

Birmingham Feb^y 21. 1786

And do you, also, my dear Betsy! accept of my warmest acknowledgements for your affectionate letter of 2^d Aug. last — I too, feel my self happy in so agreeable a correspondent.

I shall begin my answer to yours with your paragraph towards its close — whenever you may read helence, you must begin at the last page, & read on backward as witches do when they say the Lord's prayer. — You seem to think, that you have duly attended to my Recipe of writing letters — not quite my dear — at first, your lines were too far apart, for a single half sheet, so that I had not my penny worth for my penny. — Seventeenthly & lastly; I said, two half sheets would be better than one — now, to exculpate you, I think you have done well, & thank you, for a little, as it is the readiest way to have more — but still one whole sheet would have done better — now, I know that you are so good a girl, as to wish an increase of virtue, so I doubt not of your speedy improvement in that virtue of obliging an affectionate parent; especially, as you need not be ashamed of such a performance as your half sheet, only, contains. Methinks, I hear you say, "why papa! if what I did write, gave you so much pleasure, perhaps you would have surfeited on a double quantity

quantity" — no, my dear! such pleasures never pale the mind; for it can bear ten times the quantity of such food as the stomach can of the most delicious viands.

I am much pleased to hear that your brother is with so good a man as Mr. Woodward is represented — I hope he will behave in such a manner as to merit his master's esteem.

Your request of me is to send you my picture — can I deny my Betsy any request? yes, my dear! I must refuse this, at present, & I believe you will not take it hard when I tell you, that your cousins Tommy & Peter (as well as Peggy) are geniuses at painting, & I will try their skill, & if it succeeds, you will have the double satisfaction, of having my picture, & having it done by such a youth, so nearly allied to you.

Now my dear! as to giants & dwarfs: I like your medium, & though you say, that you are not in the happy medium, yet you may comfort yourself that our atmosphere is high enough to give you room for expansion, as it is wide enough for the expansion of every virtuous exertion. About a month since, I saw in this town, a polish Count who was a dwarf of 3 ft 4 inches high, & weighed ~~4~~ 40 pounds, & was 17 years of age: he was well proportioned, well-bred, sensible, & had more understanding than both the giants possessed who were 8 ft high, & who were here before him — comfort yourself, that the greatest souls often inhabit very small,

small bodies.

The rage of balloons is pretty well over: their irregularity of their courses hath exposed many lives, by dropping the high flyers into the water, & brought them into disrepute — one very large one was made in England & sent to Russia, but the wisdom of the empress ordered it back immediately — the only successful successful ascendant was your dear son, Jeffries son, who crossed the English channel, but he was saved, almost by miracle. I have seen a paper one of above 3 ft diameter, which did not cost of, ascend in the night with a fire annexed to it, & I could trace it 15 miles — but they have been of great disservice, by wasting the time of many thousands of the poor who depended upon their daily labor for their daily bread. so, now I despair of seeing you in England, & must work up my imagination, to bring you often to the next chair to me, and converse with you, which I, not seldom, do — but however, my dear, write as often as you can, & do not wait for my answers. I can find, by your stile, that a literary correspondence is productive of great advantage to you as well as to me.

Your uncle, & cousins all, desire to be affectionately remembered to you, & no one wishes to you more health, happiness, & virtue, than your affectionate Papa or grand Papa

which you please

P.S. to fill up. — Spoken over the grave of Socrates, a favorite Cat.

Peter Mavor

1. What ravages the tyrant, Death,
Alas! amongst the human race?
And tyrant-like, makes every cat
His haughty triumphs grace!
2. See Socrates! the wild & good!
Renowned for his morals;
Him at his chariot wheels he drags
So to parade his laurels;
3. Tyrant! in vain thou dost fling
And made him bow the knee,
For, King, proud monarch, Socrates
Will live, even outlive thee.
4. Of old thy hamasaka firmly drank
Thy ampoison'd hemlock bowl;
Thus thou thy cruel fate didst meet
With fortitude of soul.
5. Linger! alas! thou bore without
The melancholy moan
Hunger & thirst could never extort
The piercing heart felt groan.

6. Was I a prisit of Rome, I would
Ten thousand maces say
And out of purgatory, slay
Thy noble soul, & may.
7. But stop, my Socrates! forgive,
For I am in a curious thought!
Thy life too faultless was to be
Thy virtue, thou art a bright
8. So free from every art
They had bequeathed to the power
Of either pope or devil.
9. A glorious of names, taught
Of souls the transmigration,
Of cats & birds, & fishes souls,
And souls of every nation.
10. If what he taught was doctrine true
At that time when he spoke it,
Socrates sure were he alive
Would scorn now to revoke it.

11. If so, my Socrates! sure then
Your virtues cannot fail
So favored with them, you were
Adorned from head to tail.
12. That you great soul inhabits now,
That noble royal form,
Which man himself admires, his
In praises, ever warm.
13. In Athens, forst, thou throned
Alas! amidst the various ills,
Thy generous heart, brave
And shadest thy brow with grace.
And when thou quittest that beautiful form
For one more transmigration,
O'er men thou doubtless wilt adorn
Thy destined royal station.
14. An empire thou wilt doubtless, bow
With homage, justly due
To him who will his subjects paths
With peace & plenty strew.

15. I fought my Socrates! thou hast not
The meekest blush to raise
Linger! no flatterer speaks, to his
Thy much lov'd, majestic praise.
16. The twenty sixth, that fatal day,
How oft shall I remember
Thy death! last day, the year's last month,
That gloomy month, December,
17. I was on that day when thou didst part
So dear a friend, & I
And each hath had his day.
18. Sleep on my Socrates! have rest,
A noble rest you have,
You are now safe from cruel dogs,
And yet more cruel men.

Miss Betty Mavor

Miss Betsy Oliver

in

Boston

1
Birmingham Oct.^r 9.th 1787

My dear! I'm doubtfull which is best
To let pen scrawl, or let it rest;
For as I wrote about month since,
Which makes a preter-perfect tense,
Why should I write in tense that's present,
Unless to try what Betsy says ont?

Your last was of eighteenth of July,
If not, then sure both I and you lie:

{ Oh shame! to make a lady lie!
Shame upon shame! Oh fie! Oh fie! }

Thus poets, to make out a jingle
Say words that make chaste ears to tingle.

But let me set the matter right,
And give the thing, the thing that's quite:

In stile mercantile, I have duly

Rec^d. yours, 18.th of July

Ult.^m of Ship Blank, Cap.ⁿ Blank

And give you many a thank, thank, thank

Your last I answer'd before I got it;
 To answer now, the thing is not it;
 But if unnotic'd it should pass
 Perhaps you'd cry, alas! alas!
 That grand-papa one word won't write me,
 For well he knows, one would delight me.
 Therefore, dear girl! you shall have one
 To sooth, or make a little fun.

'Tis true, it's scribbled out of season;
 Perhaps, with neither rhyme or reason!
 No matter! it will please my Bets,
 And keep off mulligrubs & frets;
 For disappointments, pesky things!
 They ladies fret, as well as kings;
 Then take it, take it as it goes!
 'Twill do in verse as well as prose.

Blank verse I thought would never hit.
 A lady's taste, no! not one bit!
 Blank verse, it's true, is more sublime,
 But then, a verse that's wrote in rhyme
 Is ter, ay twenty times much fitter
 To keep the muscles on the titter:

3

Like Squirrel in a cage of bells,
When cage turns quick the music swells;
It wakes attention to the sound,
As squirrel climbs & cage turns round;
There's not one tink our ears escape,
But all is giggle, stare, & gape.

So, without further introduction,
We come to lesson of instruction.

Speak out, my dear! a subject choose
To suit your ear, & suit my muse:
You're fond of scenes which are inviting,
And she, such scenes, too, takes delight in:
I'll try a beauteous scene to paint,
Although my colors are too faint;
The Leasowes then shall be my theme
Where pleasures, endles, ever teem.

Unlatch that gate; descend that bower;
And sit one quarter of an hour:

The pleasures of the scene there quaff,
They're pleasures that forbid the laugh:
Pleasures reign here without control
Which fill cool contemplation's bowl.

† The seat of Edward Horne Esq: 7 miles from Birmingham.

41.
Hark! how that rill murmurs along,
And murmurs in poetic song:
The umbrageous grove, the rocks, the hill,
Echo the music of the rill:
It winds, it glides, it disappears.

Thus life descends the vale of years;
And when it has had its fill of glee,
Howls to eternity's wide sea.

Now quit the grove, the path winds round
To where's a bench in open ground:
A lawn before; the velvet grass
Arrested by a sea of glass
So smooth, it shows the smallest feature
Boasted by nature's best-form'd creature;
Narcissus like, you grasp at bliss,
The phantom of eyes, you've lost your kiss.
Just emblem of earth's greatest pleasures,
Attempt to grasp, you lose your treasures.

Here opens to your view, Hales-Owen,
With farms around, the hinds at mowing:
With forges, mills of various sort,
Where trade & hunger both resort:
The rising spire, the chimnies smoking:
Old women & the frogs all croaking:

5.

The thumping hammers, chiming bells.
Chiming for joy, then toll for knells,
Present a scene of bustle, strife,
Which represents the toil of life —
But throw your eye on yon cap'd hills,
Then shut your ears 'gainst sound of mills,
Take in th' horizon's chearfull bound,
View Nature playing all around;
You'll find such pleasures fill your soul
That tend to happiness fair goal,
Such pleasures lead to that abode
Where true bliss dwells with nature's God.

I lead you next through many groves
Where songsters play their little loves:
No adder here the path manifests;
No venom'd insect here molests
Such as the busy life invade;
Secure, you, here, the path may tread.

Listen! I hear the murmuring vill!
The mind, with joy, its murmurs fill:
I hear it still, as on I pass;
Lo! there it peeps through matted grass:

6/
It waters all the vale around,
To fertilize the unseen ground.

Fair emblem of the good man's life!
He passes free from noise & strife;
Scarcely seen, the downward vale he treads,
But blessings round him ever spreads:
Distributes joy to every heart,

And heaven & he have each their part.

Step on! behold the piping Faun
O'er looking the far distant lawn;
On pedestal of roman glory,

There to record the roman story.

Pass on! the solitary glade,
Fair mixture gives of light & shade;
So difficult to trace with paint
Where Nature glows, & Art is faint.

Hark! hark! I hear the cascade roar!
Now let imagination soar,
Expand its wings, inhale a joy
Can not the ^{mind with} surfeit cloy.

{ Let's rest in this Alcove a while!
Each passing minute here beguile,
And give to Nature smile for smile. }

17
Behold those Trees with pendent boughs!
Imagination how they grouse!
Fast rooted in the ground they throng,
And view the current rowl along:
They view it, heedless, pass away,
Unmindfull of their own decay,
'Till Time's huge scythe shall cut them down,
And rob them of their fair renown.

Thus thoughtless man, in fortune's lap
First revels, then he takes his nap;
Regardless of his race around,
He sees them mix with common ground,
Unconscious of all that's past,
At last the scythe cuts down at last.

How that firm Rock resists the wave!
See it his harden'd forehead save!
Its adamantine sides it lashes,
And spends its force in harmless splashes;
The Rock its rapid force withstands,
As if it had rowld to distant lands:
It breaks its full united force,
And makes it foam, & turns its course.

83
Thus fares it with the virtuous soul,
Whose virtues vice aims to control;
With steady front defies the shock,
And firm as the intrepid rock
Turns the envenom'd arrow by,
And heedless, lets it harmless fly:
Th'uplifted javelin it defies,
And claims protection from the skies.

See! how the Cascade swells & pours?
Imagination adds, devours:
No! here, beneath our feet it passes,
And spends its strength among the grasses;
It waters, as it runs, the soil,
And rich, repays the laborer's toil;
Then, when its destin'd course is run,
Ocean absorbs it, for the sun,
By his rays to exhale it into rain
To fertilize the ground again.

To vice, with aid of human art,
When Heaven's designs it dares to thwart,
Displeas'd its aims are thus withstood;
Turns all to universal good.

We've lock'd quite grave, now let us smile!
Come Bets! I'll hand you o'er this style!
We'll then climb eager yon ascent,
And rest our selves when breath is spent.

We're seated now: the view how charming!
Below, you see the effects of farming;
There Nature glows in rich attire
To warm & set the soul on fire.

The silver firs close by your side
Are emblems fair of Britain's pride;
Whose Navies stretch from pole to pole,
And gladden the commercial soul.

Behold the various Mountains tower!
Grand emblems of almighty power!
See, how they erect their heads on high
To claim a kindred with the sky!
Then view those clouds descend, & hide
Their heads, to mortifie their pride.

There, the sharp Clent rears, too, his head
To mimic Egypt's pyramid;
In vain; but then its lofty shade
Doth Hagley's grand domain invade.

Hagley, the seat of the late great & good Lord Littleton, about 4 miles
from the Leasowes.

8. 10/
There Hagley's ruin'd tower overlooks
Sweet Hagley's groves, its walks & brooks:
Delightfull seat, whose owners' tastes
A paradise form'd out of a waste;
Whose rich & wide expansive soul
Of Nature compass'd the vast whole:
With Virtue's science so endued,
He taught & led the way to Good.

The Palace stands below yon Wood
Uprear'd by Littleton the good;
Simplex munditiis strikes the eye
And doth the critic's smart defy,

Behold the Obelisk aspire!
And Littleton's fine taste admire:
Beneath it, Theseus's temple stands
And points to variegated lands:
Though you can scarcely catch a view,
That peeps through foliage & sees you.

There Briery chapel towers on high,
To reach the regions of the sky:
Happy would every tenant's soul
Aim at the Demerits fair goal.

17
19.
That solitary hill now view;
To all the hills it bids adieu:
The Wrekin call'd, proud Shropshire's pride
Proverbial quite, whenever the tide
Of mirth & jollity spreads wide,
The last toast, when almost past speaking
Is, all our friends around the Wrekin.

He lifts his head the skies to meet,
And laughs at thunders at his feet.

Now, turn a little, here you'll see
Below, the antient Priory
Where Monks too frequently have sold
There Legends false for sterling gold.
Within it, now, inhabits one
Who life's best race hath almost run:
With toil at twelve pence a day worn;
And cloaths all tatter'd & forlorn;
You'd think his life a very curse:
But he thanks Heaven it is no worse.
Envy! ne'er grin at man of state,
But envy here, e'er it's too late.

Look down, my dear! & then you'll see
A Reef that peeps over that tree:

Beneath it dwells, & there doth reign
The owner of this fair domain:

Within, without, wherever you chance,
You see all taste & elegance:

Here's fill'd the hospitable bowl,

Fair emblem of the owner's soul:

It's threshold often have I tread,

Often have enter'd this abode;

Here, still, I ease my mind unbend,

And here enjoy my self & friends,

My dear! pause, if you can find leisure,
And not rub off the edge of pleasure:

Those cloud cap'd towers which we've seen,

And gorgeous palaces between,

Those temples, groves, & fair spread trees
Whose foliage trembles in the breeze,

Like visions baseless fabrick all

At Jinn's imperial nod shall fall:

When Nature's elements shall roar,

And Nature sweat at every pore,

They'll pass away & be no more:

At that tremendous ^{day}, you'll find

No wreck will then be left behind.

Now let's into the vale descend,
And from too serious thought unbind.

See, how the Lambkins sport & play!
Gambol & frisk the live-long day!
No troubles interrupt their joy,
All's innocence without alloy.

That generous Horse, see how he treads
And crops the herbage of the meads!
Plump, sleek, & fat, with flowing tail
Insects to lash who dare assail
His polish'd sides; enjoys his pasture,
And proudly boasts that Horn's his master.

Behold the female herd! who wade
The grass, embaw'd in the glade!
Their swelling udders never fail
To crown the milk-maid's brimming pail:
They here enjoy their nature's life,
Unconscious of the ungratefull knife.

What's that retires within yon shade?
That's Health's fair temple, where the maid
Whose charms inspire brute-man with dread
Whence by brutish passion led,

May safely there retire & save
 In Nature's cool refreshing wave:
 Like Venus then rise out again,
 And reign the goddess of the plain.

Still further on: where are we now?
 In Contemplation's shade below.

Hark! how the Linnæa chants his note!
 And warbles through his quivering throat:
Bullfinches, too, their music join
 And make the harmony divine.
 The rude gun, here, no ear alarms;
 The sweet Musicians fear no harms;
 They flit through wood, through grove & field
 And Providence their guardian shield.

See, on the left, that mantled pool!
 How smooth! how glassy! & how cool!

Turn to the right: behold that Cypripis!
 Bedeck'd, beneath, with shrubs & poppies;
 But not content in humble bed,
 It envies the aspiring head
 Of that tall Beach's reverend shade
 That keeps it humble in the glade.

17
15
That steepy hill, let's now ascend,
and bend our selves to Nature's bend.
The task though hard, let us not flinch,
We'll gain its summit, inch by inch.

Thus! when you travel Virtue's road,
In quest of James's fair, bright abode,
The task, though arduous ~~the~~ may ~~complain~~,
The prize rewards him for his pains.

Courage! the zigzag steps appear!
To banish all our panic fear:
Easier & easier still we go —
We've reached the Hill's tremendous brow.
Lo! there, the Vista, how it lengthens!
And Janey's various humors strengthen;
It's sides & arch with foliage grac'd,
With branch & shoot so interlac'd,
Uninterrupted here we talk;
Emblem of Academick walk
Where Grecian sages science taught,
Themselves with lore of science fraught.
No pebble here or straggling root
Endangers the incautious foot.

M^{rs} Shawstone, the former proprietor of these grounds.

The world, through branches you may peep,
And from the world a distance keep at.

But what is that, at further end,
Whither our shady course we bend?
Tis Shenstone's temple raised to Pan,
The Satyr: satire upon man;
The god of woods, who birds affrights,
And children scares out of their wits -
From hence the phrase, a panic fear,
Where danger never doth appear.

We'll now descend this steepy hill,
And tread the path of pleasure still;
It's foot we've reach'd - a moment pause
Let's scan the course of Nature's laws.
See, there! the verdurous grain aspires
Warm'd by the Sun's kind, genial fire;
Unconscious grows, on Nature's plan,
Destin'd for beast as well as man.
See, there! the cattle, various, tread
And crop the verdure of the mead:
Onward they crop, & never feel
The future edge of barbarous steel -

17

Then, when they are fatted, man devours
The joys of all these joyous hours.

Thus man, at ease, doth thoughtless riot,
And undisturb'd, plays on, in quiet,
Regardless of that keen hereafter
When crummed & fatted for the slaughter
He, too, will then enrich the soil
Where grows the grass, & cattle toil;
He'll feel the warmth of sun & dew,
And in his turn be eaten too.

Hence it is plain, that all men are
True Cannibals, as Wolf & Bear:

Not, for the Ladies, nor I deem

They eat not men, though men eat them.

Here Littleton had made his choice,
And this seat meets the applause & voice.

At distance, there, a Cascade falls
And for your close attention calls;
It's almost hid by branching trees,
But yet it murmurs to the breeze;
And whilst o'er rocks it pours its thrum
It makes devotion of flame & burn:

181
8. 127.
Look all around! hills, dale, & grove
The soul to inspiration move.

Well onward move, a little lower,
Onward, to that delightful Bower
Sacred to Virgil, call'd his grove;
Scene for reflection, or for Love.

Here might the chaste soul'd Mantuan.
Indulge his chaste poetic strain;
The trees, slopes, murmurs, shades, & views
Unite to animate his Muse.

Now cross the Rill o'er this arch'd bridg
And cautious, tread on that dark ridge;
I'll lead you to health's fountain, where
You may cast off all ills & care.

This mineral spring heals every pain
For man which Nature doth ordain;
A mistress kind, both safe & sure,
She orders ills, but gives a cure.

What's that behind? 'Tis Venus fair
With polish'd limbs & auburn hair—
She's bathing in the lucid stream,
Nor doth one ray upon her gleam;

Will not disturb her — let's depart,
And let her love with joyous heart.
When none to hinder us are went — to
Let's do to others as we are done to.


We now must leave this sweet abode,
And pass the Root-house to the road —
Stoop down a little, never mind!
To stoop, will always please mankind.

Thus from the Root-house we are got out,
And here we are, just where we set out.

To journey's end we've fairly got;
And jogg'd in Hudibrastic trot;
Or if you chuse a serious gait,
In Sternhold's measure, eight & eight,
Which you, on any Sunday noon
May sing in — the — old — hundredth — tune.

I've trotted you a three-mile course,
Which oft hath broke the wind of horse —
I fancy now, we both wish rest;
Twixt you & I, I think it best:
Well therefore Pegasus now stable,
Far to then jog to make him able:

Well, too, prepare for our own flight:
And so, my dear!—good night! good night!



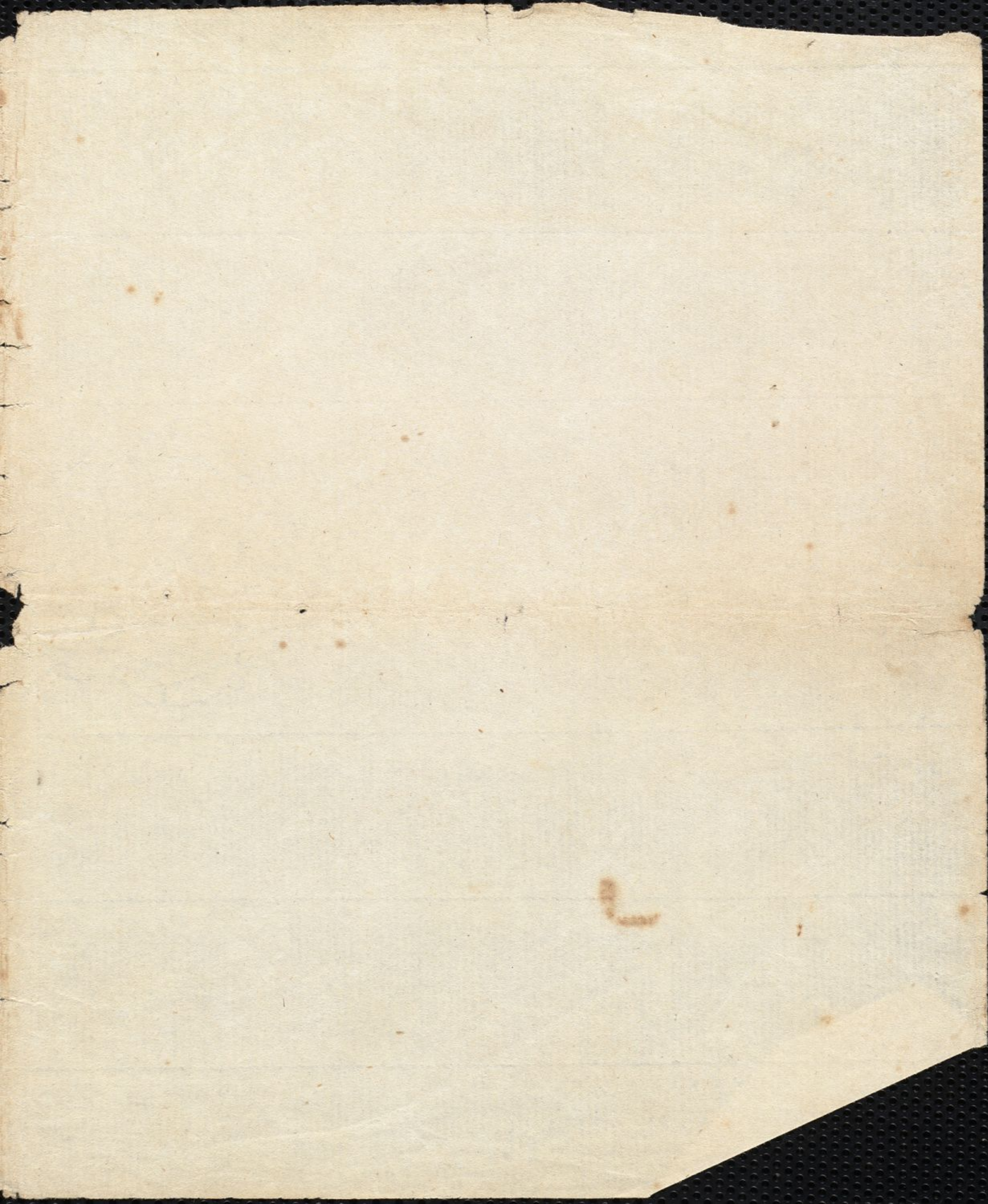
P. S. Your Letter of the 1st or rather 6th Aug^o 1766, I both, received & answered.

The Fireflies shine, to catch their prey when its dark.

New England was called so, not from the Similarity of surface or climate to this island, but because our ancestry went from Old England.

Tell Daniel I have rec^d. his of 26 July 1787 & that all his Letters ^{to his Cousins} are received. I expect another from him & shall ^{bring in} both together, as the conveyance now waits.

You see I have returned your poetry, for yours on M^{rs} W.



HMS O 16.3