Further Letters of Benjamin Rush

A voluminous and almost always a lively letter writer, Dr. Benjamin Rush did not, like some of his more systematic contemporaries, regularly make and keep copies of his outgoing letters. The great collection of his papers in the Library Company of Philadelphia consists for the most part of the letters he received, thus providing the names of his correspondents and indicating the amount of his epistolary output. From this evidence alone it appears that he wrote at least three times as many letters as I was able to trace when assembling materials for my edition of the Letters of Benjamin Rush.1 Texts of nearly 1,400 letters were found, and, from these, 660 of the more valuable and entertaining were chosen for publication.2 It was inevitable that in the course of time more of the busy doctor's letters would come to light, and though no large group of them has been found, enough “new” letters of real interest have turned up in various places to justify issuing a supplement to the published volumes. I am very grateful to the various friends and other informants, named in the notes below, who brought a number of these fugitive letters to my attention.3

2 The editor's final report on the publication of Rush's Letters appears in the Year Book of the American Philosophical Society for 1952 (Philadelphia, 1952), 201-204.
3 Several of the letters now printed had been traced earlier, but for one reason or another were not available for publication when the volumes went to press. Several others were available, but were omitted from the collection on grounds I now think mistaken.
The twenty-six letters assembled and printed here were written by Rush between the ages of nineteen and sixty-six; the first of them dates from the period of his medical apprenticeship under Dr. Redman in Philadelphia, and the last is dated about six months before his death. They are as various in content as the physician-teacher-reformer-politician-author Benjamin Rush was in his interests. The earliest letter reveals the devout young Presbyterian self-consciously brushing up the Latin he had learned at West Nottingham and Princeton, and this is followed by two letters written while Rush was studying for his medical degree at Edinburgh. Later letters to friends he made in Scotland suggest that Rush possessed fully as conspicuous a talent for friendship as he sometimes showed for making enemies. While on his travels abroad he was fortunate enough to meet his eminent fellow Pennsylvanian Benjamin Franklin, who—as was his way—soon tested out his young friend's opinions on an important scientific subject, in this case the nature and causes of colds.

A group of letters written during the Revolution, mostly to Richard Henry Lee, display both the breathless excitement that many must have felt in the midst of great events and the impetuosity of judgment that was especially characteristic of Dr. Rush. The letters during the years after the war treat such typical subjects as aerostatic experimentation (ballooning), the reasons why Scots should emigrate to Pennsylvania, and the cultural advances made by the United States since the Revolution. Later they range into politics—one letter being a bitter indictment of Hamilton's funding scheme of 1790—and that other favorite theme of Rush's, the efficacy of bleeding and purging as a cure for yellow fever.

The letters after 1800 are very miscellaneous in their contents. The most surprising letter in the whole sequence now printed is that to Alexander Hamilton dated November 26, 1801. The original has long reposed among the Hamilton Papers in the Library of Congress, where the editor did not look for it because he had every reason to suppose that Rush and Hamilton, who had been political and personal enemies for a decade, were no longer correspondents. The subject is the death of Hamilton's son Philip in a duel, and Rush's expressions of condolence have a special poignancy, not only because of the circumstances of the elder Hamilton's death in 1804, but because a few years later Rush's own eldest son, John, became perma-
nently insane as the result of a duel in which he killed a fellow naval officer. The last letters printed here reveal that in his old age Dr. Rush was as zealous as ever for the welfare of Dickinson College, "the dear, petulant brat" he had brought to birth a quarter of a century earlier; that he was willing to take the trouble to write a little lecture to a namesake in Virginia; and that he was immensely proud of the recognition accorded by the court and learned institutions of Russia to the medical writings that he had transmitted through the hands of our minister there, John Quincy Adams.

These supplementary letters furnish a modicum of new facts about one of the most versatile and energetic of the founding fathers. The facts are not startling or weighty, but they delineate a little more clearly the features of a man who contributed more than is yet generally recognized to the cultural advancement of the young republic. And there is always justification for printing letters as engaging and pungent as Dr. Rush's are.

In presenting these new letters I have provided texts that are literally faithful except for lowering superscript characters to the line. The annotation is not as full as it might have been, simply because many of the persons and events alluded to here are annotated in the collected edition of Rush's Letters, and it would have been pointless to reprint notes that are available there.

Institute of Early American History and Culture

L. H. Butterfield

TO EBENEZER HAZARD

[Translation]

Philadelphia, July 23, 1765

Friend/

Your second letter in Latin arrived and gave me great pleasure. In truth I saw in it pale Death spreading fear throughout the world.

4 A.L.S. (in Latin) owned by Edward Leffingwell Smith, New York City. This is one of two surviving letters from Rush in a Latin correspondence that he and his former school and college mate Ebenezer Hazard projected but soon afterward dropped. See Rush, Letters, I, 17, 18–19. For the case of the Rev. John Murray, discussed at length in the second paragraph, see ibid., I, 8, and frequently. The original Latin text follows:
I saw a sinner torn from his pleasures and hailed before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge. I heard the groans of the wretched in Gehenna vainly invoking pity and an end of their sorrows, and I also saw the man who is whole of life and free from vice exulting in the joys of this life and prepared by the glory of God to enter into immortal life. O “thus may it fall to my lot to live and thus to die.” Horace.

Greeting, thrice greetings, New York! God now dwells among you. Now Paterclitus is hurrying to you by the river; and many are fleeing to Christ the Mediator. Pour forth tears for us, my dearest Ebenezer. The Spirit of God has departed from Philadelphia. Now our church is in mourning. It mourns that worthy man William Tennent, who has departed this life. It mourns the decline of religion among the disciples of Christ. And alas! how shall I speak? But “may it be proper for me to say what I have heard.” It mourns as well the reputation of the man, once eminent and dear, named Murray.

Philada: Juli 23d: Die 1765.

Amice/

Litera tua secunda Latina Mihi animo gaudenti provenit. Mortem vero in illa vidi pallidam Pavorem per Orbis Gentes struentem.—Vidi Peccatorem a Deliciis suis evulsum, et ad Tribunal Judiciis Supremi arreptum. Audivi Genitus Miserorum in Gehenna, frustra Misere-recordiam Finemque Dolorum invocantium. at vidi quoque Integrum Vitæ Scelerisque purum Gaudiis suis exultantem hoc Mundo, & in futuro paratum Gloria Domini introire. O “sic Mihi contingat vivere sicque mori.” Hor:


Scripsi tibi Hepdomade postrema. tempus non restat in longam ducere Literam. Sol diu ex hoc Occidens, & Sidera Cælo Splendentia ad Lectum vocant. Vale. tuus sum totus Benignus

Benjamin Rush

5 This word is a puzzle, but may be a garbled form of Greek parakletos (English paraclete), meaning consoler or helper, a term applied to the Holy Spirit (Webster), but probably used here in reference to the well-known and much-beloved Rev. John Rodgers, who had just left Philadelphia to take a church in New York.
snatched away by envy. Recently there appeared among us an Irish minister named Rhea, who was pleased to tell us that Pastor Murray is not talked about in his own country on account of his altering his license. Pastors Ewing and Allison have received letters from friends of theirs in Ireland whom I believe to be ill-spoken confirming this gossip, and they show them freely to everybody. More I do not know. You will hear the rest from Pastor Rodgers. For all that, I consider Pastor Murray innocent of wrongdoing.

I wrote to you last week. I haven't time now to write you a long letter. The sun sank some time ago, and the stars shining in the heavens summon me to bed. Farewell. I am wholly your affectionate

Benjamin Rush

Addressed: For Mr: Ebenezer Hazard Att Mr: Garret Noel's to the Care of Dr: Malachi Treat in New-York. ℹ favr: of Mr: Garrison.

To Thomas Bradford

Liverpool Octobr: 25h 1766

Dear Sir

August the 31st: was the mournfull Sunday on which I bid you and several more of my Bosom Friends farewell on Philadelphia Wharf. the Sun that day to me had lost all its Lustre, and I fancied all nature around me corresponded wth: the gloomy Situation of my Mind.—After some time I began to emerge again from a Sea of Trouble, and fondly presaged to myself a happy voyage from the encouraging Appearances we had when we left the Capes.

On Tuesday Evening immediately after I wrote to you I was seized wth: a most violent Vomiting and Sea Sickness which continued upon me for upwards of ten days without One Moments Respite. however after a while I became more used to the Motion of the Ship, and in a few days recovered my former Strength and Appetite.

6 A.L.S., Hamilton Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP). The recipient has been identified from internal evidence. Except for slight variations in the dates, Rush's manuscript journal of his voyage and his stay in Scotland confirms most of the details given in this letter. This unpublished journal is in the University of Indiana Library.
Sepr. 18th: we were met with: a most violent Gale of Wind in Lat: 43. Long. 47 which continued to blow without any Intermission for near three days. O my Friend what feint inadequate Ideas do we form of a Storm at Sea while we live secure on Land! All my Courage & Firmness was now vanquished, and I waited every moment with trembling Anxiety for the fatal wave that should engulf us for ever in the Sea. What now would it have availed me to have possessed the Riches of the Indies, or to have swayed the most extensive Sceptre. Riches and power could have afforded no Comfort in this important Hour. 'twas Religion alone that could support the Soul, and bear her up amidst the awful prospects of approaching Death. happy the Man to whom Heaven bestows this most precious Gift of divine Bounty! The Sea may rage and roar—Winds may blow with: all their Fury—and Destruction may appear on all sides ready to devour him:—still will his Soul be calm and serene, nay he will welcome Death tho' clad in these his horrid Forms with: all the Triumph of a Conqueror. Would to Heaven this had been my happy Case!—

On Friday Morn: Octobr: 18th Our Eyes were once more blessed with: a Sight of Land which upon a nearer view appeared to be the South West part of Ireland. but this Joy was allayed the next day by our being exposed to great Danger in being drove too near the Irish Shore by a strong Gale of Wind. and had not Providence interposed, and the Wind shifted very suddenly we should inevitably have been drove upon the Rocks, where we could have had no Hopes of Life, for the Rocks were upwards of seventy or eighty Feet high, and rose up perpendicularly from the Water.

Tuesday Eveng: Octobr: 22nd: After being exposed to several dangers from running too near the Coast of Wales in sailing up St: Georges Channel we arrived safe in Liverpool. O! sir you cannot conceive what Joy I felt when I got my Feet once more placed upon Terra Firma, and this Joy was succeeded by all those various Reflections which naturally arise in the mind from being first in a Country so long celebrated for her Liberty—Commerce—and the Learning of her Sons.

The Town of Liverpool is built upon less Ground but contains far more Houses than Philada:—the Streets are very narrow and irregular & tho' paved with: stone like ours are very dirty. the Town is
seated About 3 miles from the Irish Sea, the Sea wch: divides England from Ireland, and stands upon the River Mersey wch: extends about thirty miles up the Country dividing Chestershire (the place where all the English Cheese comes from) from Lastershire. the Navigation up this River is so dangerous that no large Ships ever venture above Liverpool. there cannot be a worse place contrived for buildg: a City than this, and nothing but English Bravery and Industry would ever have brought this town to its present flourishing Situation.—it is no uncommon thing for Ships to be cast away within Sight of the town, and Seamen are Often brought home dead After being Absent from their Families many months. no Ships ever venture up or down this Channel without Pilots, and it requires so much time to acquire a perfect Knowledge of the Channel (Altho’ there are a great number of Buoys and Beacons placed in the water to guide the Ships) that all their Pilots are Obliged to serve a long Apprentiship to it, and then compelled to stand a severe Examination before some old Seafaring Gentlemen. they have all of them Branches⁷ in the same manner as our Pilots have, and if it can be proved that a Ship was lost by means of their Neglect they are obliged to pay for the whole Ship and Cargo. The English and Irish Coast is furnished wth: a great number of light Houses, which in some measure avert the Danger of coming up St Georges Channel in the Night.—There is a Light House built upon the mouth of the River Mersey about 3 miles from Liverpool of an entire new form. it fronts the open Sea, and there is a looking Glass placed closed [sic] behind the Fire wch: reflects the Light to a prodigious Distance twice as far as when the Light is diffused in equal rays on all Sides.

All the Ships are brought into two large Docks which have been cut out by the Labour of man and extend up into the Heart of the town.—the Water is here confined by Gates, and they admit more or less of it just as they please whenever the Tide rises. there are now in these two Docks upwards of 300 Sail of Ships.

The Custom House Officers here exercise a kind of Vigilance and Authority over the Ships which almost approaches to Tyranny.—as soon as we arrived the Officer came on Board of us in his little Barge

⁷ See Webster's New International Dictionary under the word branch, noun, 12: “Naut. A warrant or commission given to a pilot, authorizing him to pilot vessels in certain waters.”
and immediately forbid Mr Potts and me to carry our Trunks a Shore untill they were carried to the Custom House. He then left two men on board the Ship to watch night and day least any prohibited Goods should be sent a Shore privately.—These Fellows watch so closely while the Ship is unloading that they burnt a Ship a few Weeks ago together wth: her whole Cargo wch: consisted of Cotton entirely up, by making too strict a Scrutiny with a Candle, and there is now a Law Suit depending whether the King should repair, or the private Merchant sustain the Loss. Nay so very strict are they that one of them stood by the day after we arrived and watched Mr Potts and me while we shifted ourselves.—Our Trunks were accordingly car-
ried to the Custom House, and there searched narrowly and for this peice of unmannerly Ceremony we were Oblidged to pay half a Crown. pray how do you think the free born sons of America bore this unacustomed Treatment?

This town has been enriched by the African Trade chiefly, as also by purchasing East India Goods from the Ile of Man wch: you know was Once a free port. But the Bristol merchants finding Liverpool began to exceed thier City in Trade, prevailed upon the Crown to take the Island from the Duke of Athol (to whom it belongs) during his minority, so that that Branch of Trade is now suppressed.

You have no doubt heard of the Honour his Majesty has con-
ferred upon Our illustrious Commoner Mr Pitt in creating him Earl of Chatham. his Friends here in England began to be alarmed, and were afraid least his being removed from the House of Commons to the House of Lords would put an End to his Usefullness, but he soon convinced them to the contrary, & has been endeavouring to make the East India Trade free, or else Oblidge the East India Company to refund the Money the Nation laid out in defending those Settle-
ments which they alone have a right to trade to.

Give my Respects to your Father’s Family more especially to my good Friend Tacey. write to me by the way of London in Edinburgh, and direct your Letters to the Care of your Booksellers, and desire them to forward them to me if possible by private Opportunities. I could enlarge upon many more particulars but a want of time & paper prevent. Adieu.

Benja: Rush
To Colina Campbell Hogg (Mrs. Thomas Hogg)

Melvill July 5th 1768

My Dr. Madam/

I enjoy so much of the Fruits of your and Mr. Hogg's Friendship here at Melvill that it would be the highest Ingratitude in me not to embrace the first Opportunity of acknowledging it. The Kindness of my Lord and the whole Family, together with the Beauty of the Country exceed the highest Accounts you gave of them, or even the more romantic Ideas I had formed of them. Like Queen Sheba I can say the half was not told. But what shall I say of the Behaviour and Charms of ———. Language is too poor to do them Justice.—I shall therefore muse an Encomium upon her which I want words to express.

The principal Design of this Letter is to desire you to inform Miss Anne Hogg that my Lord had received no Letter from Dr Wether- spoon before he embarked for America, so that Miss Anne is now at Liberty to make known the Doctor's Request to her to my Lord in any manner She pleases. If She is gone out of town, I should be much Obliged to you if you please to drop her a line to Yester.

I cannot tell when I shall return to Edinburgh. My attachment to Melvill grows stronger and stronger every day.—how insipid are all Lectures and Studies when set in Competition with the pleasures of Friendship & a rural Life!

8 A.L.S. owned by George Scott-Moncrieff, Edinburgh, who kindly furnished a transcript. Mr. Scott-Moncrieff is a descendant of the Hogg family of Edinburgh, who very generously befriended Rush while he was studying medicine in Scotland. See note and references in Rush's Letters, I, 43. I am indebted to Francis L. Berkeley, Jr., of the Alderman Library, University of Virginia, for locating this and other letters of Rush's in Edinburgh and for arranging to have them transcribed.

9 Rush was writing from the countryseat of the Earl of Leven and Melville, to whom he had been introduced by Thomas Hogg. (Mrs. Hogg was a niece of the Countess of Leven and Melville.) See Rush's Letters, I, 40, 43, and passim. See also his Scottish journal for tributes to the character of various members of the Leslie family, especially the oldest daughter, Lady Jane, with whom Rush fell head over heels in love and who is certainly the nameless charmer alluded to in this letter.

10 The nature of this request is not known. Miss Anne Hogg, sister of Thomas, was a literary spinster of Edinburgh. The Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon of Paisley had sailed with his family in May, 1768, for America, where he was to assume the presidency of the College of New Jersey (Princeton University). See L. H. Butterfield, John Witherspoon Comes to America: A Documentary Account . . . (Princeton, 1953).
I am my good Madam wth: best Respects to your dear Mr Hogg
Your Most Affectionate Humble Servant

Benjamin Rush

Addressed: To Mrs Hogg Castle Hill Edinburgh

To Benjamin Franklin

[Philadelphia, c. 1771]

Hond. Sir/

I acknowledge myself much indebted to you for the Instruction contained in your last Letter. I have met with many Facts which confirm your Opinion of the Origin of Catarhs from Cloaths—Beds—Books &c. Baron Vanswieten in his last Volume of Commentaries on Dr Boerhave’s Aphorisms in treating upon Epidemic Diseases mentions with Astonishment a Disorder which was peculiar only to the students & Bookseller of the University of Alstorp in Switzerland. May not the Origins of this be traced to the Library of the University, from which all the inhabitants of the town except the Bookseller were probably excluded? A Clergyman from Charles-town in South Carolina who had never heard of your Remark informed me lately that he had almost lost his wife by a severe Catarh which she caught by assisting him in moving his Library from one Room into Another. Instances of Catarhs derived & propagated from Beds—Cloaths &c might be mentioned without Number.—But I can by no means think that Catarhs should be confined to these Causes. The cases you have mentioned I grant a little invalidate the Arguments derived from the operation of Cold in producing Catarhs, but I beg Leave to add that they do not appear conclusive. Dr. Gaubius in his Pathology speaks of certain remote Causes of Diseases which act only on what he calls the “predispositis.” Thus a few Glasses of Wine will bring on a Fitt of the Gout upon a man who inherits a gouty Constitution, provided he drinks them at the usual seasons of that Disorder’s attacking him. The same quantity of Wine will have no Effect upon a man who is not predisposed, or subject to the Gout. We cannot say however from this that Wine is not One of the remote Causes of that Disorder.

A.L., Franklin Papers, American Philosophical Society. At least one page, with signature and date, is missing. Franklin had a lifelong interest in the causes of colds, and he had evidently encouraged his young physician-friend to investigate the subject, though the letter to which Rush is replying has not been found.
Putrid Diseases are brought on by Effluvia from putrefying Animal substances. The City of Edinr: [Edinburgh] & many of the principal Cities in Spain are never free from these Effluvia & yet we do Not find they are more subject to putrid Diseases than Other Places. It will not do to say here that the Volatile salt which is constantly extricated from these foecal Matters acts as an antisectic & prevents putrid Diseases. The same Salt is extricated from Other putrid Matters without producing any such Effect. These Facts however by no means call in question the Truth of that general Proposition that putrid animal Effluvia generate putrid Diseases. The Operation of Cold & moisture requires a Predisposition in the Body to produce a Disorder in it.—A man with weak Lungs seldom fails of having a Cough brought on, or aggravated by wetting his feet—sitting in a damp Room—or riding or walking in the Night Air. A man who has had the Sensibility of his Lungs encreased by previous warm weather—a warm Room—or by speaking or singing long, or with a loud voice will seldom fail of having a Cough or Defluxion brought on his Breast if he exposes himself immediately after any of these, to a cold Air. Cold & Moisture it may be said influence the Operation of those Matters which bring on Catarhs, & thus appear to act by themselves. But it cannot be so in the present Instances. Moreover in the Histories of all Epidemics—whether Plague—small pox—putrid fevers &c we find the operation of Cold & Moisture marked in the most sensible Manner upon the Body either in predisposing to—preventing—or changing the Type of these Diseases.—But I go further—we find several Diseases actually produced by Cold such as the Rheumatism—angina—& Pleurasy.

After much & painful Enquiry into the [remainder missing.]

To Thomas Hogg

Dear Sir/

It is a long time since I received a letter that gave me more pleasure than yours. While I sympathise with you in your vicissitudes of fortune, I rejoice in hearing from every quarter that you have preserved a fair character. Should the same vicissitudes befall me (as they most probably will in a few months if the present unnatural War

12 A.L.S. owned by George Scott-Moncrieff, Edinburgh, who kindly furnished a transcript. Hogg's letter to which this is a reply has not been found.
continues between Britain and America) It will be a great Alleviation of them if my conscience and my friends continue as yours have done, to bear witness to my integrity.

Your account of your being afflicted with the Gout gives me some reason to suspect that your temperance has not kept pace with the other parts of your morality. A clergyman in this country sometime ago lent a religious book to one of his parishioners. The poor man in reading the preface of the book found that the Author had been much afflicted, & at last had died with the gout. He threw the book from him in a passion, & afterwards returned it to his minister, assuring him that it was certainly an ungodly book as the author of it had died of an ungodly distemper.

I rejoice to hear of Mrs. Hogg's good health & spirits. My most respectful compliments await her. Kiss my little sweetheart Miss Molly a thousand times for me.

I refer you to Dr Erskine's letter & packets for politicks. From dear Sir your most affectionate humble servt

B Rush

Philada. July 6. 1775

Addressed: Thomas Hogg Esqr. Mercht at Edinburgh

To Richard Henry Lee13

Wednesday evening. [May 22, 1776]

Dear Sir/

A Memorial will be presented by our assembly tomorrow to the Congress praying an explanation of your resolve of the 15th. instant. The Motion for the application (which came from one of the Allens) shews a design to enslave the people of Pennsylvania. I conjure you by your past & present affection for our common mistress not to desert us in this trying exigency. 4/5 of the inhabitants of our colony will fly to the ultima ratio before they will submit to a new govern-

13 A.L.S., Richard Henry Lee Papers, University of Virginia Library (ViU). The date has been assigned from internal evidence. This short but significant letter shows Rush deeply engrossed in the sharp political infighting that was going on in Pennsylvania as a result of a resolve of the Continental Congress, passed on May 15, 1776, calling upon the several colonies that had not yet done so to form governments of their own "sufficient to the exigencies of their affairs." According to John Adams, who drafted it, the resolve was "a machine to fabricate independence," and it was unquestionably a calculated effort to force the issue in Pennsylvania, which was one of the laggard colonies. The Pennsylvania Assembly, dominated by
ment formed by the present Assembly. Please to circulate the papers you will receive herewith among all the Southern delegates tomorrow morning. Mr Hewes must not be neglected.—Yours Affectionately

B R—H

To Richard Henry Lee

Bristol Decemr 25. 1776

Dear Sir,

My letters I fear will prove troublesome to you but I cannot help it. Your industry as well as zeal in the Service of your country encourage me to convey every hint that occurs to me to your knowledge—being well convinced that if you think them of importance, you will force the congress to attend to them.

The Sufferings of our brave Continental troops from the want of cloaths exceed all description. I shall not give you or myself the pain of attempting to paint them. It becomes us to do every thing to remedy them as quick as possible, and guard against them for the future. For heaven's sake let it [be] a standing order of Congress that no subject should be broached there for three weeks to come but what relates to the cloathing and officering of the Army. I am in

conservatives, was by no means disposed to take so decisive a step. On May 22 that body appointed a committee, of which Andrew Allen was named chairman, to prepare a memorial or remonstrance to be presented to Congress asking for an explanation of the (perfectly obvious) intent of the resolve. Meanwhile, the radical leaders, of whom Rush was at this time in the forefront, had roused popular sentiment in the city and countryside for a convention that would demand independence and a new government. The Assembly's authority was virtually nullified by the radicals' campaign, and the proposed memorial was evidently never drawn up or acted on by the Assembly, and was certainly not presented to Congress. See John Adams, Works, ed. Charles Francis Adams (Boston, 1856), II, 510; Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789, ed. W. C. Ford and others (Washington, 1904-1937), IV, 342, 357-358; Proceedings of the Pennsylvania Assembly, in Peter Force's American Archives, 4th Ser., VI, 845-847; Extracts from the Diary of Christopher Marshall, ed. William Duane (Albany, N. Y., 1877), 71-73; J. Paul Selsam, The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776 (Philadelphia, 1936), 112ff., especially pages 129-130.

14 Not identified.
16 A.L.S., Richard Henry Lee Papers, ViU. This is one of a series of vivid letters written to Lee in Congress while Rush was serving with the Pennsylvania volunteers defending Philadelphia on the Delaware. Two more are printed here, and others are in his collected Letters, I, 120ff. A few hours after the present letter was written, Washington threw his troops across the river against the Hessian garrison at Trenton. Gen. John Cadwalader's troops at Bristol, where Rush was serving, failed to get across the river.
hopes we have got a sufficient stock of Woolens for the present year—
But what shall we do for linnen?—Every soldier in the british army
is obliged to have four shirts, and to shift twice a week. Clean linnen
is absolutely necessary to guard against lice and sickness. All the
medicines in the world will not make an Army healthy without
cleanliness. Suppose an Application is made to every man in America
for one or two of his own shirts for the benefit of the Army?—The
application I am sure will be successful. Col: Griffin informed me that
had our scheme for cloathing the Army with second hand cloaths
proposed three months ago in Congress been adopted three fourths
of the poor ragged fellows whose times are now expired would have
reinlisted. Let nothing prevent the execution of this Scheme but a
large supply of new linnen which I believe is not to be had. It would
tend greatly to preserve the health of our Army if each soldier would
have two flannen [sic] shirts instead of two linnen ones to wear in wet
weather & in the fall of the year. But I fear we have not a sufficient
stock of wool by us for that purpose.
Nothing new. Col: Griffin with only 800 men keeps How's whole
army under constant alarms in New Jersey.17 He has had several
successful skirmishes with them. Our militia who croud in daily call
aloud for Action!

Yours

Benjn Rush

To Richard Henry Lee18

Bordentown Jany 6. 1776 [i.e. 1777]

Dear Sir/

Enclosed is an original letter containing instructions from Genl:
Howe to Colonel De Danop. I beg you would lay it before congress.
Perhaps it would not be amiss to publish a translation of it. The
inhabitants of those villages in which the Hessian troops were quar-
tered inform us that the colonel executed his orders too faithfully

17 This is a very extravagant estimate of the results of Col. Samuel Griffin's recent demon-
stration against the Hessians at Mount Holly. See William S. Stryker, The Battles of Trenton
and Princeton (Boston and New York, 1898), 74–75.

18 A.L., Richard Henry Lee Papers, ViU. The letter is evidently complete without compli-
mentary close or signature, for it ends on the fourth page of the manuscript, which bears Lee's
endorsement. The enclosed letter from Sir William Howe to the Hessian officer Count von
Donop was dated from Trenton, Dec. 13, 1776, and gave orders for locating and supplying the
Hessian outposts on the Delaware; it is printed in Stryker, 316–317.
among them. He obliged them to bring in exact lists of those Articles specified in his instructions, and afterwards took them at his own price for them—a copy of which is as follows. For hay when bro’t by the inhabitants £4-0-0 a ton—when carted by the Hessians £3-0-0 for wheat 6/ & 5/6 ¶ bushel—for beef /3d— & 2½ ¶ pound—pork—the same—Oats—& corn 3/- & 2/6 ¶ bushel according as they were bro’t in, or sent for by the enemy.—They never contracted for wood or candles—but seized them wherever they found them.

As to the Salt provisions & flour they did not leave in scarcely any one family a quantity sufficient to it.

They gave receipts only for those articles which they affected to buy, but I have not yet seen a man who ever received a shilling from one of them.

The Quakers are loud in their complaints against them. An old Preacher near Crossicks who had been plundered by them said after they left him “Well! God made these men—but I am sure the devil governs them.” Another says he will send his three sons into the army to avenge the insults they have offered to his country.

The enemy have retreated precipitantly to Brunswick. We expect to follow them. Our troops are still in high spirits.

There is one thing which I wish our Commanders would learn from Genl Howe’s letters & that is Economy. They confine their care principally to military abuses, and too much neglect to inspect the quarter master—commissary & medical departments. This is inter Nos. An officer who served under Prince Ferdinand in the late war told me that he once saw him stop by the side of a broken waggon, and wait there ’till a man came to mend it. A General should be great in minute things, we waste as much money every month as would support three thousand men—I repeat it again—this is inter Nos.—The short enlistments I grant have had a great share in producing this profusion of our money. I shall tell you in what manner hereafter.—Don’t forget to urge Congress to resume the power of appointing all military Officers.19

19 This letter followed another written earlier the same day to Lee which was also erroneously dated by Rush (Letters, I, 124), but unfortunately it does not help to straighten out the puzzle of Rush’s movements at the time. According to various accounts, including that in Rush’s Autobiography (ed. by George W. Corner [Princeton, 1947], 128–129), Rush reached Princeton a day or so after the battle there on Jan. 3, 1777. Yet here he is still at Bordentown, on the other side of Trenton from Princeton, on the 6th. By far the most significant item in the
To Richard Henry Lee

Philada Jan. 15 1777

Dr Sir/

An Account is just now come to town that General Mercer (after continuing [all day on lined out] in the forenoon of Saturday [& Sunday lined out] to appear perfectly free of danger) was taken with a fainty fitt [on Monday Morning lined out] in the evening of the same day and died in a few minutes after it. How is the mighty fallen! Alas! for his family—his friends—and his country!—But let us dry our eyes. Let America exult in him for he was hers—Let human nature triumph in him—for he was a MAN.

Yours sincerely

B: Rush

To Nathanael Greene

Philada S[ept]r 4th/81

Dear Sir/

I felt both pain & pleasure in reading your letter—pain in recollecting how much I had lost in not gratifying an inclination I had often felt to renew a correspondence with you,—and pleasure in hearing of your health and happiness.—Accept my dear friend of the thanks of an individual for what you have done & suffered for our country. Cornwallis gained the honor only—You gained all the

present letter is in the final paragraph, which contains the earliest suggestion of Rush’s disillusionment with Washington’s leadership, not as a general, but as a military administrator. Within a year there was an open breach between the two men, for each of whom there was much to be said in this unhappy controversy. See my Appendix on “Rush and Washington,” Rush’s Letters, II, 1197–1208.

20 A.L.S., Richard Henry Lee Papers, ViU.

21 Brig. Gen. Hugh Mercer died, as a result of wounds received in the battle of Princeton, on Sunday, Jan. 12, 1777. Rush had attended Mercer until Jan. 11, when the former left Princeton for Philadelphia; and in a letter of the 14th he had assured R. H. Lee that Mercer, though exceedingly weak, was “out of danger.” Letters, I, 127. The present report, written very hastily, is by no means clear or consistent in its details, and I am not sure whether the deleted passages have been transcribed with perfect accuracy.

22 A.L.S. owned by Robert C. Norton, Cleveland. Rush is acknowledging a letter from Greene dated at his Headquarters, High Hills of Santee, S. C., Aug. 8, 1781, describing operations in the southern theater and containing a defense of the military conduct of Horatio Gates, Greene’s predecessor in this command. Greene’s letter is in the William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor. The French troops admired by Rush as they marched through Philadelphia were Rochambeau’s regiments on their way south to Yorktown, Va.
advantages of victory. This sentiment be assured is the prevailing one in Philadelphia. So general is the praise given to you & your little Army for your exertions & sufferings in the common cause that I have absolved human nature upon your acct: of all the charges of caprice & illnature that have been brought against her.—The South Carolina refugees in this city drank your health every day with a pleasure that discovers that they view you as one of their deliverers from the tyranny of Britain.

I was much pleased with your candid acct: of our old friend Gates’s defeats, & am still more happy to find you so reciprocal in your acct: of each other’s military Operations. Genl: Gates has done [yo]u justice in all companies, and speaks of your having done wonders with your slender resources.—I wish for the honor of republican governments, that the congress had restored him to a command after Genl: Washington informed them that no charges had been brought against him.

I hear that you have written for a parson & a printing press—both material engines in moving the world.—a newspaper in South Carolina in the present state of their affairs would be equal to two regiments.—Cardinal De Ritz remarks that in the civil wars of France that party that wrote most and wrote best always prevailed.—We have seen the wonderful effect of the pen properly managed in America in the publications of Common Sense.—I beleive his Crises did as much mischief to the enemy, & as much service to the friends of liberty as it has been in the power of any one man to render this country with any other weapons short of the sword.

Great events are in the womb of time. While you are reading this, I hope we shall be rejoicing in the success [of t]he combined arms of France & america by land & Sea. The French troops who marched thro’ this city yesterday and today are the finest body of men I ever saw in my life.—May they share wth: you in the glory of reducing the power of the enemy in the Southern states!

With sincere regard and best wishes for your encrease in every thing that can made [sic] a soldier & citizen (for I know you to be both) great and happy. I am my dear Sir

your most Affectionate friend & humble Servant

Benjn: Rush
My dear friend,

I cannot describe to you how much pleasure your letter gave me. It seems as if we had both been dead and buried for eight years, and that your letter was the first signal of our resurrection. It transported me across the ocean to Edinburgh. I forgot for a moment that we were subjects of a different empire, & I enjoyed for a while all the pleasures of friendship and hospitality under your roof. Your account of your family would have been more agreeable had it not been checkered with the news of my dear little Molly’s indisposition. I know that you have the best medical assistance in the world in Edinr:, but I cannot forbear mentioning that we have lately found common Salt a very efficacious remedy in a Spitting of blood in this Country.—We give from a teaspoonful to a tablespoonful of it every day in a dry form for two or three months. I have seen it perform several remarkable cures taken in this way.

Tell the dear girl how often I have dandled her on my knees, and how much I still love her. And as I am too remote from her to repeat those kisses which I once lavished upon her in my lap, let me beg of you to look out for the hansomest young man in Edinr: to kiss her a thousand times for me.

As for your dear wife—my once invaluable friend—what shall I say to her? I thank God that the world is still blessed with her example and prayers, But methinks Abraham—Isaac—& Jacob begin to be impatient for her company. But holy Patriarchs have patience! Let good Mr. Robin Walker satisfy you for at least half a century to come.24

My dear Mrs. Rush was taught by her father to love her very name when she was only ten years old.25 She begs to be remembered

23 A.L.S. owned by George Scott-Moncrieff, Edinburgh; transcript kindly furnished by Francis L. Berkeley, Jr. The letter acknowledged by Rush has not been found.
24 Robert Walker, D.D. (1716-1783), was for many years associate minister of the High Church, Edinburgh. There is a tribute to Walker’s character as a preacher in Rush’s Scottish Journal; see also Rush’s Autobiography, 47, and note.
25 Mrs. Rush was the former Julia Stockton of Princeton; her father, Richard Stockton, had visited Scotland in 1767 in an effort to persuade John Witherspoon to accept the presidency of the College of New Jersey.
to her and to the young ladies in the most affectionate manner. It would be ungrateful to heaven not to acknowledge how much happiness God has bestowed upon me in a wife. She would pass for a good woman even in Scotland, & for what the world calls a fine woman even in England. We have had five children two sons & three daughters. Two of the latter sex are dead. The names of our children in the order of their ages are John—Ann Emelia—and Richard Rush. The eldest is between 6 and seven years old.

I sympathize with you from the bottom of my heart in your indisposition. I pray God to restore your health, and to make you long a blessing to your family.

I have not yet received Lady Jane Belches's letter. I hope to open a correspondence between her and my dear Mrs. Rush. She will find her not unworthy of her friendship.

Yours—yours—yours and yours too my dear Mrs. Hogg and the whole family's—

Benjn: Rush

To Thomas Hogg

Philada April 22. 1784

My Dr friend,

Accept of my thanks for your kind letter enclosing a print of my honoured Master Dr: Cullen. I shall enclose it in a gilded frame & give it a place in my parlour. I think the resemblance of him is very striking.

I delivered both your letters last year to Mr. Ross. He is now in extensive business, the partner & friend of Mr. Robt Morris the financier of the United States. He bears moreover an excellent character for integrity and benevolence. I believe he is worth not less than £15,000 sterling, and perhaps much more.

26 Lady Jane Leslie (see Note 9 above) had married John Wishart Belsches in 1775.
27 A.L.S. owned by George Scott-Moncrieff, Edinburgh; transcript kindly furnished by Francis L. Berkeley, Jr. Hogg's letter here acknowledged has not been found.
28 Probably John Ross (1729-1800), who emigrated from Scotland in 1763, became a Philadelphia merchant and shipowner of extensive interests, and made large purchases for the Continental Army, advancing his own funds to the point where he became financially embarrassed. Historical Catalogue of the St. Andrew's Society of Philadelphia, 1749-1937 (Philadelphia, 1907-1937), I, 311.
Before this time I presume you have seen the Revd: Dr Wether- 
spoon. Your good friend and my father in law Mr Stockton died 
three years ago of a cancer in his neck. He breathed his last in strong 
confidence of a happy immortality. His last words to his Brother in 
law who stood by his bedside were “I have plead many causes (said 
h) in the course of my life, but I have been paid for them. But my 
redeemer has undertaken to plead my cause without money & with- 
out price—And O! how transporting the thought!—my redeemer is 
not only my Advocate—but my Judge likewise—this ensures my 
success at his bar.”

My dear Mrs Rush joins in best compliments to Mrs. Hogg, and 
the young ladies with my Dear Sir your affectionate friend, and 
humble servant

Benjn Rush

Addressed: Mr. Thomas Hogg Mercht: in Edinburgh

To Mary or Susan Stockton

Philadelphia, July 30, 1784

My Dear Sister:

From the laudable passion you have lately discovered for natural 
knowledge, I conceive that I cannot entertain you better than by

29 John Witherspoon traveled this year in England and Scotland on an unsuccessful fund-
raising mission for the college at Princeton.

30 Original not found; text from the Daily National Intelligencer (Washington, D. C.), June 
21, 1819. David C. Mears of the Library of Congress kindly called my attention to this char-
acteristic specimen of Rush’s epistolary style, which is at the same time the fullest account 
available of an important and not-too-well-known episode in American ballooning history. The 
recipient of the letter was clearly one or the other of Mrs. Rush’s younger sisters, rather than
one of Rush’s own sisters. Familiarly known as Polly and Sukey Stockton, Mrs. Rush’s sisters 
were twins, and Rush was fond of them both.

In the newspaper the following editorial note precedes the text, indicating that the letter 
had first appeared in a Pittsburgh paper:

“The following letter from Doctor Rush to a relation in New-Jersey, may serve to amuse 
for the moment. Twenty-nine years have made astonishing alterations, no doubt, to the beau 
monde of Philadelphia. The ascension of a balloon would scarcely cause the same sensations 
now as those described by the learned Doctor; such ungentleel wonder and curiosity would 
certainly be scouted from all polished circles as a vulgar bore. Chemistry and Natural Philos-
ophy have made such rapid strides in the last few years, that scarcely any thing surprises now;
the boast of Archimedes is no longer considered as a gasconnade. The ocean will shortly be 
navigated without sails; mail stages will be propelled by steam engines, and the lately invented 
Velocipede will knock up the profits of the livery stable.

“We are indebted to our friends at Morganza [the home of the Morgan family, formerly of 
Princeton and old friends of the Stocktons] for this letter.—Pittsburg Gazette.”
giving you a history of the Air Balloon that was exhibited in this city last Saturday.\footnote{Actually the Saturday before last, since the ascension Rush describes occurred on July 17, 1784. The promoter was “the ingenious Mr. [Peter A.] Carnes” of Bladensburg, Md., whose hot-air balloon had carried aloft a thirteen-year-old boy named Edward Warren near Baltimore on June 24—the first instance of human ascension into the air in the United States. Jeremiah Milbank, The First Century of Flight in America (Princeton, 1943), 21-23. For a year or more there had been the most intense interest in ballooning, both in Europe and America, as a result of the successful experiments of the Montgolfier brothers and other French aeronauts. In a letter from Passy dated Dec. 26, 1783, Benjamin Franklin sent Rush a detailed printed account of the new invention. A.L.S., Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Geneva, Switzerland; photostat in Personal Miscellany, Franklin, Ac. 6367, Library of Congress (LC). Rush transmitted the letter and its enclosure to the American Philosophical Society at a meeting held on Mar. 19, 1784. The Society ordered the letter “and translations of the most interesting parts of the treatise” published. Early Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society . . . from 1744 to 1838 (Philadelphia, 1884), 124. This was done in the Pennsylvania Packet, June 29, 1784, and was accompanied by a public appeal for funds to support a large “subscription balloon” as proposed by Dr. John Morgan at a meeting of the Society on June 11. Ibid., 126; Pennsylvania Packet, June 29; Pennsylvania Gazette, June 30, 1784; see also Julian P. Boyd, ed., The Papers of Thomas Jefferson (Princeton, 1950—), VII, 134-137, 246-247. The signers of this appeal included, along with Rush, the intellectual elite of Philadelphia—physicians, lawyers, clergy, the faculty of the University, and sundry “philosophical” merchants and political leaders. At this point, evidently, the news of Peter Carnes’ experiments in Maryland became known, and the Philadelphians’ plans were temporarily suspended.}

Its size was 30 feet in diameter, and of course 90 feet in circumference. It was made of oiled silk of different colors, which gave it an agreeable appearance. It was filled with (not inflammable) but rarified air, which was obtained from billets of wood placed in a kind of open stove in the bottom of the balloon. To the bottom of the balloon was suspended a stool, on which the man sat who had consented to go up with it. At 6 o’clock in the evening, in the presence of near 10,000 spectators of all classes, and ages, all gaping with impatience to see the new phenomenon, the balloon was let loose from its place of confinement in the work house yard. Instead of rising perpendicularly it took an oblique direction, which threw it against the work house wall with so much force as to tear the cords which suspended the man. I was so near the wall as to get a full view of the poor fellow just before he fell. Every hair on his head stood on end. His countenance expressed not fear or terror, but emotions far beyond both—it expressed the last degree of horror and despair. I can never forget it, and can form no idea of any thing like it, but by bringing to mind the anguish of a man just entering into the regions of eternal misery. The balloon did not stop long at the wall; it rose gradually above it,
and passed in silent majesty over my head. I stood in a lot near the work house, where there were a great number of women and children. The effect of the sight upon the latter was very remarkable; most of them cried—some of them screamed out, and one of them was nearly thrown into convulsions. I was not surprised at this scene; for I had long adopted Mr. Burke’s idea, that sublime sights were always accompanied with terror, and a sight more truly sublime than this balloon I never saw in my life.

Its size, its motion, which was slow and majestic—the fire within it—and, above all, the novelty of seeing such a huge body advancing, as if by a power inherent in itself, through the regions of the air, all conspired to fill every mind with sensations that were new, solemn, and delightful. It advanced with the wind northward upwards of 600 feet, where it probably met with a new current of air, and was brought backward and southward, but still ascending, it rose above 1000 feet from the ground. Here it appeared stationary, and so small as to resemble a barrel in size. While every eye was fixed upon it, and a dead silence prevailed through the vast multitude that crowded to view it, suddenly it caught fire. Here the majesty and terror of the scene was encreased; so great a body in flames, at such a stupendous height from the earth, was a sight beyond description awful and interesting. To those spectators who were at a distance, and who supposed that the man whose fall I mentioned was still in the balloon, the sight was distressing and agitating in the highest degree; when the stove fell, which it did in a straight line, and with great velocity, while hundreds cried out “there goes the poor man—Oh he's dead! he's dead.” The fragments of the balloon fell gradually, and were scattered all over the city lots. From the time of its rising till its fall, was exactly four minutes; but, from the number and variety of ideas that passed through the mind in that time, those few minutes seemed to many people to be half an hour. Every body came away pleased and satisfied.

The miraculous deliverance of the serial navigator has furnished the advocates of this new species of navigation with a new argument in favor of balloons. They say, that Providence intends them for great and useful purposes, and hence he interposed to save the young adventurer’s life, lest his death should put a check to the enquiry and experiment upon this new and important discovery.
A gentleman told Mr. Kairns, (the owner of the balloon) next day, that he hoped no man would venture up in a balloon again; 'Why not, sir?' said he; 'Because it caught fire,' said the gentleman; then, said Mr. Kairns, 'I hope no man will ever sleep in a house again;' 'Why not?' said the gentleman, 'Because (said Mr. Kairns) there was a house burnt last night in Second street'—which was really the case.  

Philosophy, curiosity, and even wit and humor, are all at work in our city upon the subject of balloons. There is little else talked of—they furnish metaphors, similes and hyperboles, upon all subjects. Some people expect a new era in politics, war and commerce, from these balloons, while others treat them as an invention calculated only to amuse gimcracks in philosophy, and to terrify children.  

Your's affectionately,

BENJ. RUSH

TO WILLIAM PETERKIN

Sir

Since my letter to you dated the evening after I received yours, I have read your pamphlet & Sermons, and have no difficulty in

32 A brief account of the ascension in the Pennsylvania Gazette for July 21 adds little to Rush's narrative except the correct form of the unlucky owner's name and the somewhat amusing circumstance that whereas the balloon had ascended from "the New Work-house," the stove or furnace for heating the air with which it was inflated had fallen near "the New Play-house." A long communication signed "A.B.C." in the same paper for July 28 states that although Carnes' privately financed exhibition had suspended the plan for a subscription balloon and had been far from successful, it should by rights spur Philadelphians to greater efforts in ballooning. Carnes' balloon, which was of "too flimsy a texture" and "clogged with a quantity of bed-tick, a great number of patches and other incumbrances, and having many holes," was manifestly unsafe for human travel in the air. If the promoter had had sufficient funds, his equipment would have been more adequate. "A.B.C." assures the public that the "undertakers" of the subscription balloon intend to go ahead and that they will "construct their aerostatic machine on a scale befitting the metropolis of one of the first states in the union, for wealth, commerce, literature and importance." They propose a balloon twice as large as that of Carnes, made of the very best materials, and reinforced by a protective netting. For reasons unknown, this appeal, which was as sensible as it was eloquent, led to nothing, and there were no successful flights and very little "aerostatic" experimentation in the United States until January, 1793, when Jean-Pierre Blanchard made his celebrated aerial voyage from Philadelphia to Woodbury, N. J. Rush wrote a highly interesting description of Blanchard's feat, which will be found in his Letters, II, 627-628.

33 A.L.S., Adams Manuscript Trust, Boston; transcript kindly furnished by Stephen T. Riley. Just why the letter is now among John Adams' papers is not clear. Adams became the
asuring you that your principles both political & religious will make you very acceptable to the people of Pennsylvania.

I have mentioned your name to a gentleman in Yorktown (thirty miles from Carlisle) who says that a comfortable living may be afforded to you between a small congregation in that Village, & a larger One at a place called Hopewell 12 miles from Yorktown. In these Congregations you will have agreeable Society—and extensive opportunities of doing good. You may live in affluence on a farm on which you may improve your fortune. Your salary, which will probably be about £90.00 Sterling a year will be sufficient to maintain your family. If this Settlement should not please you, you may have your Choice of twenty Others in the State of Pennsylvania.

The life of a Clergyman in Pennsylvania is respectable, and agreeable, especially if his manners are accommodating, and his life exemplary. Your opportunities of doing good in this Country will be very great. A man of an active mind, with good principles may form the fashion of thinking of a whole county. The human mind here is like soft clay. It has as yet received but few impressions but what are derived from nature. Our love of liberty is the effect of instinct rather than of education. Religion & Science will have no prejudices or errors to encounter among us. You may cast us into any mould you please.

The Accts. that are published in your papers of our factions & riots are invented in London, & are calculated only to check the Spirit of emigration.³⁴ When we consider the infancy of our Governments, & the sudden dissolution of an Army of 10,000 men, we are astonished to find so much Order prevailing among us. All our felonies are perpetrated by [manuscript torn] chiefly from Britain & Ireland. The [manuscript torn] law governs more in the Un[ited States] than in any Other Spot of the World. Europe resembles an

³⁴ Americans had frequent cause to complain of distorted and prejudiced reports on affairs in the United States as printed in English newspapers at this period. For example, see a communication by Jefferson to the Gazette de Leyde on this precise topic at this very time, Papers of Thomas Jefferson, VII, 540–543.
old garment that has been turned. The habits of your people forbid every Species of improvement in human happiness. In America everything is new & yeilding. Here genius and benevolence may have full Scope. Here the benefactor of mankind may realize all his Schemes.

I have only room to add that it will afford me great pleasure to take you by the hand upon your arrival in Philada.—With great respect I am Sir Yours &c

BENJN RUSH

Addressed: To the Revd Mr. William Peterkin at Dowen Banff-shire North Britain

TO RICHARD PRICE

Philadelphia, Feb. 14th, 1787.

Dear Sir,

In transmitting an account to you of the progress of order, government, and knowledge in America, I consider myself as discharging a small part of that immense debt which every citizen of the United States owes to your labours and zeal in promoting their interest and happiness.

I feel great pleasure in informing you that the insurrections in Massachusetts Bay are in a fair way of being terminated in favour of the government of that state. The decision and publick spirit which have actuated the councils, and arms of those ancient republicans, I hope, will satisfy the world that the forms of Government we have chosen, are agreeable to us, and that we are as ready to risk our lives in defence of them, as we were formerly in support of our liberties and independence.

I am happy in informing you further, that the old dispute between Pennsylvania and Connecticut about territory, is at last happily adjusted without the effusion of blood. The claimants under Connecticut have peaceably submitted to the Government of Pennsylvania, and have accepted of their share of the power and offices of

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85 Original not found; text from the London Morning Chronicle, Apr. 23, 1787, to which Price must have sent his friend's optimistic account of American affairs and "the progress of literature in Pennsylvania." I am indebted to J. Bennett Nolan of Reading, Pa., for calling my attention to this hitherto overlooked letter.
the State. This fortunate event can be ascribed to nothing else but
the magnanimity of our Legislature in nobly cancelling the memory
of past insults and injuries, by an act of lenity and forgiveness which
has suddenly changed ancient enemies into friends and brethren.

A convention composed of deputies from most of the States, is to
set in this city on the 10th of next May, for on [sic] the purpose of
divising a method of strengthening the federal Government. It will
be composed of the most respectable characters in the United States.
General Washington will probably preside in it, for his name is the
first of the deputies appointed by Virginia.

I have frequently observed in my letters, that the minds of the
Americans are at present in a yielding state, and that they readily
adopt plans of every kind that are calculated to promote their hap-
piness. As a proof of this, I beg leave to inform you, that our Legis-
lature, at their last session, have adopted part of the plan for the
establishment of schools in Pennsylvania, which I inclosed to you
last year.36 They have granted a charter and 10,000 acres of land to a
college in Lancaster (66 miles from Philadelphia) for the benefit of the
Germans, who, from the prejudices of country or language, have
hitherto neglected (except in this city) to unite with their English
fellow citizens in any literary institution. This college is to become an
additional vehicle of the name of Dr. Franklin to future generations.
He has given it a very handsome endowment. The Germans are
much pleased with it, and from the zeal and liberality with which
they promote every thing, which is connected with the advancement
of their religion, I have no doubt but it will, in a few years, rival in
funds and reputation, the oldest colleges in America. Our Legislature
has likewise established and endowed an academy at Pittsburgh,
above 300 miles from this city. These institutions are absolutely
necessary to prepare the State for the FREE SCHOOLS, which I con-
sider a very important part of the plan that I proposed in the
pamphlet. Should it please God to spare my life a few years longer,
I shall not despair of seeing the whole plan carried into execution.

In this account of the progress of literature in Pennsylvania, I
must not forget to add, that Dickinson College has revived under the

36 For Rush's Plan for the Establishment of Public Schools . . . (Philadelphia, 1784), see his
letter to Price of Apr. 22, 1786, Letters, I, 386, 387. The Plan is reprinted as the first of Rush's
Essays, Literary, Moral & Philosophical (Philadelphia, 1798).
patronage of Dr. Nisbet, who has recovered his health, and that a
class of near 20 young gentlemen are to graduate in the arts there
next spring.

The spot on which this College stands was a wilderness thirty-
three years ago. How delightful to behold the first fruits of science,
in a place inhabited so lately by Indians, or beasts of prey!

A College of Physicians has lately been established in this city,
whose objects chiefly will be the advancement of medicine by the
publication of facts and enquiries, in the manner that is practised by
the medical societies in Great Britain.

A society has likewise been established among us for "political
enquiries." The objects of this society are the advancement of the
science of Government, and the promotion of human happiness. It is
conducted in the manner of the Philosophical Societies in Europe; we
expect to publish our communications annually, and thereby preserve
in volumes many valuable essays, which might perish in news-
papers.—The venerable Dr. Franklin is President of the society.

With great respect, I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Your devoted friend,

And humble servant,

BENJAMIN RUSH

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Dear Sir/

A worthy friend of mine, & formerly my pupil Dr Rodgers has
lately removed from our city to New York. Permit me to solicit a
small share of your extensive influence in his favor. I do not expect
that former medical connections should be given up to serve him. It
will be eno' from you—if when his name is mentioned in company
you bear a testimony from his old preceptor that he is a gentleman of
solid abilities—great industry—and extensive information in his pro-
fession. His principles as a man are pure, and his conduct in every

1954 FURTHER LETTERS OF BENJAMIN RUSH 29

27 A.L.S., Hamilton Papers, LC. The letter is interesting because it shows that Rush and
Hamilton were on friendly terms prior to the latter's launching of his financial program as
Secretary of the Treasury—a program Rush deplored in the strongest terms (e.g., in his letter
to Fitzsimons, which follows). After Rush broke with the Federalists, primarily on account of
Hamilton's policies, Hamilton as a trustee of Columbia College struck back at Rush by block-
ing his appointment to the Columbia medical faculty. See Rush's letters to John R. B. Rodgers
(the physician here introduced to Hamilton) in October-November, 1797, Letters, II, 794–795.
respect irreproachable.—In my opinion he will be an acquisition to your city.

The bearer of this letter Mr. Tench Coxe is a moving [library lined out] common place book of knowledge with respect to the politicks of Pennsylvania. His appointment has subjected him to some newspaper attacks.—They came from men who have in vain attempted to supplant him in the esteem of his fellow-citizens. The antifederalists have subscribed to his promotion—for in all his publications, he has treated them with moderation & liberality.—From a long & intimate knowledge of him I can affirm that his integrity, as far as I have observed, is equal to his talents as a politician.—We have too few such men—in Pennsylvania.

With great respect I am Dr Sir yours sincerely

Benjn Rush

Philada. January 5th 1789.

To Thomas Fitzsimons

Philadelphia Feb 19 1790.

Dear Sir,

While you condemn the legislator in Mr Madison, I will admire in him the honest man. I have ever thought that the heart is a better sentinel of what is just than the head—and I would as soon believe

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38 The full story of the checkered career of Tench Coxe, political adviser in turn to Federalist and Republican leaders, remains to be told. He was appointed assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury in 1790, but soon fell out with Hamilton.

39 Original not located; text from transcript in Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library. This letter may never have been sent, for George Bancroft's copy was made from the original among Rush's papers, and the same original (described as an A.L.S.) was sold in the Biddle sale in 1943. See Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., The Alexander Biddle Papers... (New York, 1943), Part Two, lot 234. On the other hand, Rush sometimes retained signed drafts and duplicates of important letters, so the evidence on this point is not conclusive. The letter is significant in its revelation of Rush's bitterness over Secretary Hamilton's plan for funding the old debt of the United States at par—a boon to speculators and an injustice to the Revolutionary soldiers and other creditors who had sold their certificates at heavy discounts. Fitzsimons, a member of the Pennsylvania delegation in the House of Representatives, strongly supported Hamilton's plan. Rush thought James Madison's proposal to discriminate between original and present holders—paying the former in full and the latter only the highest market price—was the only fair way to proceed; and the failure of that proposal in Congress (February, 1790) converted Rush from a Federalist to an opposition man. See his Letters, I, 538-544, 569.
in the grossest absurdity in Gulliver's travels, as admit any thing to be impracticable in legislation that is perfectly just. The Abbe Raynall in complaining that Americus deprived Columbus of the honor of having a continent called by his name, remarks that it was a fatal presage that America was to be the theatre of future acts of injustice. Your funding system is to be one of them, and however much it may be gilded by the splendid and imposing names of honorable policy &c it will rank hereafter with the murder of the innocent inhabitants of South America by the Spaniards—with the slavery of the Africans by our Southern States, and with the ravages committed by Great Britain upon property and life in America during the late war.—All these acts had their Secretaries to propose and defend them and they were all advocated upon the principle of policy—necessity—or national honor.—But they have all left a stain upon our country and upon human nature.

I feel so much hurt at the indignity done by your proposed act, to justice and humanity, that I now wish that I had never consented to any one act of the revolution.—Passive submission to Great Britain would have been sublime virtue compared with the adoption of the Secretary's report.

Mr Wilcox objects to that part of Mr Madison's motion which proposes to refund the original holder his losses upon his certificates. Three per cent he says to the purchaser would satisfy every body.

The universal cry here is to pay the present original holders six percent.

This is the last testimony I shall bear against your proposed system of honorable fraud and oppression.

From Dr Sir yours sincerely,

BENJN. RUSH

TO AN UNIDENTIFIED CORRESPONDENT

My dear friend,

The disease certainly abates in every part of the town, except its skirts, where from the distance of the houses from each other, it cannot be so common or mortal as it has been in the more compact

40 Original not found; text from the American Clipper, June, 1935 (catalogue of American Autograph Shop, Merion, Pa.). Several obvious errors in transcription have been corrected by the present editor.
parts of the city.—The more general use of Bleeding & purging
(which the people now prescribe for themselves without, or contrary
to the advice of some of our Physicians,) has contributed very much
to lessen the mortality of the disorder. Business is reviving and the
countenances of our Citizens every where, are less gloomy than
formerly. One heavy rain of a day or two’s continuance, or three or
four nights of severe frost would probably so far destroy the con-
tagion of the fever as to make it safe for the citizens out of town to
return, but I think it probable that the disease will be kept up, from
carelessness or ignorance in some families during the months of
November & December. This was the case in 1762.

All our neighbour Cresson’s family 6 in number, are upon the
recovery, after having lost in all 220 ounces of blood. Rich: Wells,
Ben Morris, Christ: Sam Morris, Math: C[l]arksons—Sam Coates’s—Wm.
Hall’s and many—many other families who have used the
new remedies under my care with punctuality & fidelity are upon the
recovery, without the loss of a single person in them. This informa-
tion will illy comport with what you will hear when you come to
town—for I am accused at every corner of the Streets by our Bark43
& wine & cold Bath Doctors, of having filled our graveyards by
means of mercury & the lancet.

I was so well as to ride out yesterday, but I am yet very weak, and
as much worn down as ever you saw a continental horse in the
Spring of 1777.

Many—many thanks to you for the pears. They are very accept-
able.—From my dear Sir yours sincerely

Philada. Octo. 6th, 93

To David Daggett44

Dear Sir/

for by that friendly epithet, I will address a Man who has added
much to my happiness by communicating to me fresh proofs of the

41 Text reads “Cripin,” but this was James Cresson. See Rush’s Letters, II, 689.
42 A family name was probably omitted here by either Rush or the copyist.
43 Text reads “Bush,” but Rush’s medical adversaries opposed his “depleting” remedies for
yellow fever and prescribed instead a “stimulating” regimen of Peruvian bark (cinchona,
quinine) and wine.
44 A.L.S., Daggett Papers, Yale University Library. Daggett was a New Haven lawyer and
politician. DAB.
success of copious bleeding & purging in the yellow fever, at a time when I am suffering a second persecution from the Physicians of Philadelphia for the use of those remedies in the same disease.

My success this year is much greater than it was last; owing to my patients being so much better attended and nursed.

Out of near forty patients to whom I have been called since the 9th of June, and whom I saw on the first, or second day of the disease, I have lost only one, & she died only because her friends opposed bleeding at the time, & in the quantity I prescribed it.

I have lately bled a middle aged man 12 times in 6 days (four times in one day) and given nearly 150 grains of Calomel with the same quantity of Jalap—and ten grains of Gamboge, within the said six days. He lost upon an average twelve ounces of blood at each bleeding.—He is now well.

The remedies of copious bleeding & purging, are almost uniformly successful in the yellow fever which now prevails in Baltimore.

With great gratitude and respect, I am Dr Sir your sincere friend

Benjn Rush

Philadelphia Septemr: 17. 1794

To James Currie

Dear Sir/

All your friends shall command my services. Mr. Eddowes is entitled to every thing that friendship, and hospitality can bestow upon modest talents and virtue. He is pleased with our country, and I hope will be happy among us.

The United States continue to enjoy peace, liberty, and a most productive commerce.—The insurrection in the western counties of Pennsylvania has been completely subdued by the militia of the Country. The business was effected by gentleness, and persuasion, and not by the use of arms. How differently do mercenaries, directed by absolute monarchs, terminate rebellions! But here we are all members of one family, and have a common interest in the preservation of each others lives and honor.

45 A.L.S., Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, London. Prof. Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., of Dickinson College, kindly brought this letter to my attention.
The yellow fever made its appearance in our city in June, and prevailed until the month of October, but with very little mortality compared with last year—owing to the more general use of depleting remedies.—I have taken notes of it, & expect to publish an account of it next spring, together with some observations upon the proximate cause of fever, at which I have hinted only in my account of the yellow fever of 1793.

Since the 1st: of last January I have had four cases of internal dropsy of the brain, all of which have yielded to copious bloodletting. In one case seven bleedings were necessary to subdue the disease.—Two of the above cases were \textit{idiotic}, from falls—the others were \textit{symptomatic}—the effects of remitting & intermitting fevers.

Dr. Priestley was lately elected Professor [of] Chemistry in our University, but he [has] declined the appointment, owing to the influence of his family who are all happily settled in Northumberland in this state, and who cannot think of exchanging their delightful retirement for the tumult of a city life.

From Dear Sir yours sincerely, and affectionately

\textbf{Benjn Rush}

Philada: Novr 30th: 1794

\textit{Addressed:} Dr James Currie Physician in Liverpool Capt. Coxe

\textbf{To Alexander Hamilton}\textsuperscript{46}

Philadelphia Novr: 26. 1801

Dear Sir/

 Permit a whole family to mingle their tears with yours upon the late distressing event that has taken place in your family.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{46} A.L.S., Hamilton Papers, LC.

\textsuperscript{47} Philip Hamilton, a lad of twenty and eldest son of the statesman, was mortally wounded in a duel on Nov. 23, 1801. The following brief account of the affair appeared in the \textit{New-York Evening Post} for Nov. 24:

"On Friday evening last, young \textit{Hamilton} and young \textit{Price}, sitting in the same box with Mr. \textit{George I. Eacker}, began in levity a conversation respecting an oration delivered by the latter in July, and made use of some expressions respecting it, which were overheard by \textit{Eacker}, who asked \textit{Hamilton} to step into the lobby; \textit{Price} followed—here the expression, \textit{damned rascal}, was used by \textit{Eacker} to one of them, and a little scuffle ensued; but they soon adjourned to a public house:—an explanation was then demanded, which of them the offensive expression
It may perhaps help to soothe your grief when I add to that united expression of sympathy, that your son had made himself very dear to my family during his late visit to Philadelphia, by the most engaging deportment. His visits to us were daily, and after each of them he left us with fresh impressions of the correctness of his understanding and manners, and of the goodness of his disposition. To one of my children he has endeared himself by an act of friendship & benevolence that did great honor to his heart, and will be remembered with gratitude by Mrs Rush, and myself as long as we live. My son has preserved a record of it in an elegant and friendly letter which he received from him after his return to New York.\textsuperscript{48}

You do not weep alone. Many, many tears have been shed in our city upon your account.

It afforded your friends great consolation to hear of the pious manner in which your son closed the last hours of his life. God does not judge, nor condemn like man. There are no limits to his mercy.

My dear Mrs Rush joins in respectful sympathy with Mrs. Hamilton with Dr Sir yours sincerely

\textbf{BENJN: RUSH}

\textsuperscript{48} Though their fathers were on by no means cordial terms at this time, Philip Hamilton and Richard Rush, who were nearly of an age, were evidently close friends. Philip's letter has not been found.
Philadelphia Septemr 1st: 1804

Dear Sir/

Accept of my thanks for your letter and the pamphlet which accompanied it. Dr Fothergill had put the latter into my hands some months ago. The humane, just, and christian sentiments contained in it so warmed my heart to its Author, that it was my principal reason for believing the little fragment I lately sent you [wou]ld prove acceptable to you.

I am endeavouring to follow the advice you have given me. In reviewing my life I am often disposed to say with Westmorland in Shakespear substituting “hours” for “men” “O! that I now had but one ten thousand of those hours that did no work” in the early or unprofitable work in the middle of my life. Indeed, when I have heard persons complain of their time hanging heavily upon their hands, I have jocularly said “were it possible I would give them a dollar an hour for it.” I am busily employed at present in preparing a new edition of my medical works for the press. They will contain a retraction of some errors, and many additions which subsequent observations have suggested to me. They will be comprised in 4 octavo volumes.

 Permit me dear sir to call upon you in the same fervent and friendly language that you have addressed me. “Go on worthy friend. Let not an hour of your precious life be lost.” You are public property. Your talents and feelings are bonds of obligation to society. A few more blows aimed at that monster negro slavery must bring it to the ground. It totters in England, and of course in the British Dominions in the West Indies. Let it receive no quarter in the United States. I blush for human nature when I think of the conduct of a part of the Union upon this subject. Let the advocates for the late law in South Carolina for ever cease to pronounce the words liberty, & the rights of man!

 ADieu! my dear sir and beleive me very affectionately yours

Benjn: Rush

Addressed: Dr: William Thornton City of Washington favoured by Col: Burrows.

49 A.L.S., William Thornton Papers, LC. I am indebted to Mrs. Dorothy S. Eaton of the Library of Congress for bringing this letter to my attention. The pamphlet by the versatile Thornton here acknowledged by Rush was Political Economy: Founded in Justice and Humanity. In a Letter to a Friend (Washington, 1804), an antislavery tract. See Fiske Kimball’s excellent article on Thornton in DAB.
Philadelphia June 1st 1808.

Sir/

I have read your letter with great Attention, and although I cannot with you, ascribe the diseases induced by dentition exclusively to an acrid humor confined between the integuments which cover the teeth of Children, and their mouth enamel, yet I am disposed to believe that it is one of the causes of their diseases. As such your opinion is entitled to notice, and will I hope be applied to lessen one of the frequent sources of suffering in Children.—With best wishes for the success of your efforts to improve the important branch of medical science to which you have devoted yourself, I am sir very respectfully yours

Benjn: Rush

To John Quincy Adams

Philadelphia May 3rd 1810

Dear Sir

Innovators in all Sciences are uniformly disposed to propagate their opinions, whether they be true, or false. As one of their number, I wish to diffuse mine. They have found their way into several European Countries, but as yet I believe they are unknown in Russia. I send you therefore a copy of the third edition of my Medical Inquiries to be made public in any way you may think proper. Perhaps they may stand the best chance of becoming generally known, if presented to the prime minister of the Russian Court, or to the Emperor’s physician, or to the Emperor himself. The principal subjects of two of the volumes are in a great measure National. They relate to the prevention of pestilential diseases, and to the folly and incompetency of Quarantine Laws for that purpose. Of course they

50 A.L.S., University of Pennsylvania Library. Thomas R. Adams, curator of rare books, kindly brought this letter to my attention. It is valuable as a further bit of evidence on Rush’s understanding of the relationship between dental and other diseases. Medical historians have repeatedly pointed out that Rush’s description of focal infection, in an essay published in 1809, is a classic account of an important pathological phenomenon. See Nathan G. Goodman, Benjamin Rush, Physician and Citizen (Philadelphia, 1934), 235–237, and references in Goodman’s notes.

51 A.L.S., Adams Manuscript Trust, Boston.

52 Published at Philadelphia, 1809, in four volumes.
will require the aid and patronage of the Government to render them effectual and useful. I leave this business wholly to your management. You will please to accompany the volumes to whomsoever presented, with a note as from the Author. Had I not been assured that the opinions and advice contained in them had saved many lives, & did I not believe they are calculated to prevent the national as well as the individual evils of pestilential diseases, and of the inadequate and absurd means that have been generally opposed to them, I should not have given you the trouble of reading this letter, nor of the business which is connected with it.

My last letter from your venerable father is written in that cheerful and sprightly strain which leads to a belief that he and all his family are in good health.

From Dear Sir yours very respectfully, and sincerely

**Benjn Rush**

P.S. I need not suggest to you the propriety of the request contained in this letter being private. You know I live in an enemy's country.  

**To James Hamilton**

Philadelphia Augst: 7th: 1810

**Dear Sir/**

Agreeably to your request I set on foot an inquiry for a suitable person to fill the professorship of natural philosophy & chemistry lately established in our College. I soon learned that Mr. Ellicot had devoted himself only to astronomy, and from his age, I supposed him to be beyond that time of life in which men usually acquire a knowl-

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53 A reply from John Quincy Adams dated at St. Petersburg, Jan. 11, 1811, stated that the bearer of Rush's gift, a Mr. Hodge, had been captured by a Danish privateer, but that after no little difficulty Rush's letter and books had been forwarded from Norway. Adams gave the books to Count Romanzoff to be presented to the Tzar (Alexander I), and the Tzar had directed that a ring be presented to Rush "as a testimonial of his satisfaction." Letter-book copy in Adams Manuscript Trust.

54 A.L.S., Hamilton Collection, HSP. James Hamilton was a trustee of Dickinson College who lived in Carlisle. For more on the Aigster appointment and its aftermath, see the following letter.

55 Doubtless Andrew Ellicott (1754–1820), surveyor and mathematician, who became professor of mathematics at West Point in 1813. *DAB.*
I applied indirectly to a young man in this city of respectable acquirements in both the sciences we wish to be taught, but he declined becoming a candidate for the appointment, having he thinks better prospects in Philadelphia. By accident I heard that there was now at Harrisburg in our state a certain Dr Charles Fred: Aigster—a gentleman of an extensive European education, a native of Germany, but educated in France, and a man of a pure private character. He was represented to me as well informed in chemistry and natural knowledge of all kinds, and more disposed to cultivate and teach them, than to practice medicine. I employed a friend of his, to write to him to know whether he would accept of the chair lately established in our College, and to mention the salary annexed to it. He embraced the offer at once, and with an avidity that indicated zeal to fulfil the duties connected with it. The letter addressed to him found him preparing to give a course of lectures upon chemistry to the Citizens of Harrisburg, but with very slender expectations of collecting a class among them. He speaks the English language my friend informs me fluently & correctly. His letter to his friend proves that he writes it not only correctly, but with taste and elegance. He is a single man, and of course will live comfortably upon the salary appropriated to the professorship. Should the Trustees elect him—he will carry to our College a large mass of European learning of every kind, which cannot fail of adding to its usefulness & reputation. From his being a German, he may possibly excite an interest in the Germans of our state in favor of our College, or at least lessen their prejudices against it. His letter to his friend, breathes an ardor & enthusiasm in Science and benevolence that augur much in his favor. Suppose a letter should be addressed to him requesting his attendance at the College & that a conference be held with him by a Committee of the trustees and professors; or suppose a suitable person be sent to Harrisburg for that purpose. The latter measure will enable the trustees to discover more fully his present habits as to morals, conduct and principles, all of which should be perfectly known and approved [sic] before he is admitted to have any share in the business of educating the youth committed to our care.

I have once written to Mr Atwater upon the subject of purchasing a number of modern books for the use of our library. The British
poets & historians, and the many valuable works lately published
upon polite literature should be in the hands of all our students.
American editions of them may be had at a very moderate price of
the booksellers, and at vendues, much below their first cost. From
Dr Sir your friend & Colleague

Benjn: Rush

PS: I wish sincerely no public notice had been taken of my trifling
donation to the College in the late account of the exhibition of
Orators at the College. It abated very much the pleasure I should
have had in reading that account. Nay more—it distressed me. I beg
it may never be mentioned hereafter publicly nor privately.


To James Hamilton56

Philadelphia Septemr 1st. 1810.

Dear Sir/

I enclose you three certificates in favor of the literary, philosophi-
cal & moral character of Dr: Aigster. The Revd Dr Colin & Mr
Vaughan57 are well known I presume to many of the trustees. They
are good judges of men and merit. The friend who recommended Dr:
Aigster to Mr. Vaughan was his brother a gentleman of great worth
& high rank in the district of Maine. Mr Fischer is a clerk in one of
our public offices. He is a German of good education, and of a sober
moral character. Both Mr Vaughan & Mr: Fischer informed me that
Dr: Aigster was once proposed as a teacher in the French Baltimore
Academy, but was objected to only because he was protestant. After
these testimonials in his favor, there can be no risk in giving him the

56 A.L.S., Hamilton Collection, HSP. The appointment of Aigster proved a bad move in spite of all the testimonials assembled by Rush. The official history of Dickinson College states that Aigster was appointed professor of chemistry and natural philosophy in September, 1810, but that his services were “terminated in a somewhat spectacular fashion in the following May, by reason of his interference in the marital affairs of two residents of Carlisle, claiming the young lady for himself.” Jeremiah Atwater, president of the College, suggested to Rush that Aigster was deranged, adding that, though “it was not universally agreed that he was deranged, . . . it was considered that his usefulness was at an end.” James Henry Morgan, Dickinson College . . . (Carlisle, Pa., 1933), 187.

57 The Rev. Nicholas Collin, D.D., and John Vaughan, Philadelphians who were deeply interested in science and active in the American Philosophical Society.
contemplated appointment.—He is anxious for it, and I believe will count the days and hours 'till he receives it.

Considering the state of our funds,—what do you think of offering him something less than the sum voted by the trustees—for the first year? It cannot be expected we shall derive much advantage from his knowledge & talents until they are known, and this cannot be the case,—until after the first year of his labors among us.

I rejoice to hear of the encrease of students in our College. I hope the tuition money is always paid in advance. Unless this be done, our Professors will suffer. It is constantly demanded & paid at Princeton.

Let us not forget to cultivate English literature in our College. Even the writing of a fair and legible hand should not be overlooked in our system of education. The College at Princeton has lost character by neglecting it.

From Dear Sir your friend & fellow labourer

Benjn: Rush

PS: I expect the postage of this packet will be charged to the trustees.


To John Quincy Adams

Philadelphia Jany 15th 1812

Dear Sir

I communicated to Mr. Daschkoff sometime ago a packet addressed to Mr. Levett Harris in which I enclosed a letter to you acknowledging the receipt of an elegant ring transmitted to me through your hands from his imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia. I beg of you to convey to his Majesty through his Minister Count Romanzoff, the high and grateful sense I entertain of the

58 A.L.S., Adams Manuscript Trust, Boston. Adams acknowledged the present letter from St. Petersburg, June 15, 1812, saying he considered it “among the fortunate incidents of my life, to have had the opportunity of being on this occasion the medium of a communication, in the honourable intercourse between Genius and Greatness, between the labours of learning & Science, & the favours of Imperial Munificence.” Letter-book copy, Adams Manuscript Trust.

59 André Daschkoff was the Russian chargé d’affaires at Washington; Leavitt Harris was American consul at St. Petersburg.
honor done to me by his invaluable present. It shall be preserved, not as the reward of my labors, for they have not merited such a splendid mark of imperial favor, but as an inducement to continue my efforts to advance the Science of Medicine, and to lessen the sorrows of my fellow creatures.

I beg of you at the same time to accept of my thanks for your polite letter which accompanied the ring, and for your friendly conduct in every part of a transaction which has done so much honor to

Dear Sir

Your sincere & affectionate friend, and most obedient Servant

Benjn Rush

TO BENJAMIN RUSH FLOYD

Philadelphia, April 21, 1812.

My Dear Name-sake!—

Your father has conferred a name upon you which one of the dictionaries says is “proverbially worthless.” But [it] is possible for you to remove the ideas that are naturally associated with it, by your good conduct, in which respect I hope you will be more successful than I have been. May you be kept by a kind Providence from all the errors and follies that characterized my youth, and from the controversies and bitter persecutions that attended my middle life, and may your old age be blessed, as mine has hitherto been, with good health, a faithful wife, dutiful children, and a competency of the

60 Original not found; text from Niles’ Weekly Register, July 24, 1813. Nicholas B. Wainwright kindly called my attention to this characteristic letter, the printing of which was in some sense an obituary tribute to Rush, for it is preceded by the following explanation:

“To the editor of the Weekly Register.

“Sir—Convinced of the importance of the enclosed letter on the conduct and prospects of a beloved son, I thought the best deposit I could make of so rich a legacy for him, was to obtain a place for it in your truly American paper. To attempt to eulogize the character of its illustrious author, would be an undertaking far beyond my capacity. The simple story of gratitude may be told in a few plain words. To the friendship and skill of the immortal Doctor Rush, my little family owe the lives and health of both parents. An impulse of a mother’s heart prompted me to name a very promising child after the idolized friend of my husband.—Hearing of this circumstance, that truly benevolent and great man addressed the subjoined letter to my son. ‘He thus, though dead, does still befriend.’

“With much esteem I am, sir, your constant reader,

“LAETITIA FLOYD.

“Christiansburg, Va. July 7th, 1813.”
good things of this world. For the attainment of these blessings, permit me to advise you to begin in childhood, to honor and obey your parents, to learn your catechism, and to commit passages in the Bible to memory. As you advance in life, go constantly to a place of worship; avoid bad company, and be very attentive to your studies.

The less time you spend in fishing and hunting and other youthful amusements, the better. In reviewing my life, I have often felt pain in recollecting the many innocent birds I killed for mere sport, for I had flesh enough and of a better kind than theirs to eat at any time I pleased, both at home and the country school at which I passed my youth. I have been ashamed likewise, in recollecting how much time I wasted when a boy in playing cat and fives and steal-clothes, &c. &c. all of which consumed so many precious hours that might have been more profitably employed in getting my lessons, or reading instructing books.—In middle life avoid propagating new and unpopular opinions; but if you are impelled by a sense of duty to do so, never reply to any thing that may be said to your disadvantage upon the account of them, for scandal will die much sooner of itself than you can kill it. Live temperately, that is, eat sparingly of simple food, and avoid tasting spirituous liquors in every part of your life. To a conformity to this advice, I owe much of my present health, and pleasure in business and study, and probably the prolongation of my life. Adieu! my dear boy. May God bless you, and make you a comfort to your parents, and a blessing and ornament to society!

From your friend and name-sake,

Benjamin Rush

To John Quincy Adams

Philadelphia Novemr 13th 1812

Dear Sir

The passion so common among Authors, and Innovators of wishing to disseminate their opinions, still continues to actuate your old friend. Under the influence of this passion, I am again induced to transmit to you a copy of a Volume of Medical inquiries & observations upon the diseases of the mind. After reading it, if you think

61 A.L.S., Adams Manuscript Trust, Boston.
62 Rush's last and most enduringly influential work, published at Philadelphia, 1812; fifth edition, 1835.
it worth the time necessary for that purpose, you will please to pre-
sent it to the Imperial Academy of Sciences at Petersburg through
the hands of their President Mr. Wylie, and assure him at the same
time of the high Sense I entertain of the honor conferred upon me in
being elected a member of the Academy, the account of which was
communicated to me by him in an elegant latin letter. I have waited
only for the certificate of my election to acknowledge that honor in
an answer to Mr. Wylies letter.

I have this day received a long letter from your venerable father
written with all the original good sense and eloquence, that charac-
terised the effusions of his pen in the early and middle years of his life.

Health, Respect and Friendship! from Dear Sir your much obliged
and sincere friend

BENJN RUSH

Jacques Wylie, Scottish-born physician to Tzar Alexander I and author of medical
treatises, held numerous posts of dignity at the Russian court.