

Thomas Jefferson to Charles Thomson, January 11, 1808, from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO CHARLES THOMSON¹

¹ From *Collections of the N. Y. Historical Society for 1878*, p. 256.

Washington, Jan. 11, 08.

My dear and antient Friend, —I see by the newspapers your translation of the Septuagint is now to be printed, and I write this to pray to be admitted as a subscriber. I wish it may not be too late for you to reconsider the size in which it is to be published. Folios and quartos are now laid aside because of their inconvenience. Everything is now printed in 8vo, 12mo or *petit format*. The English booksellers print their first editions indeed in 4to, because they can assess a larger price on account of the novelty; but the bulk of readers generally wait for the 2d edition, which is for the most part in 8vo. This is what I have long practised myself. Johnson, of Philadelphia, set the example of printing handsome edition of the Bible in 4v., 8vo. I wish yours were in the same form. I have learnt from time to time with great satisfaction that you retain your health, spirits and activity of mind and body. Mr. Dickinson too is nearly in the same way; he exchanges a letter with me now and then. The principal effect of age of which I am sensible is an indisposition to be goaded by business from morning to night, from laboring in an Augean stable, which cleared out at night presents an equal task the next morning. I want to have some time to turn to subjects more congenial to my mind. Mr. Rose still stays on board his ship at Hampton, we know not why. If he is seeking time we may indulge time. Time prepares us for defence; time may produce peace in Europe that removes the ground of difference with England

Library of Congress

until another European war, and that may find our revenues liberated by the discharge of our national debt, our wealth and numbers increased, our friendship and our enmity more important to every nation. God bless you and give you years and health to your own wishes. Remember me respectfully to Mrs. Thomson and accept yourself my affectionate salutation.