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Lettre de T. Dabney Marshall à Émile Zola datée du 8 mars 1898

Auteur(s) : Marshall, Thomas Dabney

Transcription

Texte de la lettre

Papier à lettre

Déjà dactylographié à gauche :

Board of Control

1. J. Mc Laurin Governor

Wiley N. Nash, Att'y Gen'I

1. J. Evans

M.M. Evans

John D. McINNIS (*accolade avec les deux au dessus*) : R. R. Com

1. J. Evans Jr Secretary

Déjà dactylographié à droite :

Walter Mc Lauren, Warden.

Mississippi

State Penitentiary

Jackson, Miss.

Dactylographié en violet :

Jackson, Miss., March 8th 1898.

1. Emile Zola,

Paris, France,

Dear Sir :--

I have read with passionate interest every detail, which our American papers have given of the noble fight you have been waging for the honor of France and the cause of Justice.

Although from the opening of the trial, when the prejudice of the judge became only too obvious, I was convinced that a verdict against you was inevitable, still in spite of my reason, I, together with my fellow prisoners confined here, hoped that for once genius and justice would reverse the course of history and triumph over injustice bulwarked by power.

When I was hardly more than a boy, I read that powerful and sombre masterpiece of yours --Germinal -- where it always seemed to me your genius touched its highest mark, and from that day you gave had the tribute of my admiration for both your genius and your nobility.

In no country in the world are authors accorded the same influence and honors as in France, and in no land have they shown themselves more worthy.

In the frequent loneliness of a prison memory has full sway, and I have often recalled the long line of martyrs who have illustrated the history of French letters.

I remembered Corneille, daring to incur the displeasure of the all powerful cardinal rather forfeit his own independence.

I remembered Voltaire and Rousseau on account of their championship of the rights of man. I remembered that great Titan of letters, Victor Hugo, on the island of Jersey another Prometheus, exiled but indomitable. Still hurling "ses châtiments" against an unjust Zeus.

As in your writings you have shown yourself the equal of these predecessors in intellect, so now in your championship of Justice in the face of power, you have proven your brotherhood with them in nobility.

I cite these great names of France in connection with your own, not only to give the gratification a man must feel to find himself in this noble army of martyrs, but for this reason also.

Though they suffered, the cause for which they struggled triumphed. As one of your poets has said,

Though the martyr meets in life disdain,

The great curse, blossoms in the after years,

As the sunlight after the rain !

In France no man needs a patron new. The ideas of Rousseau and Voltaire not only suffuse of their own land with justice, but leaping the Atlantic inspire the American declaration of independence, and each fourth of July evoke the applause of free hearts.

Victor Hugo died under a Republic and was buried amid the lamentations of a mighty nation, but Napoleon le Petit died a king discrowned and was buried in an exile's grave.

So in the long results of time it will be given your cause to triumph and you yourself classed among

“The dead and sceptred spirits who rule us from their urns”.

I know it is in the nature of an intrusion for an unknown prisoner to address you, but still it may be a gratification for you to know that here in Mississippi across the ocean more than seven thousand miles distant from France, you are admired and your efforts applaud.

With best wishes I remain,

Very respectfully,

Signature : T. Dabney Marshall

Jackson

Mississippi

United States of America

Les folios

En passant la souris sur une vignette, le titre de l'image apparaît.

3 Fichier(s)

Relations

Ce document n'a pas de relation indiquée avec un autre document du projet.□

Présentation

GenreCorrespondance

Date d'envoi[1898-03-08](#)

AdresseMississippi, State Penitentiary, Jackson, Miss.

Description & Analyse

Description Soutien dans l'affaire Dreyfus, compare Zola à d'autres grands intellectuels français, lui parle de sa future postérité.

Notes non

Information générales

Langue [Anglais](#)

Cote AME 1898_03_08 LEA.60.Marshall.08031898.Jackson

Source Collection famille Émile-Zola

Informations éditoriales

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Notice créée par [Richard Walter](#) Notice créée le 21/12/2018 Dernière modification le 23/12/2022
