

The Nature of The Soul As Perishing At Death

Post by "Cassius" of February 10, 2019 at 12:57 PM

Jefferson's statement there was probably informed partially by the arguments Thomas Cooper later included in [The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism](#)"

Letter of Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Cooper, December 11, 1823.

TO DR. THOMAS COOPER

MONTECELLO, DEC. 11, 1823.

DEAR SIR:

I duly received your favor of the 23rd ult. as also the two pamphlets you were so kind as to send me. That on the tariff, I observed, was soon reprinted in Ritchie's Enquirer. I was only sorry he did not postpone it to the meeting of Congress, when it would have got into the hands of all the members, and could not fail to have great effect, perhaps a decisive one. It is really an extraordinary proposition that the agricultural, mercantile, and navigating classes should be taxed to maintain that of manufacturers.

That the doctrine of Materialism was that of Jesus himself was a new idea to me. Yet it is proved unquestionably. We all know it was that of some of the early Fathers. I hope the physiological part will follow; in spite of the prevailing fanaticism, reason will make its way. I confess that its reign at present is appalling. General education is the true remedy, and that most happily is now generally encouraged. The story you mention as gotten up by your opponents, of my having advised the Trustees of our University to turn you out as Professor, is quite in their style of barefaced mendacity. They find it so easy to obliterate the reason of mankind that they think they may enterprise safely on his memory also; for it was the winter before the last only, that our annual report to the Legislature, printed in the newspapers, stated the precise ground on which we relinquished your engagement with our Central College. And, if my memory does not deceive me, it was own your own proposition, that the time of our setting into operation being postponed indefinitely, it was important to you not to lose an opportunity of fixing yourself permanently; and that they should father on me too, the motion for this dismissal, than whom no man living cherishes a higher estimation of your worth, talents, and information. But so the world goes. Man is fed with fables through life, leaves it in the belief that he has known something of what has been passing, when in truth he has known nothing but what has passed under his own eye. And who are the great deceivers? Those who solemnly pretend to be the depositories of the sacred truths of God himself! I will not believe that the liberality of the State to which you are rendering services of science which no other man in the Union is qualified to render it will suffer you to be in danger from a set of conjurers.

I note what you say of Mr. Finch; but the moment of our Commencement is as indefinite as it ever was. Affectionately and respectfully,

Yours,

TH. JEFFERSON