

## --Transcribed Washington Letter

Mount

Vernon June 20th 1788

Sir:

I request you will accept my best thanks for your polite letter of the 1st of January (which did not get to my hand 'til yesterday) - and also for the copy of your "System of Arithmetic" which you were pleased to present to me.-

The handsome manner in which that work is printed, and the elegant manner in which it is bound, are pleasing proofs of the progress which the arts are making in this country. But I should do violence to my feelings, if I appreciated an acknowledgement of the belief that the work itself is calculated to be equally useful & honorable to the United States.-

It is but right, however, to apprise you, that, diffident of my own decision, the favorable opinions I entertain of your performance is founded rather on the explicit & ample testimonies of Gentleman confessedly possessed of great mathematical knowledge

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ledge, than on the partial & incompetent attention I have been able to pay to it myself. -But I must be permitted to remark that the subject, in my estimation, hold a higher rank in the literary scale than you

are disposed to allow.- The science of figures, to ascertain a degree, is not only indecipherably requisite in every walk of civilized life, but the investigations of mathematical truths accustoms the mind to method and correctness in reasoning, and is as (empoym ?) peculiarly worthy of rational beings. In a cloudy state of existence, where so many things appear precarious to the bewildered research it is here that the rational faculties find a firm foundation to rest upon.- From the high ground of mathematical & philosophical demonstration, we are insensibly led to far nobler speculations & sublime meditations.

I hope & trust that the work will ultimately prove not less profitable than reputable to yourself.- It seems to have been conceded, on all hands, that such a system was much wanted. - It's merit being established by the approbation of competent Judges, I flatter myself that the idea of its being an American production and the first

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first of the kind which has appeared; will induce every patriotic and liberal character to give it all the countenance & patronage in his power. - In all events you may rest assured, that, as no person takes more interest in encouragement of American genius, so no one will be more highly gratified with the success of your ingenious, arduous & useful undertaking than he, who has the unfeigned pleasure to subscribe himself with esteem & regard

Sir

Your Most Obed't and very H'ble Servant

G Washington