The Papers of James Madison. Vol. 8: *10 March 1784–28 March 1786.* Ed. by Robert A. Rutland, William M. E. Rachal, Barbara D. Ripel, and Fredrika J. Teute. [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973. xxviii + 560 pp. Illustrations, charts, appendixes, notes, and index. $20.00.]

The Papers of James Madison. Vol. 9: *9 April 1786–24 May 1787 with Supplement 1781–1784.* Ed. by Robert A. Rutland, William M. E. Rachal,

Fredrika J. Teute, Charles F. Hobson, Frank C. Mevers, and Jeanne K. Sisson. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975. xxv + 447 pp. Illustrations, tables, appendix, notes, and index. $18.50.)

The Papers of James Madison. Vol. 10: *27 May 1787–3 March 1788*. Ed. by Robert A. Rutland, Charles F. Hobson, William M. E. Rachal, Fredrika J. Teute, and Jeanne K. Sisson. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977. xxvi + 572 pp. Illustrations, notes, and index. $25.00.)

The Papers of James Madison. Vol. 11: *7 March 1788–1 March 1789*. Ed. by Robert A. Rutland, Charles F. Hobson, William M. E. Rachal, and Jeanne K. Sisson. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977. xxvi + 471 pp. Notes and index. $15.00.)

The American Revolution activated James Madison's great talents. The constitutional crisis of the 1780s brought them to maturity. And as these four volumes make clearer than ever before, those talents made Madison the foremost political intelligence of his generation. His only intellectual peers were Jefferson, more universal in his interests, and John Adams, more impassioned in his views. His sole rival as a political strategist was Hamilton, more daring than the Virginian and more capable of decisive action. But Madison's vision was more focused, his application to the great questions of contemporary political science more intense, his expression more judicious, and his philosophic calm more permeating than each of theirs. Jefferson doubted, in his own words, that he could "in the whole scope of America and Europe point out an abler head."

In the five years after 1784, Madison emerged as the grand strategist of the Federalist cause. And from the start, as the documents in these volumes amply attest, he was also an astute and influential tactician and politician. The contents of volume eight convey the range and intensity of Madison's service in the Virginia House of Delegates, where his main concern, as it had been during three years previously in the Continental Congress, was to fulfill the promise of the republican experiment. In 1785, with his masterful "Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments," he helped turn the tide in Virginia against a public subsidy for religious instruction; and his on-the-spot efforts in behalf of Jefferson's statute for religious freedom shepherded that bill through the state legislature in January 1786. In that year and the next, as we see in volume nine, Madison prepared for his pivotal role at Philadelphia through study, correspondence, and continued service in both the House of Delegates and the Continental Congress.

Volume ten, which contains excerpts from Madison's "Notes on Debates in the Federal Convention" and all of his *Federalist* essays, is the most important and longest of these four volumes. Rather than reproducing all of Madison's "Notes," the editors have wisely included only his principal speeches as he recorded them or, where he did not do so, the fullest account of his remarks taken down by other convention members—with the footnotes conveying alternative versions of his remarks. The editors' scholarship also puts to rest once and for all any lingering doubts about the date of authorship of the "Notes" (X, pp. 3–10). By examining a copy made by John Wayles Eppes in 1791, they demonstrate conclusively that, by making use of his own copy of the manuscript version of the Convention *Journal* (not published until 1819), Madison had completed the major writing and revising of the "Notes" by 1791.

The editors have also discovered evidence that helps further settle the dispute over the authorship of individual *Federalist* papers (X, pp. 262–63). By reproducing here all of Madison's essays from the McLean edition of 1788, the editors have provided for the first time between the same covers the intellectually awesome product of Madison's mind and pen in this critical year of the convention and the ratification contest. As a result, we can see better than ever before how his writings and actions were related, and especially how he drew throughout these months upon ideas formulated and set down earlier in his "Notes on Ancient and Modern Confederacies" (IX, pp. 3–24) and "Vices of the Political System of the United States" (IX, pp. 345–58).

Volume eleven illuminates the depth of Madison's involvement, well beyond his coauthorship of the *Federalist*, in planning for the ratification and implementation of the Constitution, especially in the upper South and in the expiring Continental Congress in New York. By April 1788, he had formulated, and was urging on others, the strategy that would carry the new frame of government to victory: prevent a second convention from being held; accept recommendations that amendments be added to the Constitution, but not as a condition of ratification; and offer assurances that the new Constitution does not impair the obligations of debtors and of public contracts in the "old money"—assurances that bore heavily on Hamilton's later efforts to assume and fund the debt. Madison widely shared his reasoning and plans and, with his many correspondents, in effect coordinated a national Federalist strategy—though one without organization, headquarters, or plan. Perhaps no one was more on his own than Madison himself in the Virginia ratifying convention. With remarkable placidity and judiciousness, he took on Patrick Henry and the antifederalists and poured into his softly delivered remarks a power of authoritative reasoning rarely equalled in our history. Anyone who begins to doubt the utility, as evidence and suasion, of historical knowledge will be braced and reassured by these convention speeches—distillations of years of study and the product of a grand vision.

Once ratification had been secured, Madison set about making sure that he would have a role in putting the Constitution into effect. Denied a seat in the Senate by his Virginia foes, he sought and won election to the House in a display of political acumen and electoral skills that ought to dispel the notion that he was a dull and ineffectual politician, at least under the circumstances of that day.

With volume eleven, this distinguished series has reached a point where it intersects with corresponding letterpress projects on the Continental Congress, ratification, the first federal elections, the first Congress, and the other major figures of the era. Taken together, they compose a unique archive and monument. They are a challenge to scholars to reconsider, in the light of these accessible riches, the entire history of the creation of a national constitutional and political system.

All of the volumes have been superbly edited and, with the exception of volume nine, expertly designed. In this sole instance, smaller and compressed Baskerville type was substituted for the customary, more open Janson typeface, to which, fortunately, volumes ten and eleven have returned. This last volume is the first to be brought out by the University of Virginia Press. But for its single lapse, the University of Chicago Press produced its ten volumes with great success.

Appendixes to volume eight contain a list of bills introduced by Madison in the Virginia House of Delegates between 1784 and 1786 and excerpts from his intermittent meteorological journal for Orange County, Virginia. Volume nine includes a supplement of eight items, omitted from previous volumes, during the period 1781–1784.

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