sunday in April of that year but the chronology of events points to a May date. It is most likely either that Emmet had the date wrong or what appears to be a 9 is actually a 7, as the 7th did fall on a Sunday in May, 1826.
Monticello May 12.26

Dear Sir,

For 20 years past Mrs. Thouin superintendent of the National Garden of France, has sent me annually a box of seeds assorted to our climate, this having been intermitted for the last two years, I suspected his death. Mr. Madison now informs me that he has been so for some time, and that his successor now addresses such a box to him as President of the Agricultural Society of Albemarle, this such a box is now arrived at N. York, of which he has given you notice as his successor. as we had no public garden in this state, I had always sent them to those of the other states. we begin exactly this year to want them for the botanical garden of our University which we are now beginning. if you think proper to confide the charge to us, it will be put to it’s proper use and greatly aid our undertaking; and the sooner we could receive it the better as the season is rapidly advancing. if addressed to me to the care of Col. Peyton of Richmond he will forward it. accept assurance of my great friendship and respect.

Th Jefferson

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4 James Barbour held a number of public offices, including Governor of Virginia and United States Secretary of War. Barbour served as the second President of the Agricultural Society of Albemarle from 1825-1826. The Agricultural Society of Albemarle, founded in part by Jefferson in 1817, sought the improvement of livestock, agricultural implements, crop rotation, pest control, vegetable production, etc. (Rodney True, Early Days of the Albemarle Agricultural Society, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920)

5 Andre Thouin was superintendent of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. Jefferson and Thouin became friends during Jefferson’s time abroad as Minister to France and thereafter exchanged plants and seeds for over twenty years.

6 James Madison, fourth President of the United States and a great friend of Thomas Jefferson, was the first President of the Agricultural Society of Albemarle (1817-1824).
Dear Sir,

By a letter from Mr. Madison I now learn that Thouin has been dead some time, that his successor sends the box annually to him as President of the Agricultural Society of Albemarle, that such a box is now arrived at N. York, of which he has notified Secretary Barbour his successor. to him I have written requesting it's consignment to us, and the sooner the better as the season is fast advancing, it may by possibility reach us in 3 or 4 weeks.

Yours with affection and respect,

Th Jefferson

University May 13th

Dear Sir,

I have just received your letter of yesterday. I need not assure you that it will give me very great pleasure to promote your wishes. Immediately after we visited the ground I wrote a note to the Proctor requesting Laborers and carts. I have not yet, even received an answer from him, which is much to be regretted as the season is far advanced & there will
be necessity to change the surface of all the ground, except perhaps that lying lowest down. There are also two brick kilns to be removed. The arrival of the Capitals & Bases has no doubt fully occupied Both Proctor and Workmen; but it is evident sir, that altho’ I feel very desirous that you should be convinced of my sincerity and zeal, it will be impossible for me to make any progress without the assistance of at least 6 active laborers. I hope sir, these seeds may prove fresh for I have this year tried many from the same source & sent to the Agricultural Society of Albemarle, which have not proved productive.

With great respect

J.P. Emmet

James Barbour to Thomas Jefferson

Coolidge Collection of Thomas Jefferson Manuscripts
Massachusetts Historical Society
Transcribed by Lily Fox-Bruguiere

Washington
May 16th. 26

Dear Sir,

I received a letter some time past from M’r Madison advising me of the arrival of a box of seeds, sent from France, addressed to him as President of the A.A. Society; and which he turned over to me. I immediately wrote to the French Consul of France requesting him to consign it to M’r [Allen?] of Fredericksburg or Moncure Robinson & Pleasants of Richmond- since which I have heard nothing of it. I will write to the Consul again to day and give it the direction you suggest. Some books and a small box have been sent me, for you by Genl. Lafayette; which M’r Rives has been good enough to take charge of. He leaves us to day for Albemarle.

I offer you assurances of my very high respect

James Barbour

Dear Sir

I am extremely dissatisfied with the vain in which our works at the University are going on. and were it not for my great confidence in the integrity of those we employ, I should be unable to resist the suspicion of a willingness in them to make the job last for life. I am at present suffering under a relapse so serious as to put it out my power to go there as frequently as is requisite. I will subjoin some notes of things of strong urgency, and submit to your own consideration whether they are not sufficiently so to call for our joint efforts and consultation as soon as your own affairs will permit your coming to us. altho’ always injured by the ride there I should be able to accompany you & endeavor to apply a spur to those needing it. ever & affectionately yours

Th:Jefferson

Notes. the Dome leaks so that not a book can be trusted in it until remedied. this is from the ignorance of the workman employed. how shall it be remedied? my opinion is by a new tin cover put on the present, to be done by Broke of Staunton whose competence to it we know. this will cost us 8. or 900. Dollars. I know nothing else which experience will justify.

2. the wells and water fail there and at Charlottesville; and they are proposing to send our pipe borer, mr Ziegler to the North to learn the art of boring, now in practice there, & then to return and bore for us. but why not in this, as in other cases, employ a man already taught and exercised in his trade? a borer can be had from thence as easily as a bricklayer or carpenter. besides this however the pipes which bring water to our cisterns must be repaired. they have rotted from too shallow covering originally. no log should lie less then 3. feet deep. this will cost more than I should be willing to risk on my own opinion. yet I believe must be done, and immediately.

3. the Faculty recommend strongly Gas lights instead of oil lamps on account of economy and brilliancy. I suspend therefore the former until we can consult together on the subject.
4. Congress have remitted the duties on our marbles. we are now to take measures as to the clock.

5. Dr Emmet and myself think we have found a piece of ground for the Botanical garden far superior to any other spot we possess. this work should be begun immediately, but I should request your advice in it.

6. but a stimulus must be applied, and very earnestly applied, or consultations and orders are nugatory. come then, dear Sir, to our aid, as soon as possible. our books are in a dangerous state. they cannot be opened until the presses are ready, nor they be got ready, till the Dome-room is rendered dry.

Instructions to m‘. Brockenbrough.

1. Engage mr Broke to come immediately & put another cover of tin on the Dome-room of the Rotunda, without disturbing the old one.

2. the inside plaistering will then be to be coloured uniform with Whiting.

3. the finishing the Dome room to be pushed by every possible exertion, as also the Anatomical building by employing all the hands which can be got.

4. Repair the water-pipes from the mountain, & let their ditch be 4. f. deep.

5. ascertain, by a very exact level, the point nearest to the Precincts to which Maury’s spring can be brought, leaving the trace pins firmly fixed

6. I shall write to the North to know the terms of boring for water; and to know if a skilful workman can be engaged there.

7. I shall also write to Boston to engage a clock and bell. but I must be furnished immediately with very exact measures of the dimensions of the tympanum of the portico of
the Rotunda, that is to say of its base and perpendicular, to wit the lines a.b. & c.d. also the
diameter & depth of the well, for the descent of the weights.

[drawing here of the “tympanum of the portico of the Rotunda,” showing points a, b, c, d]

8. have 200. wooden guns made, with real locks, half barrels of tin and ram rods.
9. a copy of the enactments is to be given to every student now there, and to every one
coming hereafter, at his entrance.
10. go on Mc-Adamizing in preference to any hauling which can be dispensed with.
11. the botanical garden, after being laid off under the direction of Dr. Emmet, is to be
pursued at all spare times.
12. Dr. Emmet will provide the chemical substances necessary to be used in a chemical
course, their amount to be paid for by the University.
12. he is to make enquiries as to Gas lights. in the mean time suspend mak® the lanthers.

Dear Sir

I informed you some little time ago that my health required some relaxation from
business and that for the improvement of it I wished to take a trip for a few days to
Striblings Springs in Augusta. I find at this time I can go with greater convenience to the
business of the institution than at a later period. As you will probably be up in a few days, I
beg leave to draw attention to two or three things here. The Faculty wish to be arranging
the books in the Library. I find D & Neilson will not be able to get up the hand rail &
Balasters to the stairs so as to secure the room in a fortnight from this agreeable to their
own acct. if we are to be governed by their former promises and engagements, it will
probably be double that time. there are a sufficiency of Book cases made to begin with and
as it will take some four or five weeks to get them in place, perhaps it would be better that
a temporary partition be put up at the head of the stairs. if you approve of this plan, you
can direct D & N. to have it done, I fear unless some plan of this sort is adopted the
Library will not be in place before the meeting of the Visitors. The next thing to call your
attention to is to the expense of the anatomical hall, I do not recollect how the roof is
finished agreeable to M' J's design, but I find D & Neilson is geting lumber for an
expencive Chinese raling around the top, this, if left me whether the original design or not,
I think I should stop. a plain plinth like Pavilion No 8 over the Cornice is quite sufficient.
this matter you will please direct as you think proper. the M'Adamizing of the cross streets
will be finished in a day or two- I have instructed the overseer then to put the Labourer in
the Botanical garden (after doing a few small jobs) under the direction of D' Emmet. I
should be glad to know of you as soon as convenient what number of labourers we had
better employ another year, so that arrangements may be made for the employment of an
overseer for the next year—on my return I intend to have another coat of Metal put over
such parts of streets as require it.

I am sir respectfully
your Ob'sev'
A.S. Brockenbrough

P.S. some additional water works are absolutely necessary. whether it shall be by pumps
or otherwise I am at a loss to determine. If Water from the Mountain could be gotten in
sufficient quantity I should prefer it, the stream is weak, and would hardly justify the
expense. if brought from the Mountain the best way would be to have a large cistern in my
yard (being the highest situation near the University) the water from thence to be conveyed
in pipes to every part of the University. the works to be so constructed to let off any
quantity at a given time that may be required for the supply of the buildings or in case of
fire. This requires money tho' of which we have very little

A.S B-h
Gentlemen,

I take the liberty of addressing you upon a subject of much importance to the University as well as to myself. – A Botanic Garden is about to be established for this Institution; and it seems, from the Enactments and the directions of our late Rector, that the superintendency and general management devolves upon me as Instructor in the School of Natural History. – My duties, however, are now so laborious that the most perfect ability for such an undertaking could be no security for the proper attention – Botany and Rural Economy are subjects with which I am but superficially acquainted and as they require a thorough practical knowledge there is but little probability that I will ever be able to devote time enough for their acquisition without neglecting my other duties- These considerations compel me to express a wish that I may be relieved from them and the charge of the botanic garden. With great respect, gentlemen, I remain your obedient servant,

John P. Emmet