

Birmingham August 29th 1787.

Your favor, Sir! of 30th June last, I lately received,
& catch at the first opportunity of answering it.

The Synopsis I have received, which do the you honor
I wish only to see your enlargement under each head, which
I suppose you intend favoring the public with.

Will you, in return, accept of a compilation which
filled up my leisure hours? — idleness I abhor as the accursed
root of vices; & I endeavor to keep the demon from entering
my doors — I began a compilation of an universal accentuating
dictionary of the proper names of persons of note who existed
in ancient & modern times, with their particular Ages,
ages, & deaths; together with all the places of note on the
globe, with their longitudes & latitudes, & the bigness of the
islands — this I began four or five years since, & have
finished about three quarters of it: for particular reasons
~~I broke off in the midst of the work, & compiled the~~ *Scripturae*
Lexicon which I now send — the first edition met with success
— the monthly Reviewers recommended it above its merits,
& the University of Oxford which had, ten or eleven years
since, conferred on me the honorary degree of Doctor of

Laws, did me the honor of accepting one of them, & ordered it to be deposited in the Bodleian Library: — this edition is less incomplete, & we will see my method in the advertisement prefixed to it — the first mentioned work is on this plan & will contain above fifty thousand names.

If our correspondence should subsist, it might be a piece of curiosity to compare notes by Taverniers's thermometer — we had, here, but two flights of snow since I wrote last to you, & they melted as fast as they descended; & they were on the 13th & 14th of April — we have large crops of hay & grain.

The situation of your province I know to be bad — ingratitude hath been its characteristic — what a revived energy of government may do, time alone must unfold; but as to the virtue of the people, I have lived long enough to know that virtue will not vegetate from the tap-root of licentiousness.

I readily accept of your excuse for the omission in writing of your worthy friend my amiable grand-daughter — I am not unacquainted with her tender feelings — tell the dear girl, that her filial gratitude cannot exceed the warmth of my parental affection; & although I make it a general rule not to urge a correspondence, yet I should have made her an exception to it, had not the short intimation of this conveyance prevented me — I am in daily expectations

of hearing from her, which she must know would give me pleasure.

Perhaps it may not be disagreeable to you to hear of some new phenomena in the natural world — a tar-spring, which I lately saw, hath burst forth at Coalbrook Dale in Shropshire, & runs about forty barrells p. Week — it is an exudation from the pit-coal, which perhaps hath been forming for centuries past; & its great reservoir is now overflowing, & perhaps will ere long be exhausted — it is of the consistence of thin tar, but almost they expect to make a varnish of it for some of — it is superior in quality to what they extract by artificial heat.

The other phenomenon, is a large cavern under Mass Tor hill, about a mile from great cavern in Derbyshire — it is a large area of water, & they have not yet fathomed it; & the height of it is invisible — this is the eighth wonder of Derbyshire; but I should not wonder, if, upon searching after mines, they should find a world of wonders.

Let my two girls know, that I hope to visit them about a fortnight hence.

My paper leaves me room only to inform you, that I am

Your friend & humble servant

J. Waterhouse

Peter Oliver

H. M. 2. 16. 2



Dr.
Benjamin Waterhouse
in
Boston

Birmingham July 15th 1788.

I am not certain, my dear Sir! whether I acknowledge the receipt of your last Synopsis; if I have not, I do it now.

The Scripture Lexicon, which I sent to you, I am glad met with your favorable acceptance: it was sent, only as a mark of my respect — you will doubtless find many more errors in it than I have corrected; my excuse is in the advertisement to it — be so good as to correct three errors in yours which I lately found out, viz. the words Lakum & Pis-ron, which ought to be Lak-um & Pi-son, ^{& Ex-or-cist.} — I publish'd it for the benefit of the readers of the Bible, & I trust, by my inserting the greek, that I shall be justified in the greatest part of the accentuations.


As to the other work, on the same plan, I am still compiling it; but I fear that you expect more from it than it will pay you — it will be but a Vade mecum: for instance, the Person you mention, Benevento Cellini, it will only say, an eminent statuary &c., the Age when he lived, his death & age — so for Boston, it will describe its situation, Latitude & Longitude; in short, it is on the plan of the Scripture Lexicon & consequently a work, sui generis, but if well executed, will be of some utility, & make a considerable quarto volume, at least.

The tar-spring I mentioned is black, & I believe is a bitumen sui generis, also — it decreased, from running forty barrells per week to four barrells; it now increases — about 80 or 90 years since, was found a stone near this place, which being pounded & boiled ^{in water,} afforded a scum of this consistence which was used as ~~was~~ a tar for the Severn boats; & the

British Oil, so called, is made from this scum.

Your account of the antient town, upon the Ohio, hath been entertaining not only to me but ^{to} several of my literary acquaintance - I am much obliged by it - we have no history to confirm any of our conjectures of its inhabitants - I have no doubt that America was settled by Tartars & perhaps by emigrants from other northern nations - The explorers of the straits of Humboldt hath opened a field of very probable conjecture - these straits might have been part of the continent formerly, but divided by earthquakes or volcanoes - be that as it may, they are not too wide at present to be passed by voyagers of necessity, or even of curiosity, & in small vessels too. - You hint, that they talk of settling on this spot - it surely argues an avaricious temper, or great poverty of mind, to rip up such a monument of antiquity, careless persecutions, for the sake of a field of corn or a few acres of grass, whilst so many millions of acres, equally fertile, remain in their original state of nature - but there are some of us rational beings whose souls are not more expansive than the soul of an oyster.

The bones of the animal, which you mention, argue either a very large species, or an individual of such a species, of an enormous size, as there are ^{such} individuals of other species which we our selves are acquainted with - in England, you are sensible, have been found bones like those of Elephants; it hath puzzled many of what animals they were the remains of, not considering that the Romans imported Elephants when they were in possession of this island; but I do not imagine that Romans ever explored the banks of the

Ohio. — I was in possession of one of the Vertebrae of a snake
dug up in Virginia from ten feet under ground; the head and
tail were much decayed, but the whole length extended 150 feet
& lay in this form , this bone of mine was about 6 inches
long & about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide — you have now no such reptile
— you ask me, whether the annihilation of a species would not be
striking a link out of the chain of universal existence? — my
opinion, my dear Sir! is, that in case earthquakes, volcanoes,
or still more devouring man, should strike out such a link,
the grand artificer could weld the next link below it to the
next above it, before the impending links, by their weight could
subside out of his reach — nay, that if our globe, one of the
small links of this mighty chain, was to be annihilated,
it would be no more missed from the innumerable worlds
which travel the infinity of space, than one grain of ~~bit's~~ sand
would be missed from ~~the~~ extensive bounds of oceans. — So,
Mankind hath formed Ideas of certain qualities, affections and
passions which we possess, & have ascribed similar ones to the
Deity, whereas we do not consider that the divine Being many
possesses many more attributes than we ascribe to him — if we
did, & would suffer our selves to be mortified at our finity, and
not elevate our ideas to those of his infinity; we should not
bewilder our selves in the shades of election, predestination
& some other doctrines which have terminated in so much
cruelty & bloodshed; but should act our proper parts, in
wondering & adoring.

I thank you for your accounts of the weather, but
am sorry I gave you so much trouble about them — I find
that we are sometimes as hot as you are, but not so cold.

I return my compliments of affectionate remembrance
to Judge Lee, in as full vigor as he sends his to me — you say,
he desires you to tell me that he hath grown old, sour, peevish,
unwieldy & unsociable — happy man! I congratulate him on
those fortuitous coincidences — his age gives him a fine
prospect of a second youth & a release from political convulsions
— Sour — let me see! — ay, acidity is absolutely necessary to
render the alkaline state of old age, palatable. — Peevish —
why it is ^{the} very thing that renders us, old fellows, noticeable
at all: if it was not for this noble quality, the true criterion
of a man & of a monkey, the world would regard us, ~~only~~ as
meer automata, & only look at us as they pass, as they do at
clocks, just to see what hour it is: — now, by this divine
quality we make them tremble, & convince them that tho'
dead, we yet live; & gain many a point that a moderate fool
can never reach to, for want of it. — Avaritious, he says —
better & better still, say I — pray how miserable would he be,
or any of us old fellows be, without this glorious virtue? —
nature hath pointed ^{it} out to us as an asylum: we do not
care a farthing for the world around us, & if we have a spark
of reason left, we must know that the world doth not care half
a farthing for us — now, this said avarice makes a part of this
same world put on the mask of expectation, which they can
go in behind, unseen to us; & it is so prettily printed that we can
entertain ourselves with its lively colors. — His last noble
quality seems to be unsociability — here he shines distinguished
— by this he keeps the stripling world, the beings of a day, at a
proper distance — he vindicates the dignity of man — he
retires within himself; & what can be dearer to a man than
his

his own dear self? — But you Sir! have turn'd the tables
& reversed the scene — you have changed my friend into a monkey
you have disrobed him of his dignity as man, & divested him
of every quality necessary to ease the burden of worn-out age — you
have done him an irreparable injury — cruelty in the abstract
& concrete too. — I beg that you would not ^{make} the discovery to him; it
will make him miserable.

I am glad to hear that you have resumed the profes-
sorship & retired to Cambridge, where I am persuaded you will be
much happier than in Boston, & perhaps have as much business
in it as if you resided there; & the business of both towns together,
with your professorship, may be sufficient for a family support,
with economy — as for a living beyond those bounds I trust you
do not aim at — if you do, you may depend upon being unhappy —
give me leave to mention one thing which breaks in upon family
economy, & which I have noticed in many instances, viz. evening company
it is expensive & disturbs the family system — an extensive acquaintance
of this sort, absolutely unqualifies a man for the more important duties
of life — my own avoiding it, here, has added much to domestic quiet &
satisfaction.

I find, by almost every account, that your continent is not
as yet, fixed on a firm basis, & perhaps will not be soon — one of
your own warm countrymen has confessed, that you have gained
independence & lost every thing else — as a commercial people,
I know that you have suffered greatly, & will suffer more —
I am glad that you are not ^{in that} line. — You say that my towns-
men repent — they will repent longer, & I am satisfied will
grow poorer & poorer — they knew not what they did.

Tell

Tell my dear Betsy, that I am sorry that she indulges
a diffident temper in writing to me, & that although I can
boast of a grand-daughter who can compose and write a
sensible, agreeable & affectionate letter; yet I would have her
retain so much of her diffidence as not to boast of it; herself.
I always, when I write to her, let my self down to her age; but
I would not have her, in writing to me, endeavour to raise
her self to my age; if she doth, she may perhaps, grow old
too fast.

I hope that you have received mine of the 29th Oct. last.
yours, of March 30th last, came to hand very
opportune - you seem to think that the difference of the two
statements indicates some iniquity - I know that there was,
as several persons put in claims above their real demands,
others where nothing was due, & others who owed to me. I
know mankind too well, & let me advise you to study them
before it is too late - let me tell you, that it is almost as
necessary to study them as one's self. - as to the affair of M^{rs}.
Labot, it stands thus - I owed her £200. with the interest -
you tell me that she hath given it to my daughter Olive
- I am extremely glad of it; & as to the method of her receiving
it, it must be by applying to M^r. Goddard who put in the
claim, to keep it up still, & receive the proportions which the
honesty of your government may permit to be paid - as
to recovering it here, it is determined here that no debts
can be recovered of absentees where the confiscated estates

exceeds in value the claims made upon it; & I have authenticated documents that my estate exceeded the claims upon it by some thousands; therefore I advise her to make a friend of M^r Goodale the executor, who is a worthy, honest man.

I am glad to hear of the wellfare of my friends & shall always be glad to receive the account of it under their own hands. As to my old servant Philip, I often think of him & respect him for his past services, & wish that he may pass through life under the protection of that Being whose tender mercies are over all his works.

Perhaps you will not be displeas'd to hear something particular of my late illness. — I told you that I trusted too much to a good constitution, & thought to wear off by it, an indisposition that hung about me for some time. I accordingly, when nature fail'd, took an emetic which did not operate — I found my pulse to intermit — I sent for a physician of note — he order'd to me to pour down old Madaira wine in quick succession — not having been us'd to above two glasses of wine in a day, I fear'd my head, but it operat'd through my whole system without injuring my head — my pulse presently recover'd its wonted regularity, & in the course of a week I drank eleven bottles of old Madaira, but chiefly through a spout-cup — I was advis'd to eat any meats I lik'd, which I did — my fever was very trifling — my vessels gradually recover'd their usual tone, & I am now writing this in a good state of health. — I eat
meat

meat suppers, but earlier than formerly, & drink 3 or 4 glasses
of Red Port wine with them, & find advantage from them. It
is agreed, that had I not always lived a temperate life untill
this attack, neither wine or medicine would have availed —
wine was the best medicine which I took.

Now, my dear Sir! let me smile at your hurry —
You tell me that Col. Watson wanted to see you on account of
his blindness. — Arrah, my dear joy! when you was after going
to see him, & he did not see you, what was he after saying to
you when he said nothing? it will very often happen so, now
& then; for my good friend Dermot M. Clavelin, who was bred
at Dublin College & who could neither read nor write, used to
say, when he was learning Latin, that he met with this observation
aliquando Homerus dormitat quando vigilat, & that he copied
it out to help his memory whenever he thought of it, when he
was thinking of nothing.

I ask your acceptance of a pair of buckles,
double plated with silver upon iron, which are stronger
than silver alone — also two pamphlets, on Arsenic & Tobacco.
D. Fowler is noted in the medical line. I wish to have your
public registerial almanac for 1788, & your last college Cata-
logue — I have desired Betsy to pay you for your expenses in
my affair. If you send at any time more than a letter, pray
direct to the care of D. John Jeffries, Rathbone Place, London.

I send you the composition of the Quinsy drops — I had it
as a secret from M. White of Plimouth — perhaps it is so still
among you. — No more; perhaps too much already from

D. Benj. Waterhouse

your faithful friend
Peter Oliver

Birmingham August 31st 1788

Your letter, my dear Sir!, of 18th June is before me, & am glad to hear of your receipt of mine by Cap^t Callahan, as I have no doubt that it gave to my friends great satisfaction in not having lost a correspondent who highly esteemed them — This, by the way, may serve to remind them, that they ought to improve their leisure moments in communicating a pleasure to one ^{who} is so fond of their correspondence, while opportunity lasts. — As for my dear Betsy, tell her she must not repine too much when she meets with misfortunes, but ever to bear in mind, that durable happiness, here, is not to be expected; for the lot of human nature was originally designed to be variegated, & that it is more salutary to be sometimes in the shade, than to be always basking in that sunshine which is very apt to tan the complexion of the mind.

I have wrote to you all, & Cap^t Scott, who sailed from Deal the 18th instant, but my letters were dated long before; the vessel being detained in London, I suppose for freight — I hope she will arrive safe, as I sent her the things which Betsy wrote for.

You inform me that your twins are one flesh,
Let

let me then advise you, both one, to observe such a
regimen of conduct as to prevent a modification's taking
the least hold, for the cortex is a nauseous medicine
to most palates, especially to young persons who have
been used to the delicacies of life. — Believe me, my
dear Sir! there is no person who interests himself
more for your ~~mutual~~ happiness than I do; & if it
was in my power to contribute to it, you would be in
^{no} danger of complaint — let me recommend it to you both,
always to be on your guard against the misfortunes
of life, of every kind, that you may repel them with
dignity of mind — this is both moral & christian philosophy
— *sat verbum sapienti.*

I am sorry that Col. Watson hath met with
no better success in couching — his age did not appear
to me a proper subject for the experiment — I sincerely
wish that no bad effect may ensue.

You give me an account of your new constitution,
& seem to depend much upon an energy in government.
— consider, one moment, that virtue is not the principle
on which it is founded — reflect, that the interest of
the different states are incompatible, & that new states
are forming, & that their interests will be different also.
— again, advert to the reservations of the late accession

of Virginia, & throw your eye over the opening field of contest
& pity their fate - Rome perished - Great Britain almost
sunk in the last century; & Holland verged towards ruin
very lately, & America will - will - but I forbear.

As to the ability & honesty of your present assembly
it will be much like the ~~parliaments~~. The maxim which
has been formerly adopted will probably prevail, vizth
that an assembly when it goes to serve his country, the
first year - the second, to serve himself; & the third
to serve the D - L. I have known some who have
began at the last. Politicks, as well as Law, are a
bottomless pit - avoid my dear Sir! going too near its
verge - I have known several of your profession who
have tumbled in; & if they do not, they soil the mind &
fill it with that rancour so inimical to public as well
as private peace.

Pray remember me to Mr. Bowdidge. - I
would not wish you ^{to} trouble yourself with any further
particular accounts of the weather - we differ greatly
here - at Highgate are several degrees odd, from this
place - nay, one mile from hence it is much colder
& hotter than it is here in town - last Jan. the lowest
was at 33°, the highest at 48°. - last June the highest
was at 71°. When I was in America, I thought it good
luck

luck to kill two birds with one stone. I lately made
an excursion into North Wales, where I killed three I
went to see my son who lives at Penrhyon on Acid.
of salt water bathing for two of his children who
were troubled with Yistulce lachrymales, & there met
with a cure. I went to get a little health for myself
- & I went to see one of the most curious countries which
exists on the globe; & I succeeded in all. - Tell Betsy, if
she had been with me she would have been quite wild
and would have fluttered like a Partridge, with
the two miles ups & three miles down, & precipices on
each side. If I should scribble out a sketch of my tour,
she or her cousin may possibly see it on some future
day. - I also went to Anglesea to see the greatest
copper mine, perhaps, in the world. - The vein is 80
yards wide - the ore is chiefly calcined by its own
sulphur, & the compound sulphur is so valuable as to
pay the charge of burning - a vitriolic acid water
passes through the calcined ore which runs into Vats
where they put thin plates of cast iron which collect
as much copper as they do from the ore - The neat
profits are above 80 thousands sterling & year - it is
a grand piece of scenery, both of nature & art.

I believe I shall not write to Betsy, this voyage,
but as you are now united, it amounts to the same
From your affectionate friend
D. B. Waterhouse. Peter Oliver

Birmingham March 6th 1789

I am obliged to you, my dear Sir! for your intelligent & entertaining letters of 20th Oct. & 15th Nov. last & I plume myself on having a distant correspondent, who hath something more to say to me than that he is my most humble servant - indeed, I have a few more of that class, from whom I derive great satisfaction, & am determined to enjoy while I may.

I am sorry, my dear Betsy is at such a loss to please herself in writing to me - her letter of the 29th October last must surely put her out of countenance whenever she may attempt a similar excuse - I was so much pleased with that letter, that I fear, if she should adopt any other mode, it would not please me, & that she will miss her aim in corresponding with her Grandpa. - I have already answered that letter.

I am glad you are pleased with how sleeping as new beginners, & hope it will last to the latest, when you are old beginners - Happiness is more in ^{our} power than most of us think it is. - We are generally fond of new things - for my own part, I am now writing to you in a suit of cloaths, which I have worn, pretty steadily, for nigh two years: if I liked it when it was new, I am better pleased with it at this season, as the more it is worn

worn & the nearer it approaches to the skeleton of the
leaf of a delicate plant, the more fond of it I am; for
its texture is such, that, without a microscope, I can
entertain my self by viewing its veins, arteries, and
ramifications of the finer vessels, even to the lacteals,
whenever I spill my cream upon it - & I should be still
more fond of it if it would last me to a later ear: for that
end I seldom insult it with the roughness of a brush;
& by that method, we keep up a friendly correspondence.
I am glad, we coincide in our opinions with respect to
the whiling away of time at eventides: it confirms that
maxim, invogued when I was a freshman of your
University, viz Boni ingenii junctura.

I rejoice to hear of Col. Watson's restoration to
his sight - I wish to know whether his ideas of you are
the same now he is restored to his sight as they were
when he saw you when he was blind?

You inform me that my other Betsey is about
entering the conjugal state - your news-papers inform me
that the die is cast - I am well acquainted with M^{rs}. Russel's
character - I have great confidence that her prudence will
not suffer an interruption in conjugal felicity - the odds
in age sounds a little awkward; but as he cannot lower
himself to her standard, nor she raise herself to his, I
suppose that consideration was well weighed before hand,
they must know that it is now too late to reconsider - what

strikes

me most, is, her entering into too dissipated a life, at her age, which, without great caution, relaxes the mind for the discharge of the more essential duties of life — I hope that the old friendships between my two Betsys will not be interrupted.

I am glad to hear that Betsy's mother hath been with you — I hope she is well.

You mention Philip & his much valued pipe I am glad he hath got an hobby-horse to ride upon; but as to his not parting with it for an hundred hard dollars, I think he is wrong; for if your register says true, he can purchase with them, 12,000 paper dollars; which, if bound, would make a fine library to amuse himself with during the remnant of his life — but what would he do then for his pipe? — ay, there is the rub.

I will inquire who Dr. Fowler is, & if he should be yours, I will deliver your message.

I like your philosophic idea about buckles & cloathing; but it will not answer in Birmingham — if we should turn our manufacturers adrift, the grass would grow where Troy-town stood — not far from hence lives a gentleman, of 80 years of age, who has never changed the cut of his cloaths from his youth up, & now wears his stockings rolled over his knees — I will not blame him. As your coat was made by your wife, it is better & better still, quoth he; & I have congratulated her

her upon ^{her} skills & economy.

A patrimania, as I term it, or an enthusiastic love of ones country, is a disorder similar to the small-pox, measles &c. which a man can suffer under but once in his life — if he doth not ^{die} in its progress, (as many do who have the confluent sort) the miasm in the mental fluid will occasion such a fermentation as cannot be removed, & the patient is every after unsusceptible of the like contagion. — I, myself, when about your age, caught the infection — upon the first complaint I took five grains of experientia docet — I thought the dose was so small as not to do any harm if it did no good — under its operation I began with making nails, & found that I could buy foreign nails at half price — I then tried horns, but from uncertainty of the climate, by frosts, I could not get enough to make an halter for my horse; besides rendering my soil a mere caput mortuum — I then turned to my flocks, & their fleeces furnished me with a suit of woollen cloaths, which cost me two dollars per yard, but could buy no finer ~~one~~ from abroad at one dollar per yard; & what was worse than all, I went to the council board on an election day clothed with patriotism & for my reward, was that moment dismissed from serving my country more — other experiments I tried under my disorder, & the success was similar. — Thus, like King Solomon, I went the round & found all to be but ^{the} vanity.

vanity - a gentleman, whom I know, took a larger dose
than I did, & steeped 23 acres of ^{hemp} reed in it: his turned out to
be the confluent sort, & it carried him off his legs. - You
mention sundry manufactures carrying on among you: I
doubt not that your country can make them, but it is not
very advantageous to make them, at double of what they may
be purchased for - nature never designed your climate for
all purposes - pot-ash, the cod & whale fishery & a few other
articles were designed for your staple - to go beyond, at
present, breaks in upon the navitor ultracrepidum - you
mention sail-cloth: there is an overtrusting bar to that, for
I remember when your province gave a large bounty upon
it - it was made good & strong as the Russia duck, but it
was so subject to mildew that it was soon quitted - but there
is one irrefragable answer, at present, to all these schemes
vizⁿ by asking this question, whether a manufacturer who
works at 11 p day can afford to sell his manufactures as cheap
as he who works at 6. p day? - This predicament is yours;
your people are emigrating: they always were so fond of
liberty that they chuse to be slaves to themselves at 2 p day
than to work for others at 11: they flock to the Ohio & other
lubber lands from the idea of possessing a large property in
land, where they are in danger of starving or being knocked
in the head as freeholders - at some future time, I always
thought that North America would be a great empire, but
not until a millennium out of your & my reach.

As to your growing sober & quitting rum for ale; strictly

is a virtue worth acquisition; but if it obtains for a moment, it will hurt your distilleries, & as it takes a long time for a man to learn sobriety, those soberists will soon find out that it will cost more to be intoxicated with ale than with Rum, & will return to their puking — I remember when the soldiers went from Halifax to Boston, the dram-shops in Boston were crowded, & one would call to another, come Jack, step in, it cost us 12 pence at Halifax to get drunk, we can get drunk here for a penny — mankind are pretty much the same all over the world. — You mention your grand buildings here & there — I will give you an anecdote — one of your Cambridge patriots called to see me, who had been in Virginia, & he told me of an elegant town which had been built there since the war — I asked him how they built it, he replied, with English goods.

I have done with ^{the} patrimoniae disease; your friend Dr. J. — yate stares me in the face, who as I am informed, wore his health into the grave & a great part of his estate with him, by joining with a set of men in disturbing the peace of their country, & who now are held in contempt.

For my part, my dear Sir! I am a citizen of the world; & that country which hath the most virtue, I respect most, whether Nymphisii, Heterofcii, Pariseei or Antipodes. — whenever your feru too quick, give my dear Betsy this instruction, viz. always to pull you by the sleeve, with a my dear! how doth your patient M^r — do to day, is he better than he was last night?

Poor Judge Trowbridge! he is to be pitied for his measle-phobia — it is horrid for a person to be always in death
whilots

whilst he is in life - such hath been his fate ever since
I knew him - there seems to be an Diogenes of
mind as well as body, & although natura in expellis,
turner usque recurret - remember ^{me} to him and to
M^{rs} Lee.

As to your observations on the works of Amni-
potence, I do not condemn you - I perfectly agree with
you & S^r Joseph Banks on the links of the grand chain of
nature - perhaps I may err in carrying the matter further
than either of you, for I imagine all nature to be
animated, vegetables as well as animals - I argue from
analogy; for I know of vegetables which grow on the
banks of Newfoundland, as well as the Animal Flower,
which have some of the organs of animals; & I scarce
ever see a tree cut down but I have a sympathetic
feeling - the links of the grand chain, I imagine, extend from
infinity supra to infinity infra, & I cannot conceive of a
vacuum in nature - If we had microscopic eyes our ideas
would be extended; as M^{rs} Herschell, by his improved tube, has
discovered 17000 stars in our hemisphere where former
astronomers could not discover above 3000; but its more
our part to wonder & to adore. When America may be
settled, I believe that the Squawk will be thoroughly
extirpated from the face of the earth, & then one link will
be lost. - Inquire, whether Noah took a pair Squawks
into the ark with him? - I wish you were in possession

of Dr. Douglas's catalogue of the indigenous plants of your country, which consisted of 1100; but they were dissipated at his death, to the great loss of the botanical world.

George Lukins, after his exposure, turned out an impostor. I thank you for your Register & Catalogue, but especially for your curious dissertation upon Sympathy of Souls. What you had from Mr. Lowell, relative to Mr. Labots affairs, fully evinces the honesty of your State; as doth the Register, & the depreciation of your money. — If Mr. Oliver could get the debt set off in land out of my estate, it would be better than nothing; for it is plain by the papers which you sent to me, that the estate was appraised above £3000 more than the debts.

Your friend Dr. Haysgarth & I have begun a correspondence, which I value much — he lately wrote to me that he should send to me the correspondence between you & him: ^{on the small box:} by those means, I shall be doubly gratified.

I now know where you live, & I often visit you.

I have sent to Betsy, a piece of Dr. Fleetwood's as an accompaniment to her Bible, & I promise to her great pleasure in the reading. I also send the eulogium on her Aunt Watson.

To you I send my tour into North Wales — it was wrote currente calamo, so that your candor will excuse the errors of it — I wish it, not to be out of your possession.

We have had the coldest winter for 12 years past — little snow — my Thermometer at the lowest, at 20 d. below freezing.

I have only to add that I am dear Sir?

Dr. Benj. Watrous

Yours affectionately
Peter Oliver

Dear Sir!

Birmingham April 24th 1789

I received letters from you & Betsy, M^{rs} Russell & Daniel, by D^r Lloyd - I am obliged to you all, & should have answered each before, but a turn of the Sciatica, which I have not had for forty years past, hath prevented my writing until now; & cannot, as yet, answer the others, but hope to write soon.

I wish much to see my old friend D^r Lloyd, but fear I shall not, as I cannot go to London. - I have sent to invite him to see Birmingham, but I fear also that he will not come here - it is but about eighteen hours ride.

You mention M^r T - go; he had better not have mentioned the salary affair to you, for he too much betrayed the confidence I placed

placed in him, to do him any service - I wish
to drop the affair.

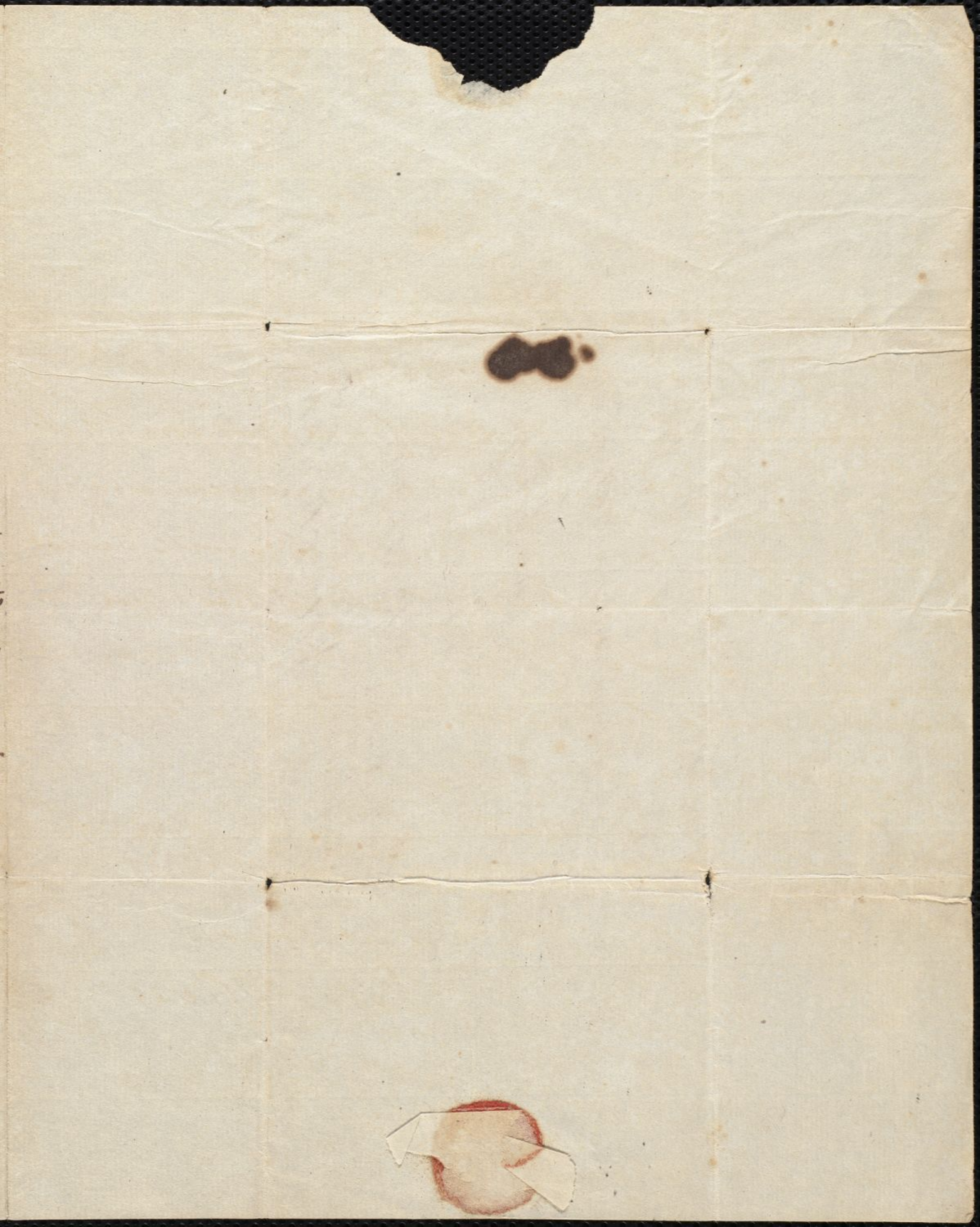
Tell my dear Betsy, I will send her
knives & forks as soon as I can, as also the
stogium which I mislaid. - I have a clock
making for you, which I hope you will have
this summer - I design it for a good one, & it
will go a twelve months with once winding up,
so that if you have not bought, you will desist.

I have but just now heard of this opportunity
so have only time to tell you all that I expect
to write more fully soon - my love to you all
correspondents, & to Betsy's mother - respects
to all inquiring friends.

I am dear Sir!

your friend
Peter Oliver

D. Benj. Waterhouse



131
Dr Benjamin Waterhouse

Cambridge

Near to

BOSTON

of the Mentor
Capt. Snow

New England

Birmingham Feb. 3. 1790.

Dear Sir!

Six or seven American letters
staring a man in the face for ~~a~~ categorical answers
appear to me as formidable as a battery of cannon
& mortars ready to pour out their vengeance —
however, as I have listed in the forlorn hope, I
hope to carry them one by one, with perseverance.
I first answer three of yours — that of
August 26th wishes that Dr. Lloyd & I might meet
— it would have given to me a particular
pleasure to have met him, but a rheumatic
attack utterly prevented my going to London,
& I suppose, distance or business discouraged him.
Your description of Rhode-Island is painful
to me who have seen it its glory, & admired it —
but Bella horrida bella, i.e. War, with its horrid
great belly, will devour men, cities & islands too.
I am glad that your reception there was so agreeable.
As to Dr. Fathergill's & my pictures being
adorned with never greens, tell Betsy if they are
ornamented with false, she will have a never-green
w. h.

which requires no alteration, & sable muffs have been in fashion.

I hope you have settled the point with respect to your allowance, as professor. — believe me when I tell you, that you must never expect gratitude from the public; if you can meet with thread-bare justice, it is all you are to expect — it was always so with respect to your province — as to your desire of my opinion, that they are wiser & better, I must tell you; that as to their wisdom, I say not, but as to their morals I can have no good opinion of them, until their friends are reimbursed their losses, for I am informed of one of them who hath by him 40,000 dollars in their paper which are not worth 1/6.

You ask me how you should conduct with Dr. Haysgarth? — Dr. Haysgarth is a man of candor & a friend of yours, so that you may be open with him — I myself venture to combat his ideas of the extent of the variolous infection, and furnished him with a folio manuscript of a society of Boston physicians A.D. 1734 on the small-pox & other disorders; which he was pleased with.

Yours by Bernard of Nov. 1st informs me of the receipt of the Vision by Danish; I am glad, you were not displeas'd with it — The character you give of George 3^d is just, & never were stronger marks of Loyalty & affection shewn to a sovereign than to him, since his recovery.

Your account of the triumphant entry of Mr. Washington is entertaining & striking — Two things are remarkable, viz^t by information of a friend at New York, Mr. Washington was installed president of your states on the same day that his Majesty went to S^t. Pauls to offer his thanksgiving addresses — The other, that the King during the procession preserved a firm countenance of solemnity untill he entered S^t. Pauls, where a band of above 5000 charity boys saluted him in a grand chorus; & then the tears flowed plentifully.

Tell Betsy, when the colts is fit to wear the bells there will be the time; tho' they are out of fashion here — but you seem to follow us in pre-coq-hag-winnin, which make a puzzle in future life.

I am glad to find that Daniel
both

hath not given up a profession which may furnish
him with independance - he informs me that he
should go to Russia in Decr, & he desired me to send
to him an Hadley's quadrant - it is in vain to
send one in his absence.

If you have not sent a barrel of Tar, I wish
you to omit it, unless you can get the yellow
curdy sort, which is the first running, as also the
crashers, as we have plenty of them here - I
suppose you took the hint from Dr. Wich; & what
I mentioned to him was the old fashioned ships
brown bisket which splits into toasts, so that
if you have not, & should send any bisket, I wish
a barrell of it, one half to be of what was called
Paul's white Charlestown bisket; & the other half
of the aged brown bisket.

You ask my opinion of Tar-water. - I
am almost too great an enthusiast in its favor,
to speak my sentiments of it - however, I comply
& relate from experience - I take it to be a
balsamic & attenuant without rival - above
30 years ago I was attacked by a violent Sciatica
- The Materia medica gave me, only temporary
relief

HMS
C. 16. 2

relief — after some years, when Tar-water began to
be in taste, I pursued a course of it for 3 months
by drinking about half a pint of it, or more,
fasting at different intervals in the day; by w^{ch}
my disorder was subdued & never returned
untill last spring — I have also cured others
of rheumatic disorders by prescribing it —
Turpentine, I believe, would be equally good
were it not that its purgative quality destroys
its good effects: but, by passing through a gentle
fire in its conversion to tar, that purgative quality
is destroyed; for, be it remembered, that it is only
the first runnings of the bitu white it is curdly,
yellow, & not disagreeable upon the tongue, which
are salutary; for when the fire increases, it then
turns black, corrosive & deleterious, & by the use
of this black sort I believe great mischief is done
& it loses its character — old Philip, perhaps knows
how to make tar-water as well as any one. —
My brother in law, Dr. Clarke, the first physician
of Boston in his time, as well as others of the
Faculty, held it of no value, but at last he used
it freely after his fatigues in the hurry of his
business.

business. — Some physicians in England, I know, have prescribed it at the same time they were utterly unacquainted with what tar is — an instance I know of a man here who was advised to it in a stubborn disorder; he sent the tar to me for my opinion; I told him it was rank poison to him; however he took it, by prescription, but did not long survive it. — The tar made from the pit-coal in England is too corrosive for the rigging of vessels, & is fit, only for timber — an instance I give; a vessel from hence to the West-Indies was grained, on one side, with it, & on the other with common tar; she returned with the latter, worm-eaten, but sound on the other side — enough upon tar.

Yours of Nov. 3th of Scott mentions the receipt of the clock — I am glad, you was pleased with it; it will save you the trouble of winding once p^o week, & perhaps forgetting your task of winding — it takes but six feet to the floor from the top of the weights, after wound up — the device on the face I thought not amiss.

Betsy had said something to me on female politicians, & I answered her — the lady of her lord whom

whom you mention, it was not difficult to many, ~~four~~
years since, to foresee their fate of contempt — this
is what they have arrived to from a correspondence
with the M^{rs} Lauleys & Grahams who sank into
contempt long since.

I am sorry that Betsy is so shy of asking
for trifles — I send her a dozen of knives & a dozen
of forks to match her dessert knives, as also a
carving knife & fork — I remember that you had
oysters in your river, & table knives are often
spoil'd by using them, in opening oysters; I
therefore send you six oyster knives — give Philip
one of them to open his Plymouth oysters; I also
send him a knife & fork to eat them with — the
construction is curious, & I have sent it open, so
that you will see the grooves, & then it slides into
place & slides back to open — Miss Clarke sends to
him two neck-handkerchiefs, & my son, the Doctor, sends to
him two pair of buckles, all for a new years gift.

While France & the Austrian Netherlands
are drenched in blood in their struggles for liberty,
happy Britain! which hath past the horrid scene,
& is settled in a mixt monarchy, under laws made
by

by themselves, which if adhered to must continue
it happy, unless wantonness should disturb its felicity.

Pray can you inform me of Col. Worthington
of Springfield? I wrote to him August 1798, but have
had no answer. I hope he lives still.

If you should meet with Capⁿ Timothy Polgion,
the father, I wish you would give to him the
inclosed letter: peruse it & give it to him sealed —
when I was in America he was in low circumstances,
& therefore I did not urge him — if he is in good
circumstances, now, his well known honesty will
discharge the debt; if not, I urge no further — if
he should pay it, take half of it for yours & Betsy's
use.

I also inclose a letter to M^{rs} Mallonee of Rhode
Island, late widow of M^r Simon Pease; which, after
reading, please to seal & send it by a safe hand.

I wrote to you & Daniel also, that I supposed
he was younger of Birmingham on account of his
two cousins Tommy & Peter being here, & that it
was not probable of their being long together —
since which, Tommy is gone to Chester to live with
a surgeon & apothecary, & Peter sailed for St. Kitts
last

H MS a 16.2

Dear Sir!

Birmingham May 27th 1790

I am so far from sea-ports that I have, seldom, intelligence of Vespe's sailing for Boston; so that I cannot be punctual in answering letters as they arrive, but am obliged to answer three or four at the same time — This I must do, now, by force of yours, vizⁿ. of Dec. 9th by Mr. Pain, whom I have not had the pleasure of seeing, and which did not meet me until the 24th. March. There are others of 5. 6. & 7. Feb^r. As your several letters report, as to some facts, the same thing, you will excuse anachronisms; & if I should put the cart before the horse, it will be no uncommon sight, for I have frequently seen a cart drawn down an hill on one side of an hill, & the horse draw down the cart on the other side of it.

My last to you was on Feb^r. 3rd. by G. Barnard which I hope you have received with the bundle of miscibles, & to a favourable acceptance. — It gives to me great pleasure to hear of my Betsy's happiness in her new guest, & I am as much pleased in her choice of a name for him — she hath shown filial duty by such an act; but tell her from me, not to view any happiness with a microscopie eye, for you well know that poring upon objects through magnifying glasses is very apt to hurt the optic nerves; & an active object

will

with sometimes spring from the line of vision, and
uneasiness takes its place, & that, too often we use food
by viewing with a microscope also.

You say that M^{rs} Russell wants such
an object, only, to make her happy — perhaps, if she
possessed it, something else would be wanting — Patience
makes an excellent salad, tho' seldom used; I have
known persons who frequently ate of it grow fat upon it
— It gives ^{to} me peculiar satisfaction to hear of the
subsistence of friendship between my two Betsys —
I hope — Labetur in omne volubilis cursum — Friendship
is a soil that produces a good crop for some time, when
it is new; but, like other soils, will lose its fertility
unless manured by judgment, attention & virtue.

I rejoice at my dear Sheela's being released
from her Bastile — it always gave ^{to} me uneasiness
at her confinement there — I hope she is happy in
her new connections with my old friend M^{rs} Spooner,
to both of whom I present my affectionate regards —
you did not tell me whether the difference of age was
40 or 50 years. You never hinted to me the treatment
that my Betsy met with, but I can only guess & perhaps
guess wrong — I my self have met with such treatment
from some other of the family which cannot be
easily overlooked — Felix quem faciunt &c. — a

Difference

difference of sentiment, in politics, too often eradicates every sentiment of friendship, & unhumanizes the mind — beware of that bottomless pit.

I am glad to hear that the circle of your friends is still entire — I am sorry, ⁺ M^r Lee is not so well, as I wish him to be — as to M^r Trowbridge, pity him that his horse cannot carry him out of reach of y^e measles.

Your letter Feb^r 5th by Daniel, I did not receive until the 20th of April, from Balmouth; & the packets of papers & Magazines not until last week, whether by M^r Paine or Daniel — I then received a second letter from Daniel, who informed me that he was to have set out from London to pay me a visit, but, the night before, was pressed into the service & put on board a 64 guns ship, where he was kept 10 days until he was released, upon the Cap^t's application to the Admiralty — I am informed that he was confined with 1100 men in the ship upon quarter allowance of provisions — thus he hath felt something of sailors luck — it is supposed that he sailed for Russia last week — I am sorry I could not see him, for many reasons — I supplied him with a Quadrant of four guineas price. The tin is arrived & I thank you especially as it was unaccompanied with feathers — for it, — I wish to know whether the clock knows how to keep good time in America; I imagine, it goes fast enough

enough, as it arrived before the information that I had sent one — your Charles-river Whale was a curious object; I remember a similar instance — I hope, a Tub was thrown out for him to play with. M^r. G. I know personally at the bar, & am thoroughly possessed of his character elsewhere — he formerly corresponded with me when he was in London, & was one mean of my diploma as a corresponding member of the Society of Arts & Manufactures — but I forbear.

You mention many gentlemen's kind notices of me — whenever they may, I return the compliment with so great interest; which, altho' prohibited by your Law, yet may be received from foreigners. — My best regards wait upon M^r. James Russell, our M^r. R.'s father; I thought he had been dead — I am glad he still lives to be an example of that integrity & virtue which he was always conspicuous for — whenever you may see him, pray ask him whether he ever casted natiivities? if so, whether he calculated that his son should marry my grand-daughter?

I am sorry that my friend D^r. Jeffries could not make it worth his while to reside in America — crossing saltwater in Balloons is the most unprofitable business a man can engage in.

In yours of 6th Feb^r. you mention M^r. John Russell, a son of our M^r. R. — I have not as yet seen him, or heard from him — I shall be much pleased to see him; & whenever I may, I shall pay every

every attention to him that the family connexion or his own merit may demand.

Your national hospital will never do at Charlestown - if it is too far from the centre of your governments.

In return to Mr. President Willard, compliments to me, please to offer my very respectfull compliments to him - In answer to his enquiry, whether I was compiling a Dictionary of Greek & English, I inform him that I never had it in contemplation - what I was endeavoring, was a compilation of an universal abstracting Dictionary, which I gave you a minute of in my letter to you, dated August 29. 1787. I should have finished it before now, but ill health prevented - please to correct an Irriem in that letter, viz. I said, I had finished three quarters of it, & afterwards told you, that I broke off in the midst of it - I have no other way to make good english of it, but by telling you that the best of english broad cloth consists of six quarters of a yard wide: so that you see that an irish bull, & an english blunder are perfectly consistent. By the way, I have lost, in the general scramble, a small folio manuscript of my fugitive pieces which Mr. Brimmer says he cannot recover; they are in Prose & in Metre - I would pay a considerable price for them - among the rest was an elegiac poem on Secretary Willard, th was printed - perhaps, the president hath one; if not, if you can find one, I wish a copy of it; it is not very lengthy.

If you can alter your mode of education as you propose

propose, it will be of essential service to science in general,
as well as to your States.

As to Betsy's child being the finest since Noah's
flood, we on this side the atlantic think it the finest since
the creation; & she may, with our leave, think so too: then
she will gain 1600 years by the calculation — I have got
a coral, bells, & whistle for it, made 1790; they cost 25 shillings,
amounting to about 6000 paper dollars, answering to the
Era of the creation; so that with the child & whistle, you
have two curious phenomena to pore over — besides, this
toy will last its owner through life, & she may do as one half
of the world ever have done, whistle for want of thought.
— I pity my dear Betsy on the account which you give of
her writing & tearing her letters to me — I fancy the dear
girl is as much in love with her grandpapa as Dido's
Byblis was with her brother Amnis, for she seems to be
an exact counterpart,

Incipit, & dubital, scribit, damnatque tabellas.
— pray! who writes her letters for her? They seem to be correct
& animated — it is a great misfortune to be possessed by a
nervous demon.

Your last letter of 7th Feb^r was a company
letter — the last signer flourished it with a G-d save the
king — I suppose king Washington; & the whistle is marked
with A.C.W., which will serve equally for your name and
the names of Mr President Willard or Mr Washington:
perhaps, the latter would do best if he would adopt him, as
there would be a chance of rising from a paltry secretary

a province to an Admiral of thirteen stripes.

We have had a remarkable fine winter — the Baltic not froze — our verdure hath been constant — my Thermometer in an upper North room & no fire near, hath been, at lowest, 36. — but 3 or 4 flights of snow which melted as it fell.

It is in vain to write news, as you have all the English papers; I will therefore only add what is not news, viz. that I am your
Faithfull friend
Peter Oliver

June 25. 1790

I am now a month later than the foregoing — you see I prepare for opportunities which may offer — I have none other of yours since those I have mentioned; Cap^t Davis brought me one from M^r Russell, by that I find, you received the bundle by G^t Barnard, but I could never learn, till then, whether the bundle ever left England.

I send to you the Oxford Catalogue of Graduates, which I thought might not be ^{an} unacceptable cade meur. Pray offer my respectfull compliments, with the inclosed Scripture Lexicon, to the candid acceptance

Of Mr. President Willar

If you should have occasion, in future, to send any little packet, above the size of a letter, pray direct thus — to be left at Mr. Copley's, George street, Hanover Square & the packets which you have sent seldom reach me until a long time after their arrival; strangers & Londoners also are too unacquainted with the methods of conveying them to me by the post coaches; & to put them into the post office is very expensive; but a single letter put into the office is trifling expence.

The cotton hose are for Betsy.

The 22^d instant was the hottest I have known in England — Barometer at 74^o to 79^o — in the sun at 99^o —

Farewell for the present —

Your friend

Peter Oliver

Things sent

A Whistle &c.

Lexicon for the President.

Oxford Catalogue

Cotton Hose for Betsy.

D^r Benj. Waterhouse

and a New England-man, can no more live
 without Cyder than a rat in the exhausted ^{renewer of an} air-
 pump — ah! there is the rub! — you ask me, if
 I know any method to destroy those insects? I
 offer my opinion from my own experiences.

Tarring the tree is not only expensive
 but is of little avail. — Tar hurts the tree in
 its growth, besides that it chills in the night
 & they go over it. — There are two species
 of those insects; one, the common caterpillar,
 whose Moth lays its eggs towards the end of
 young limbs of trees, where its young can feed
 on the tender foliage in the spring of the year
 — these make the Cobwebs. I have counted 300
 in one nest. — I had a fine young orchard
 infested with them, & I tried the usual method
 of burning the webs & firing of gunpowder —
 the first method hurt the trees & the gunpowder
 known abroad — neither of these methods avail.
 at last I employed children, in February, to
 cut off the ends of those limbs with the nests on
 them, & burnt them; — this method was an effectual
 prevention, & I saved my orchard, & it must be
 owing

owing to indolence of a farmer loses his crop by
this species: the first year I destroyed 300,000.

The other species, viz the canker worm
is more difficult to destroy - its moths does not
lay its eggs on trees, but makes the ground, under
them, a proper nidus for its young - I have
often rode miles by orchards devoured by them
& neither tar or fire will destroy them - one
of my neighbors had an orchard whose leaves
for a series of years were devoured by them -
at last they got to the outskirts of my orchard
I found destruction approaching, and argued
thus: these insects lay their eggs in the ground,
& if I can destroy them by frost, I shall gain my
point - accordingly, in November, I ploughed
my orchard deep & exposed the eggs to the
winter frosts & succeeded - I had no more of
them. - This method I recommended to Sir
Francis Bernard, & he told me it had a good
effect - These ^{are} all the experiments I know of,
& I imagine that the plowing must be repeated,
As to your voyagers to the world's end,
perchance they may fall through before they reach
their port, as the American mercantile voyager on
this

71
This & on your side of the water are continually
doing — Alas! what long strides, some men take
in hasting to be rich — there are two more of your
countrymen gone for £30,000. —

I cannot lament the death of my
old servant Philip, because I believe it to be for
his gain — I shall ever esteem the humanity
and attentions paid to him by Mr. Watson; to
whom I offer my gratefull regards. — Was I in
America I would erect a plain slate stone
over his grave, with the following inscription

Philip
The faithful African
died the — day of — 1790
between 60 & 70 years of age.

He hath made of one blood all nations,
& in every nation he that feareth God and
worketh righteousness is accepted with him.

The Key of the Bastile is an odd
circumstance to be found in America; but
let me tell you that they can make in France
now Keys for new Bastiles.

Sept. 18th hath now his Quietus — it will
be a pity to disturb him.

8) Lo! now comes on, with hasty strides
your Goliath of No. 8, armed cap-a-pie, with
sword & spear, in all the majesty of Triumph, bidding
his defiance - I have my bag of pebbles and my
sling ready, & doubt not that I shall penetrate
that forehead from whence shall issue such a
stream, that, in the phrase of your late bombastic
poet, in his Goliath, you shall see him floating
like a vast island in a sea of blood.

By the way, now we are talking of M. Byles,
can you procure me two small pamphlets
of his poetry of about six pence price, I had
them in America.

I have received Betsy's whistle, but
told her that it doth not make half the noise
that the Secretary's doth - If it made a tenth
part of what its manufacturer did, I should have
sent it back to America. As to Betsy's Evil
disposition, it is common, & most Adams have
their Eves - sit down contented with a box in
the ear; it will do you no hurt. As for your
making such apologies for satirizing a thing as
a whistle, I have a thousandth part of a mind to
tell you that you may, both, go whistle for me -
td