

June 19, 1849

7. In his reply, Ewing informed Henry that the wages would not be reduced.

vice Building "a quarter of a dollar more per day, than is given on work, private, and of an inferior order."

315. TO THOMAS EWING

Smithsonian Institution
June 19 1849

To the
Hon. Thomas Ewing
Secretary of the Interior
Sir

I beg leave to express to you my opinion of the importance of the investigations now prosecuting by Henry R Schoolcraft Esqr under the direction of the Department of the Interior.¹

Every thing relative to the manners customs habits and history of the aborigines of this country is of especial scientific interest, and this interest is at the present time much enhanced by the minute inquiries which have lately been instituted in almost every part of the world with regard to the peculiarities of the different races of men. The learned world looks to our country for a full account of the race that we have dispossessed, and as every year renders the task more difficult, it is hoped that the investigations on the subject, now going on under the Government, will not only be continued, but that means may be afforded for their more active prosecution.

We would urge [~~earnestly and~~] especially that the investigations be actively prosecuted at the present tim[e]^A while Mr [Schoolcraft]^B is in the vigour of physical and mental power, for we are [confident]^B that no person could be found so well qualified by long experience, habits of mind and peculiar acquirements to carry on the investigation.²

I have the honor to be very respectfully
Your obedient servant
Joseph Henry
Sec. Smithsonian Institution.

Henry R. Schoolcraft Papers, Library of Congress.
In Edward Foreman's hand, with Henry's signature. Copy in unknown hand in same location.

1. In 1847, the Office of Indian Affairs, then in the War Department, hired Schoolcraft to gather information on Native Americans. When the Interior Department was established

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in 1849, the Office of Indian Affairs was transferred to it. *DSB; Guide to the National Archives of the United States* (Washington, 1987), p. 377.

2. The Department of the Interior did continue to support Schoolcraft. The result was his

monumental *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, 6 vols. (Philadelphia, 1851-1857).

316. TO MILLARD FILLMORE¹

Smithsonian Institution

June 23 1849

My Dear Sir

Accompanying this letter I send you the certificate of the Executive Committee stating that the sum of fifteen thousand four hundred and fifty five dollars and seven cents, is required for the purposes of the Institution. This sum is the amount of interest which will be due 1st July on the original bequest. It will be required to pay—first, upwards of five thousand dollars which we have overdrawn from Corcoran and Riggs²—second, to pay the next instalments upon the building, also due 1st July;—third, for the salaries of officers, the purchase of apparatus, books &c.

There will also be due 1st July, a half year's interest on our Treasury stock and I am informed by the Comptroller of the Treasury,³ that it will be necessary for you to send me a power of attorney to enable me to obtain the money. It will not be necessary for us at present to sell any more U.S. Stock;⁴ it is now at a high premium and will probably advance still farther.

I will send you a copy of the Hints^A on Architecture, also a package of our reports, through the Secretary of the Senate.⁵

The workmen are now engaged in making the changes of which I spoke to you at your last visit: The East wing has been entirely dismantled. A commodious lecture room will be ready for the operations of the Institution before the next meeting of Congress.

We have received a lot of very beautiful instruments from Boston which were ordered nearly two years ago,⁶ and with the donation of Dr Hare, shall be able to make something of a display next winter in the way of books and apparatus.

The weather is at present exceedingly warm in Washington, almost too much so to allow of any exertions. I shall be obliged to leave the city