

not to pass those two "bilious months" in Washington. "I have not done it these forty years," he wrote to Gallatin. "Grumble who will, I will never pass those two months on tidewater." To Monticello, indeed, Jefferson turned whenever his duties permitted and not merely in the sickly months of summer, for when the roads were good the journey was rapidly and easily made by stage or chaise. There, in his garden and farm, he found relief from the distractions of public life. "No occupation is so delightful to me," he confessed, "as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden." At Monticello, too, he could gratify his delight in the natural sciences, for he was a true child of the eighteenth century in his insatiable curiosity about the physical universe and in his desire to reduce that universe to an intelligible mechanism. He was by instinct a rationalist and a foe to superstition in any form, whether in science or religion. His indefatigable pen was as ready to discuss vaccination and yellow fever with Dr. Benjamin Rush as it was to exchange views with Dr. Priestley on the ethics of Jesus.

The diversity of Jefferson's interests is truly remarkable. Monticello is a monument to his