Recd — Nov 15th

Monticello Va.
15th Nov. 43

Rev James Wallis.
Colonization Office
Baltimore.
Md.

G. M. Mason
Esq

Fredericksburg, Va.
November 18th 1843

Dear Sir,

Your favour in reply to my letter came duly to hand: but my object in troubling you with another communication is not to say more in relation to that matter, but to draw your attention to a subject of rather more consequence than at the first glance it may seem to deserve.

In Virginia every county was divided into parishes, in each of which the Parson was required by law to keep a register of births deaths & marriages. The value of such an institution had been long tested in England in matters connected with inheritance. In the mad humour which followed immediately upon the heals of the Revolution, in one of our crazy freaks (you observe, I use the gentlest terms) our people, drunk with democracy, so far forgot the distinction between right & wrong as to confiscate the property of the Church, held tho' it was, by as sacred a tenure as public faith could create — abrogated the parochial institutions — & established a precedent by means of which the Tenant in Fee simple will one day find himself holding at the will of the Legislature. In this overthrow & the confusion consequent thereupon

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received
A. Letter Books

8. 1843—1844

1843