

FIRST LETTER OF MR. PEABODY.

BALTIMORE, February 12th, 1857.

Mr. Peabody's first letter.

Gentlemen: In pursuance of a purpose long entertained by me, and which I communicated to some of you more than two years ago, I have determined, without further delay, to establish and endow an Institute in this city, which, I hope, may become useful towards the improvement of the moral and intellectual culture of the inhabitants of Baltimore, and collaterally to those of the State; and also towards the enlargement and diffusion of a taste for the Fine Arts. My wishes in regard to the scope and character of this Institute, are known to some of you through a personal communication of my purpose; in the sequel of this letter, I shall further advert to that subject. In presenting to you the object I propose, I wish you to understand, that the details proper to its organization and government, and its future control and conduct, I submit entirely to your judgment and discretion; and the perpetuity of that control, I confide to you and your successors, to be appointed in the manner prescribed in this letter.

I request you to accept this trust, as my friends amongst whom, I hope there will ever be found the utmost harmony and concert of action, in all that relates to the achievement of the good which it is my aim to secure to the city.

You and your successors will constitute forever a Board of Trustees, twenty-five in number, to be maintained in perpetual succession, for the accomplishment, preservation and supervision of the purposes for which the Institute is to be established. To you and your successors, therefore, I hereby give full and exclusive power to do whatsoever you may deem most advisable, for the foundation, organization and management of the proposed Institute; and to that end I give to you, and will place at your disposal, to be paid to you as you may require, for the present, three hundred thousand dollars, to be expended by you in such manner as you may determine, to be most conducive to the effective and early establishment, and future maintenance and support of such an Insti-

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