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Benjamin Rush's Travels Towards Peace

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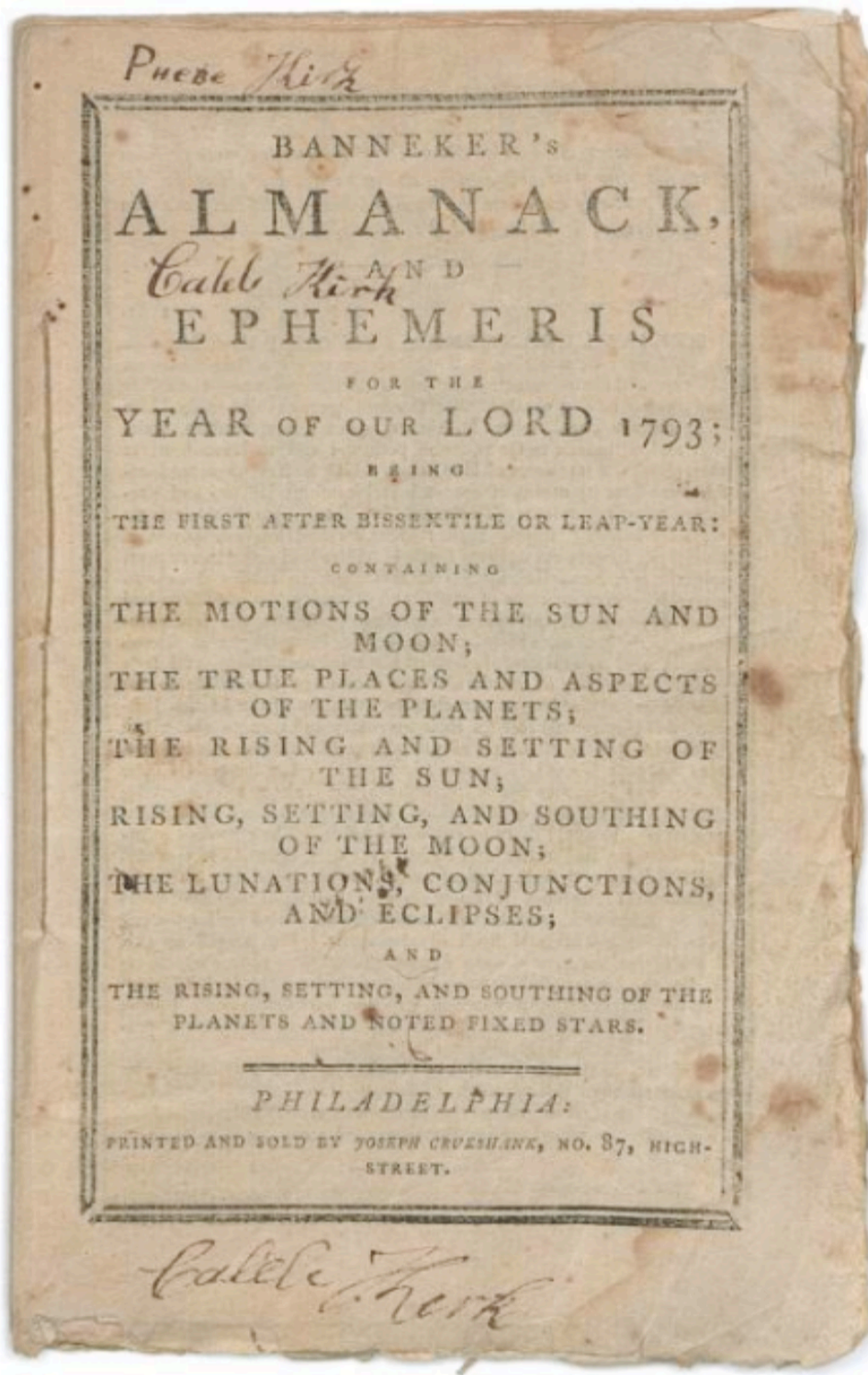
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A PLAN OF A PEACE-OFFICE, FOR THE UNITED STATES.

AMONG the many defects which have been pointed out in the federal constitution by its antifederal enemies, it is much to be lamented that no person has taken notice of its total silence upon the subject of an office of the utmost importance to the welfare of the United States, that is, an office for promoting and preserving perpetual peace in our country.

It is to be hoped that no objection will be made to the establishment of such an office, while we are engaged in a war with the Indians, for as the *War-Office* of the United States was established in the *time of peace*, it is equally reasonable that a *Peace-Office* should be established in the *time of war*.

The plan of this office is as follows:

I. Let a Secretary of Peace be appointed to preside in this office, who shall be perfectly free from all the present absurd and vulgar European prejudices upon the subject of government; let him be a genuine republican and a sincere Christian, for the principles of republicanism and Christianity are no less friendly to universal and perpetual peace, than they are to universal and equal liberty.

II. Let a power be given to this Secretary to establish and maintain free-schools in every city, village, and township of the United States; and let him be made responsible for the talents, principles, and morals of all his schoolmasters. Let the youth of our country be carefully instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and in the doctrines of a religion of some kind: the Christian religion should be preferred to all others; for it belongs to this religion exclusively to teach us not only to cultivate peace with all men, but to forgive, nay, more—to love our very enemies. It belongs to it further to teach us that the Supreme Being alone possesses a power to take away human life, and that we rebel against his laws, whenever we undertake to execute death in any way whatever upon any of his creatures.

III. Let every family in the United States be furnished at the public expense, by the Secretary of this office, with

FEBRUARY, Second Month, *both* 28 Days.

D. H. M.		Days	Planets' Places, &c.						
☾	☉		☿	♁	♂	♀	♃	☽ Lat.	
Last ☾	3 6 51 A.	1	13	25	29	7	20	20	2 N.
New ☉	10 2 58 A.	7	19	26	7	12	3	28	5 N.
First ☽	17 2 41 A.	13	26	26	1	16	10	6	1 S.
Full ☉	25 5 55 A.	19	22	27	1	21	17	16	5 S.
{ 1 17 } { 11 ♁ 16 } { 21 16 }		25	8	28	2	26	21	26	1 S.

Remarkable days, &c.	☉ ri.	☉ set.	☽ pl.	☽ rise	☽ lon.
1 6 Pleiades set 2 5	6 57 5	3 15 10	18	3 40	
2 7 Purification V. Mary.	6 56 5	4 28 11	25	4 30	
3 7 Arcturus rises 9 45	6 55 5	5 11	morn.	5 20	
4 2 <i>Clear and windy;</i>	6 54 5	6 25 0	35	6 13	
5 3 ☽ ♁	6 53 5	7 7 9	1 44	7 6	
6 4 Day 10 16	6 52 5	8 23 2	50	8 0	
7 5 Spica ♁ rises 10 27	6 51 5	9 7 3	52	8 59	
8 6 <i>flying clouds, with</i>	6 50 5	10 22 4	55	10 2	
9 7 Days increase 1 6	6 49 5	11 7 5	52	10 59	
10 7 Quinquagesima.	6 48 5	12 22	sets	11 56	
11 2 <i>rain or snow;</i>	6 46 5	14 6 6	34	aft. 50	
12 3 Shrove Tuesday.	6 45 5	15 20 7	37	1 38	
13 4 Ash Wednes. * ☽ ♁	6 44 5	16 4 8	42	2 31	
14 5 Valentine.	6 43 5	17 18 9	49	3 20	
15 6 <i>cold winds from</i>	6 42 5	18 8 2	10 54	4 10	
16 7 Sirius south 8 35	6 40 5	20 15	morn.	5 2	
17 7 ♁ sets 9 11	6 39 5	21 28 0	1 5 52		
18 2 <i>the westward;</i>	6 38 5	22 11 0	58	6 41	
19 3 ☉ enters ♁	6 36 5	24 23 1	55	7 32	
20 4 Pleiades set 12 42	6 35 5	25 5 2	49	8 18	
21 5 <i>hard frosts</i>	6 34 5	26 17 3	40	9 8	
22 6 ♁ greatest elongation.	6 33 5	27 29 4	25	9 53	
23 7 <i>toward the end</i>	6 32 5	28 11 5	3	10 39	
24 7 St. Matthias.	6 31 5	29 23 5	41	11 27	
25 2 ☽ eclipsed, visible.	6 30 5	30 5	rises	morn.	
26 3 * ♁	6 28 5	32 17 6	23	0 9	
27 4 <i>of the month.</i>	6 27 5	33 29 7	27	0 52	
28 5 Day 11 8	6 26 5	34 11 8	31	1 39	

Venus [♀] will be Evening Star until the 25th day of May; then Morning Star till the End of the Year.

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a copy of an American edition of the BIBLE. This measure has become the more necessary in our country, since the banishment of the bible, as a school-book, from most of the schools in the United States. Unless the price of this book be paid for by the public, there is reason to fear that in a few years it will be met with only in courts of justice or in magistrates' offices; and should the absurd mode of establishing truth by kissing this sacred book fall into disuse, it may probably, in the course of the next generation, be seen only as a curiosity on a shelf in Mr. Peale's museum.

IV. Let the following sentence be inscribed in letters of gold over the door of every house in the United States:

THE SON OF MAN CAME INTO THE WORLD, NOT TO DESTROY MEN'S LIVES, BUT TO SAVE THEM.

V. To inspire a veneration for human life, and an horror at the shedding of human blood, let all those laws be repealed which authorise juries, judges, sheriffs, or hangmen to assume the resentments of individuals, and to commit murder in cold blood in any case whatever. Until this reformation in our code of penal jurisprudence take place, it will be in vain to attempt to introduce universal and perpetual peace in our country.

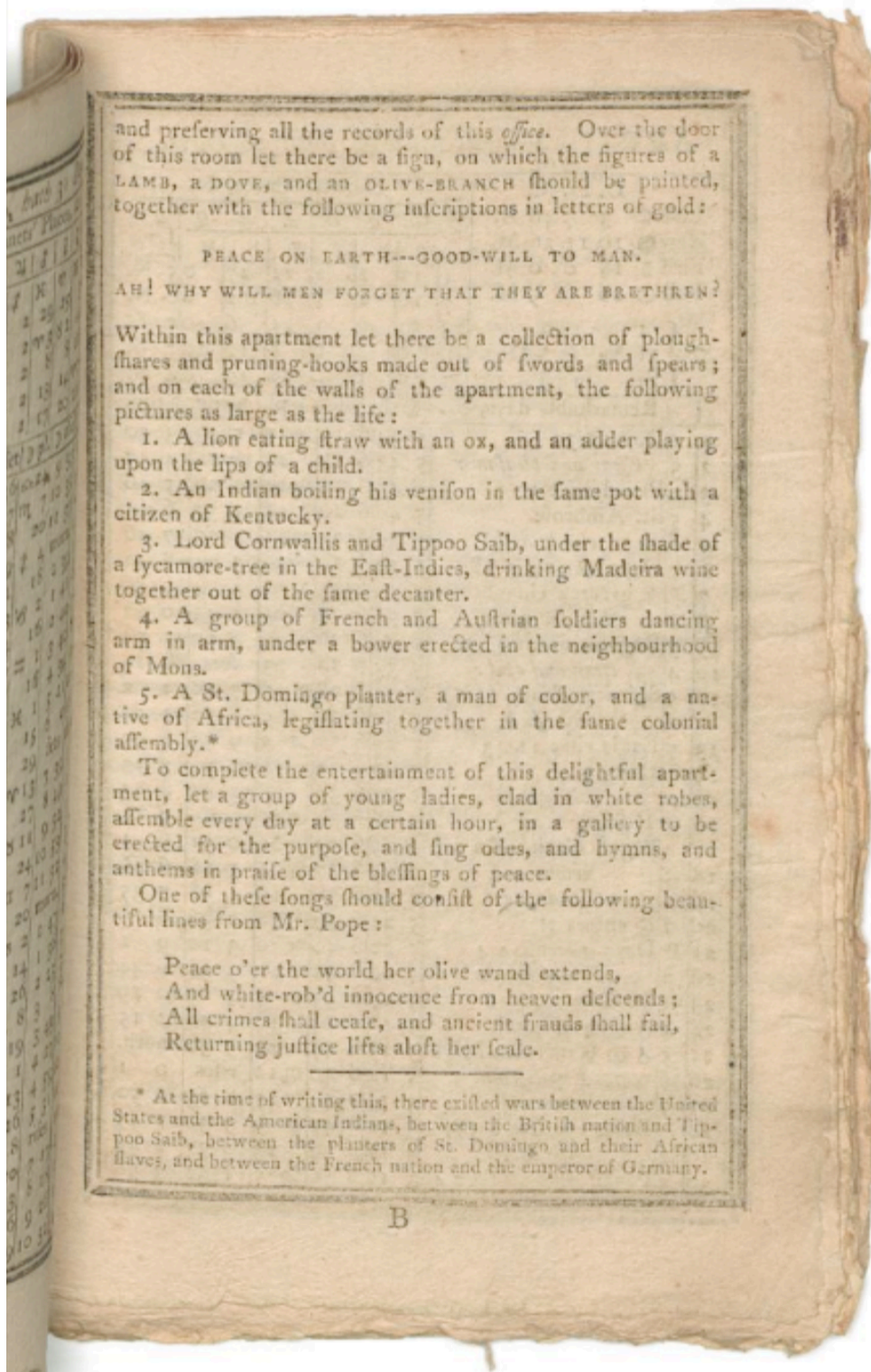
VI. To subdue that passion for war, which education, added to human depravity, have made universal, a familiarity with the instruments of death, as well as all military shews, should be carefully avoided. For which reason, militia laws should every where be repealed, and military dresses and military titles should be laid aside: reviews tend to lessen the horrors of a battle by connecting them with the charms of order; militia laws generate idleness and vice, and thereby produce the wars they are said to prevent; military dresses fascinate the minds of young men, and lead them from serious and useful professions; were there no uniforms, there would probably be no armies; lastly, military titles feed vanity, and keep up ideas in the mind which lessen a sense of the folly and miseries of war.

In the seventh and last place, let a large room, adjoining the federal hall, be appropriated for transacting the business

MARCH, Third Month, *but* 31 Days.

D. H. M.			Planets' Places, &c.						Lat.	
Last	New	Full	☉	♃	♄	♅	♆	♇		
5	12	19	18	29	29	25	8	2	14	33 N.
5	1	6	18	29	29	25	8	2	14	4 N.
8	1	10	24	29	2	8	8			262 S.
M.	M.	M.								75 S.
15	15	14	19	8	0	2	13	14	7	200 N.
			25	6	1	2	17	20		

Remarkable days, &c.	☉	ri.	☉	set.	♃	pl.	♄	rise	♅	son.
1 6 St. David.	6	24	5	36	♄	24	9	33	2	23
2 7 Pleiades set 12 0	6	23	5	37	♄	7	10	35	3	9
3 F Pegasi Algen. sets 7 53	6	22	5	38		20	11	37	4	2
4 2 Wind, with	6	21	5	39	♄	4		morn.	4	55
5 3 Days increase 2 6	6	19	5	41		18	0	39	5	48
6 4 Δ 14 8	6	17	5	43	♃	2	1	41	6	48
7 5 rain or snow;	6	16	5	44		16	2	40	7	47
8 6 Day 11 32	6	14	5	46	♄	1	3	40	8	45
9 7 changes to	6	13	5	47		16	4	34	9	44
10 F ♀ rises 11 53	6	12	5	48	♃	1	5	21	10	43
11 2 ♃ ☉ ♄ occidental.	6	11	5	49		15	6	0	11	36
12 3 ☉ ecl. inv. St. Greg.	6	9	5	51		29		sets aft.	29	
13 4 Sirius sets 12 6	6	8	5	52	♄	13	7	39	1	17
14 5 moderate	6	7	5	53		27	8	49	2	10
15 6 ♀ stationary.	6	6	5	54	♄	11	9	52	3	1
16 7 for the season;	6	4	5	56		24	10	53	3	51
17 F St. Patrick.	6	3	5	57	♄	7	11	52	4	39
18 2 clear and cold.	6	2	5	58		20		morn.	5	30
19 3 ☉ enters ♄	6	0	6	0	♄	2	0	47	6	21
20 4 Wind, with	5	59	6	1		14	1	38	7	7
21 5 Benedict.	5	58	6	2		26	2	25	7	58
22 6 Bull's eye sets 11 13	5	57	6	3	♄	8	3	8	8	45
23 7 clouds and rain;	5	55	6	5		19	3	49	9	28
24 F Days 12 12	5	54	6	6	♄	1	4	27	10	12
25 2 Annunciat. V. Mary.	5	53	6	7		13	4	59	10	58
26 3 moderate weather;	5	52	6	8		26	5	31	11	43
27 4 Algel south 2 30	5	50	6	10	♄	8		rises	morn.	
28 5 flying clouds.	5	49	6	11		20	7	17	0	26
29 6 Good Friday.	5	48	6	12	♄	3	8	18	1	12
30 7 Arietis sets 8 46	5	46	6	14		16	9	26	1	58
31 F Easter Sunday.	5	45	6	15		29	10	32	2	51



and preserving all the records of this office. Over the door of this room let there be a sign, on which the figures of a LAMB, A DOVE, and an OLIVE-BRANCH should be painted, together with the following inscriptions in letters of gold:

PEACE ON EARTH---GOOD-WILL TO MAN.

AH! WHY WILL MEN FORGET THAT THEY ARE BRETHREN?

Within this apartment let there be a collection of plough-shares and pruning-hooks made out of swords and spears; and on each of the walls of the apartment, the following pictures as large as the life:

1. A lion eating straw with an ox, and an adder playing upon the lips of a child.
2. An Indian boiling his venison in the same pot with a citizen of Kentucky.
3. Lord Cornwallis and Tippoo Saib, under the shade of a sycamore-tree in the East-Indias, drinking Madeira wine together out of the same decanter.
4. A group of French and Austrian soldiers dancing arm in arm, under a bower erected in the neighbourhood of Mons.
5. A St. Domingo planter, a man of color, and a native of Africa, legislating together in the same colonial assembly.*

To complete the entertainment of this delightful apartment, let a group of young ladies, clad in white robes, assemble every day at a certain hour, in a gallery to be erected for the purpose, and sing odes, and hymns, and anthems in praise of the blessings of peace.

One of these songs should consist of the following beautiful lines from Mr. Pope:

Peace o'er the world her olive wand extends,
And white-rob'd innocence from heaven descends;
All crimes shall cease, and ancient frauds shall fail,
Returning justice lifts aloft her scale.

* At the time of writing this, there existed wars between the United States and the American Indians, between the British nation and Tippoo Saib, between the planters of St. Domingo and their African slaves, and between the French nation and the emperor of Germany.

Benjamin Rush's Travels Towards Peace

David Bradley

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was a time of peace, it was a time of war. It was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity. It was the age of wisdom, it was an age of foolishness. It was so like the present that then, as now, its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received in the superlative degree of comparison only.

A king with a large jaw and a queen with a plain face sat on the throne of England and carried their divine rights with a high hand, although rumor had it the king was *touched* and the queen touched by the tarbrush. But his majesty meant little to a baker's dozen of his majesty's former colonies in central North America, which, in the year of Our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five, took up arms against the Crown and subsequently declared their natural rights trumped his majesty's divine right because all men were created equal, except those tarred by the aforementioned brush. This treason prospered in the polyglot Peace of Paris; now, none dared call it aught but Revolution.

But the self-styled "United States" were actually "the several states" which, like precedent colonies, diverged in climate, culture, religion, and *raison d'être*. Their boundaries were often disputed, their manners contradictory. Each had a new, independent constitution, and some, new laws, but their tribunals were called "courts" and gavelled by enrobed, enthroned magistrates who embalmed the corpse of monarchy and still found precedents in English Law. They each had legislatures—aristocratic in membership, archaic in rhetoric, clotted by "parliamentary" procedure, middling at management, decisively indecisive.

English was the unofficially official language, although the people spoke many tongues—Acadian French, New York Dutch, Pennsylvania Deitsch—and appropriated place names (also the places) from the indigenes. They all believed in the God of Abraham, almost all in Christ, but their doctrines were Legion and dogmatic. Saints were going direct to Heaven, Strangers were going direct the other way. Most believed in salvation but only some in universal redemption; others thought *their* destination was predetermined, and those who disagreed could leave the state. They also all believed in Satan; in the fitful sleep between Awakenings they dreamed of devils and angels dancing *pas de deux*. Eventually a committee styled them "We the People;" they believed in that, too.

We were said to be "a people of cultivators;" even our aristocrats called themselves "farmers" in print. But the plain truth was our independence depended on trade in "the

Drugge ... Tabacco,” the demon rum, and Africans. On the eve of our Revolution an Englishman sneered, “[i]f there be an object truly ridiculous in nature, it is an American patriot, signing resolutions of independency with the one hand, and with the other brandishing a whip over his affrighted slaves.” An itinerant firebrand, hearing humans hawked on High Street, begged us “consider ... with what consistency” we decried the clank of galling chains when we ourselves “held so many hundred thousands in slavery.”

A troubling proposition in what was said to be an Age of Reason, when the learned got high on intellectualisms, and even the illiterate thought the pamphlets looked nice. Some claimed the monarch made us do it and many embraced that *folie à plusieurs*. No one then spoke of “stages of moral conflict” or “moral schizophrenia” or “cognitive dissonance.” In those times, philosophy subsumed psychology, which then meant “the study of” not mind, but soul. We had psyches and exhibited psychoses, but lacked luminosity and terminology—“defense mechanism” and “groupthink” would not be minted for two centuries.

Still, one American physician did consider what influence the military and political events of the American Revolution might have on the human body. He also argued emotions were related to physiology and dared contradict the clergy, to insist the madness of mankind was due not to sin or demonic possession but diseases of the mind, and that the afflicted deserved treatment, not shunning, stoning, or burial in unhallowed ground. In the early twentieth century he was hailed as the “Father of American Psychiatry.” His image graced the seal of the American Psychiatric Association.

Later in that century, a Hungarian American psychiatrist compared his treatments to tortures of the Spanish Inquisition and an American Professor of Internal Medicine wondered if he was a “Beloved Healer” or an “Assassin.” Early in the next century, the American Psychiatric Association, meeting in Canada, decided “the modern psychiatrist as a physician of mind, brain, and body” was better signified by the image of the Greek Rod of Asclepius.

Admittedly, some of his treatments *were* barbarous. But they were shaped by the scientific paradigms of his day. He learned chemistry when combustion was explained by phlogiston, not oxygen. He studied *materia medica* before it was “pharmacology” and before analgesics—like nitrous oxide or aspirin—were known, although he did prescribe opioids. He treated fevers when contagion was explained by miasma, not microbes or mosquitoes, although he did discern a link to wetlands management. He practiced phlebotomy but did refer patients to counseling. He did recognize physical occupation as therapeutic.

Admittedly, too, his diction was sometimes too colloquial for the colloquium. But he published in popular magazines, not medical journals—which did not yet exist. In lieu of Latinate labels he coined terms to delight as well as instruct. His nosology included Negro Mania, in which “inhabitants ... mistake their interest and happiness in supposing that their lands can be cultivated only by Negro slaves”; Liberty Mania, in which “visionary ideas of liberty and government ... occupies the time and talents so constantly, as to lead men to neglect their families”; Republican Mania, a determination to “introduce a republican form of government, where the people are not prepared for it”; and Military

Mania, found primarily in young men, although occasionally it presented in “an old soldier” who remembers “nothing in history, but the detail of sieges and battles.”

He promoted social reforms that, he knew, were often deemed “romantic ideas.” He “meddled” in controversies “foreign to my business,” in essays whose tones ranged from the fanciful to the piquant to the acidic. He often, wisely, signed with pseudonyms—“A Pennsylvanian,” “Ludlow,” “Harrington,” “Z.”

His skilled use of rhetorical tropes has at times misled modern readers. Some political scientists have missed his subtleties because his metaphors were physiological and his language Biblical. But in his time Blackstone's *Commentaries* had resurrected the medieval metaphor of a “body politic,” ministers were more powerful than legislators, legislators were required to “acknowledge the Scriptures”—and Scottish Enlightenment philosopher David Hume believed no science could yet be found in politics.

One historian denied his authorship of a facetious essay because “the light touch” was something he “never displayed in his whole life.” One black American essayist, who surely should have known better, mistook his most subtle polemic for a racist medical opinion. In fact he wrote sardonically of a Dueling Mania, afflicting “men whose ideas of honour amount to madness ... every attack upon their character, whether true or false, can be expiated only by a duel.” But to a father whose son died dueling, he wrote, “[y]ou do not weep alone.” Sadly, he could not prevent the madness from recurring in the family of Alexander Hamilton, nor from occurring in his own.

By the last year of the eighteenth century he had witnessed war and peace, death and birth, opulence and financial embarrassment. He had given himself up for dead on at least three occasions. He thanked God he had never fallen while climbing and descending stairs. Like Thomas Jefferson, but with a faith more fundamental, he had trembled for his country when he reflected that God was just. In the last year of that century—a caesura of calm between decades of turmoil—he began a memoir, *Travels Through Life*, intended “for the use of his children.”

*

His name was Benjamin Rush. He was born in Pennsylvania, in Byberry Township, thirteen miles northeast of Philadelphia, on Christmas Eve, 1745—or, less portentously, January 4, 1746, New Style. He was of what Benjamin Franklin called “the middling People”; his grandfather was a farmer and gunsmith, as was his father, who died when Rush was five. His widowed mother became a shopkeeper in the City.

His religious background was complicated. His furthest-back-person was John “Old Trooper” Rush, a cavalry officer in Oliver Cromwell's Puritan army, who saw the “Inner Light” and followed William Penn to Pennsylvania in 1683. Some of John's descendants became “Christian Quakers”—followers of dissident George Keith, who saw Christ's Second Great Commandment as a reason to condemn slavery. Rush was baptized an Anglican but, after his father's death, his mother, a Presbyterian, trained him to go in a way “highly calvinistical.”

When he was eight, he and his brother, Jacob, were sent to study with his uncle, Samuel Finley, a “New Side” Presbyterian minister who operated an academy at West Nottingham in what was then southeastern Pennsylvania. There he spent five years learning Latin, Greek, and the *Westminster Catechism*. He later argued that early study of “dead languages” was detrimental to democracy, but in his case it had an egalitarian effect: At thirteen, after an examination requiring translation of New Testament verses from Greek to Latin, he was admitted to the College of New Jersey, recently relocated to Princeton.

There, he studied philosophies natural and moral, mathematics, and Classical texts and rhetoric, and formed the habit of recording his thoughts in a commonplace book, which eventually supported a “frequent ... use of pen and ink” on a range of subjects and in a reach of styles. Decades later, he based *Travels* on such notations; there, he deprecated his undergraduate self as “idle, playful ... sometimes mischievous.” Still, he was awarded his *Artium Baccalaureus* at fourteen, and remains Princeton’s youngest graduate.

Upon graduation he thought to study law, but Reverend Finley cautioned legal practice was full of temptations and urged him toward medicine. At fifteen, Rush was apprenticed to Philadelphia’s busiest physician. He learned to compound medicines, nurse the sick, and keep the books. Voracious for knowledge, he recorded whatever he found “curious or valuable” in his master’s practice in his commonplace books. At sixteen, he wrote one of the earliest symptomatology of yellow fever. Finding his master more employer than mentor, he observed other physicians at the Pennsylvania Hospital, attended lectures at the newly-formed medical department of the College of Philadelphia and even took vocational ideas from sermons; Finley’s homily “The Madness of Mankind” may have limned his future specialty.

At this time, he was a loyal subject and no pacifist; he rejoiced at “the success of our forces” during the second *Annus Mirabilis* of the Seven Years War, regretting only that the “wild mob” singing *Rule, Britannia!* tended “to extol the prudence and moderation of a general” when “[t]is God that teaches our hands to war and our fingers to fight!” But eventually he fell into the less loyal company of Thomas Bradford, whose father owned the London Coffee House and published the *Pennsylvania Journal*.

In March 1765, Parliament passed the *Stamp Act*, which required that all documents printed in the colonies bear stamps purchased from the Crown; not only legal documents but newspapers and almanacs had to be franked with what colonists called “badges of slavery.” As these could only be purchased with specie, which in the colonies was chronically in short supply, the *Stamp Act* threatened both civil communication and the nascent American literary culture. Protests stimulated that culture; poems, essays, and broadsides inspired acts of disobedience, not necessarily civil. In Boston, in August, a society known in whispers as the Sons of Liberty hung the *Stamp Tax* collector in effigy on what was labeled, and later fabled, the “Tree of Liberty.”

In Philadelphia, in September, the normally conservative Pennsylvania Assembly passed Resolves which broadened protest of the *Stamp Act* with the argument that colonists, lacking representation in Parliament, could not be taxed by it, as “it is the

inherent Birth-right, and indubitable Privilege, of every British Subject, to be taxed only by his own Consent, or that of his legal Representatives." Still more broadly, the Resolves made an issue of identity, claiming "the inhabitants of this Province are entitled to all the Liberties, Rights and Privileges of his Majesty's Subjects in Great-Britain, or elsewhere."

In New York, in October, representatives of nine of the twelve colonies met in what British officials regarded as an "illegal assembly." Echoing the legal Pennsylvania Assembly, the "Stamp Act Congress" claimed legitimacy derived from "the right of the British subjects in these colonies, to petition the king" in a "Declaration of Rights and Grievances." This was supported by two hundred wholesalers who agreed to import no British goods so long as the *Stamp Act* was in effect. Retailers also pledged cooperation. Tradesmen, mechanics, seamen and laborers met en masse and marched down Broadway. One official reported: "[A] mob in 3 squads went through the Streets crying 'Liberty' ... breaking the Lamps and threatening particulars that they would the next night pull down their Houses. Some thousands of windows Broke."

From Philadelphia, in November, Rush wrote to a former schoolmate, now a merchant in New York, approving "commotions" there, which, he claimed, received "great approbation" in Philadelphia, although the city was "cursed with a set of men ... daily endeavoring to suppress the spirit of liberty among us. You know I mean the Quakers." Nonetheless, he reported "[a]n effigy of our stamp officers has been exposed to public view affixed to a gallows," hinted "something more spirited" was afoot, and wished for reinforcement from "4 or 500 of your *mobility*." He condemned the province's agent to London, who, although once a Philadelphia printer, was said to have acquiesced to the Stamp Tax. Rush called the agent a "curse to Pennsylvania and America" and wished "may the most accumulated vengeance burst speedily on thy guilty head!"

Parliament summoned Pennsylvania's agent for "examination"—meaning, chastisement. But the agent, who identified himself as "Franklin, of Philadelphia," declined to be chastised. Instead, he educated Parliament on colonial realities; that "frontier counties ... are able to pay very little tax" and that there was "not gold and silver enough in the Colonies to pay the stamp duty for one year." In March, 1766, Parliament repealed the *Stamp Act*.

Word reached America in May. In Boston, "Bells in all the Churches were immediately set a Ringing" and a Baptist and a Congregationalist preached from the same text—although only the Baptist interpreted the "good News from a far Country" as being that "instead of being slaves ... we are indulged the full exercise of those liberties which have been transmitted to us as the richest inheritance from our forefathers."

In Philadelphia, Franklin's reputation was rehabilitated by a bootleg transcript of his testimony and letters attesting that this alone was responsible for repeal, and an eight page-ode, printed broadside, urged "sons of LIBERTY" to honor "George our Gracious King" and forgive all foes. In Princeton, Samuel Finley, now president of the College of New Jersey, planted sycamore trees, an allusion to the diminutive tax collector Zacchaeus who found salvation after he "climbed up into a sycomore" to catch glimpse of Jesus. Two of those trees would stand centuries, but that summer, Finley lay on his deathbed in

Philadelphia. Decades later Rush recalled, “I sat up with him ... every other night ... and finally performed the distressing office of closing his eyes.”

*

On the last day of August, 1766, 20-year-old Benjamin Rush left behind all things familiar and braved the perils of the sea to study at the University of Edinburgh, the most prestigious school of medicine in the English-speaking world. The curriculum included anatomy, physic, *materia medica*—pharmacology—the primitive chemistry of the day, and “natural philosophy,” an ur-discipline that conflated theology with archaeology, paleontology with zoology, and biology with destiny. There was no entrance examination, but only one entrant in five survived to write a thesis and defend it—in Latin—and earn the degree of *Medicinae Doctor*. Even students who had taken firsts at England’s Ancient Universities were daunted by Edinburgh. Rush’s *alma mater* was a colonial college, and, although a journeyman physician, he delayed matriculation for year of “hard study” so as “to make a figure in Europe.” Throughout the seven-week voyage he suffered from what he diagnosed as *mal de mer* and self-medicated with laudanum.

In Edinburgh, his seasickness progressed to insomnia and homesickness; he fantasized a future in which Philadelphia was the “*Edinburgh of America*” and “The student ... no longer tears himself from every tender engagement ... in pursuit of knowledge in a foreign country.” Nonetheless, he attended both lectures at the University and sermons at St. Giles Cathedral with calvinistical diligence. His appearance at the High Kirk prompted pious Edinburghers to receive him socially. Though he left America with “a resolution to avoid forming connections with persons of great distinction,” he found it “unavoidable and in some cases absolutely necessary” to hobnob with “persons of rank.” He met David Hume, whose ideas would shape some of his future essays, at the table of a baronet. At the mansion of the Earl of Leven, David Leslie, he formed “a particular acquaintance” with the heir, Lord Balgonie, and familiarity with the Honorable William and Lady Jane.

But Rush also formed a particular acquaintance with a commoner, John Bostock, who challenged his monarchial orthodoxy with republican ideas. “Never before had I heard the authority of kings called in question,” Rush wrote decades later. “For the first moment in my life I now exercised my reason upon the subject of government.” Rush became convinced of the “absurdity of hereditary power” and that “no form of government can be rational but that which is derived from the suffrages of the people.” But although this “great and active truth ... became a ferment in my mind,” he entertained it “in theory only ... the change produced in my political principles by my friend had no effect upon my conversation or conduct.” At year’s end, the radical Bostock was only grudgingly granted a degree; Rush was invited into the Medical Society.

He spent the summer brushing up his Latin, learning to read Italian and Spanish and to converse in French. That fall, he became a disciple of Dr. William Cullen, who advocated the “depletion therapies”—sweating, purging, blood-letting—later labeled “Heroic Medicine.” Cullen also was dedicated to “delivering medicine from the fetters of the

Latin." Still, it was for a dissertation written and defended in that language that Rush was awarded an Edinburgh MD.

That summer, now-Dr. Rush was a guest at Melville House, the Earl of Leven's country seat. Decades later, he emphasized friendships with the Earl's sons, noting "many fine philosophic walks thro' ye woods & Avenues of Melville" with Lord Balgonie. But it was the Earl's daughter, Lady Jane, who caused new ferment in his mind. His journaled description of her crowds the boundaries of eighteenth-century Presbyterian propriety. She was, he wrote, "between 15 & 16—an Age in which the Charms of youth—Beauty—& Virtue appear to ye greatest Advantage." The next half-page was excised, but syntactical analysis suggests Rush referred to Lady Jane's physique. What remained was "Beauty ... Education—virtue—spotless Innocence & Sweetness of Temper ... irresistible." He cautioned himself not to "dwell upon every part of this lovely young Lady's Character ..." then dwelt in inadvertent couplet: "What politeness! What an Address—what an insinuating Manner does she possess!"

Rush no doubt expressed his admiration to Lady Jane. He may have broached the disposition of her hand to Lord Balgonie, or even the Earl. But any such conversation would have been affected by events far from ye woods & Avenues of Melville. In 1767 Parliament had again sought to tax the colonies, through laws known, collectively, as the Townshend Acts, which imposed duties on many imports, including tea. American responses included a dozen elegantly -worded epistles which discouraged "measures disrespectful to our Sovereign" but encouraged a boycott of British goods and noted "English history affords frequent examples of resistance by force." These *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* were first published in Philadelphia.

Politics aside, Rush was a landless, penniless, colonial commoner. Any suit discouraged, he quit Edinburgh for London. He wrote, covertly, to Lady Jane, "When I reflect upon what I have left behind me in Scotland ... I can say from experience that there is no operation in surgery so painful." Later, he would describe love as "a passion [that] becomes a disease only where it is disappointed ... The effects of unsuccessful love are dyspepsia, hysteria, hypochondriasis, fever, and madness. The last has sometimes induced suicide." He prescribed blood-letting and purging. Fortunately, mild cases could be treated with "constant employment."

He may have been his own first patient; certainly, in London, he kept himself employed. He observed clinics at two hospitals. He learned Robert Sutton's technique of smallpox inoculation, which substituted "a slight puncture with the point of a lancet ... dipt in fresh matter" for "a large incision and pus-infused bandage." He attended medical discussions—"Levee Morning" breakfasts—at the home of Dr. John Fothergill, an Edinburgh alumnus, who had introduced the Royal Society to both "mouth-to-mouth ventilation" and Franklin's observations on electricity. Fothergill, who along with medical matters "often spoke with horror of war," introduced Rush to his protégé, John Coakley Lettsom.

Lettsom, too, was colonial born and a physician through both apprenticeship and formal study. He'd made his fortune in the West Indies, practicing Heroic medicine, of

which he spoke with mordant humor. He had inherited slaves, but immediately freed them. He and Rush would be lifelong correspondents.

Rush dined with Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith and heard the latter read from a work-in-progress, "The Deserted Village," which depicted a once-idyllic hamlet decimated by aristocratic arrogation and American emigration. He attended political coteries at the home of Catherine Macaulay, widow of an Edinburgh physician, who was publishing an eight-volume *History of England*. In her most recent volume Mrs. Macaulay had dared opine that Britain's "Glorious Revolution" would have been more glorious had it not only secured the traditional rights of Englishmen but also "cut off all of the prerogatives of the Crown." Between volumes, she'd dashed off *Loose Remarks* on Thomas Hobbes, augmented with a plan for "democratical" government.

In January 1769, Rush wrote to Mrs. Macaulay begging to differ with her inclusion of military officers in her model legislature. Applying Hume's notion of character types, he argued that "military officers should be entirely excluded" as "[t]he strict discipline kept up in armies and navies disposes military gentlemen ... to contract an arbitrary temper which, when brought into private or civil life, becomes disagreeable." Mrs. Macaulay, who found young men amusing, included Rush's letter in a second edition of her *Loose Remarks*.

But Rush's most important connection was with the man he once cursed. "Domesticated" for a time in Franklin's home, Rush continued to visit frequently—never, he told his children "without learning something." Franklin took Rush to Westminster, introduced him to literary friends, encouraged him to visit Paris and funded the trip, calling it a loan to protect Rush's pride, which Rush found a "delicate act of paternal friendship that attached me to him during the remainder of his life."

Rush played the tourist in the City of Light, visiting Versailles, venturing into Catholic churches to view art. As "un ami de Monsier Franklin" he was feted by French *philosophes* at coteries where he was both guest and specimen of a *creole*—a human of European stock born in America, and so, possibly, degenerated. He himself made notes for a Humean essay, comparing the French, sarcastically termed "the most civilized of any nation in the world," to the Indians of North America. One of his observations was:

The military art is held in the highest estimation in France and arms confer the first rank in society. "At-il servie," that is, has he been in the army, is the first and often the only question that is asked when an enquiry is made into the character of a young gentleman. The same preference is given to the business of war among the Indians. The highest praise that can be given to an Indian is to say that, "he is a great warrior."

In March, he returned to London, pausing en route to deliver a baby. He visited Franklin and Fothergill, delivered letters to Hume and, in May, took ship for home.

He suffered only once from sea-sickness on his homeward voyage—although he rhapsodized ad nauseam on the theme of Lady Jane. Westbound crossings were notoriously interminable—inexplicably so, as Franklin had not yet charted the “Gulph Stream”—but Rush borrowed Blackstone’s *Commentaries* from a fellow cabin passenger and descended into steerage to find a Lutheran Bible to refresh his knowledge of the scripture in the language spoken by a third of Pennsylvanians. Decades later he called his “last view of the white cliffs of Britain affecting” and gave his reasons, but at “the cry of land” he looked upon the American shore with a “rapture” he could not explain.

After landing in New York, his rapture became “an uncommon depression of spirits” which, he later warned, was “the usual effect of a high tide of joy upon the system” and, frequently, a precursor of “melancholy and even suicide.” A week later, in Philadelphia, he settled into places prepared for him: a house, “taken for him,” shared with his brother, Jacob, now a lawyer, kept for them by a sister, Betsey, a refugee from an “unfortunate” marriage; a lectureship in chemistry at the College of Philadelphia; a membership in the American Philosophical Society. He opened an apothecary shop and began to build a practice among the Presbyterians and the poor.

He found no lack of patients. Penn’s “greene country towne”—designed to be an orderly arbor of streets and swarded squares, fronted by “a glorious River”—had metastasized into a seaport city, crosshatched with noisome alleys and open sewers; diseases came ashore with trade goods, immigrants, slaves and rats. When Rush began practice, scarlet fever raged, but some fever *always* raged, afflicting huddled masses and haughty burgers indiscriminately.

Rush chronicled epidemics for the use of colleagues; for the use of his children he described ascending by ladder to the garrets of alley huts “where I was sure I risked not only taking their disease but being infected by vermin. More than once did I suffer from the latter.” He did not suffer “depression in my spirits,” although, after his brother left to study law in London, he “kept but little company.” His days were spent in work, his nights, in study. Early to rise, but late to bed, he often “heard the watchmen cry 3 o’clock.”

Elsewhere, nights were not so quiet. Parliament countered protests of the Townshend Acts by stationing a fifty-gun Royal Navy ship-of-the-line in Boston Harbor and a four thousand-man British Army detachment in Boston itself. In March 1770, a squad of eight Redcoats, armed with muskets, fired into a crowd armed with sticks, stones and epithets, killing five. Bostonians called it a “massacre.” Parliament called it an “incident” but repealed the Townshend Acts, except a tax on tea. Nonetheless, “A British Bostonian,” invoking the prophet Micah, warned Acting Governor Thomas Hutchinson “Americans will not submit to be SLAVES; they know the use of the gun ... as well as any of his Majesty’s troops.”

But that was in another colony; the Sons of Liberty, if it ever existed in Philadelphia, was dead, though some said it was resurrected. Philadelphians had long celebrated the English May Day as Tammany Day, in homage to Tamanend, the Lenni-Lenape *sakima* who granted Penn and his settlers the right to “live in peace as long as the waters run in the rivers and creeks.” On May 1, 1772, Philadelphia gentlemen gathered at

the sign of The Golden Fleece as the “Sons of King Tammany,” and drank a twenty one-toast salute to the *sakima*, the King, the Royal Navy, the British army, and “[u]nanimity between Great Britain and her Colonies.”

Rush was not among them. As he told his children, “by persons who called themselves great in the city I was at this time neglected, or unknown.” But his practice was “extensive” though he was too often paid in paper money, and he gained patients and the envy and enmity of other physicians by offering “Suttonian” smallpox inoculation. He also took on apprentices who paid a premium. One, James McHenry, became a political, as well as medical, protégé. McHenry wrote poems but was reluctant to publish. Rush published enthusiastically. His printed lectures—arguably the first American textbook—were followed by several articles which he hoped would interest the British Royal Society. The Society was unimpressed by American newspapers and American readers were put off by discussions of intestinal worms and the “dissection” of a three-year-old, but Rush soon learned “to excite the attention of the public” with less forensic idiom and more familiar form.

In the venerable *Pennsylvania Gazette* and the upstart *Pennsylvania Packet* he published medical advisories in the guise of sermons; the conceit was they had been “discovered among the papers of a deceased minister.” Rush practiced depletion therapies, but preached preventives still prescribed by modern physicians: hydration; a diet rich in fish and vegetables, sparing in red meat; regular exercise. Collected in a pamphlet, these *Sermons to Gentlemen Upon Temperance and Exercise* proved popular; a London publisher reprinted it as *Sermons to the Rich and Studious* in “a size handy for the pocket.”

Rush’s reputation spread. He was offered a practice valued at £1,000 per year in then-Charlestown, South Carolina. He declined, claiming to prefer “this dear province where one owes one’s ease only to free and honest toil” to “a country where wealth has been accumulated only by the sweat and blood of Negro slaves,” but his moralistic preferences were supported by a prosperity that exceeded his expectations and suggested the secret adoption of election. They were also consistent with the principles of a new mentor.

His name was Anthony Benezet. He was of an age with Finley, and like Finley came to America with his family when in his teens. His people were once-wealthy French Huguenots driven into impoverished exile in Rotterdam and London before Philadelphia. In London Benezet became a Quaker; his first principle was pacifism. During the first *Annus Mirabilis* of 1759, when American clerics were thanking God for British victories at Madras, Lagos, Guadeloupe, Ticonderoga, and the Plains of Abraham, Benezet told the Philadelphia Meeting a Christian could neither “derive blessing” from war’s success, nor “exult when to the short-sighted view of the human mind the appearance of success presents itself.” In 1766, he published “Thoughts on the Nature of War,” based on *Matthew 26:52*—“all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”

But in Philadelphia Benezet also became a teacher, first at a Quaker school in Germantown, later at the public school chartered by William Penn. He saw his profession as a duty, of which “the poor and helpless” should be “the first objects” and began instruction of Negro children in his home. Their progress convinced him that “the notion

... that the blacks are inferior” was a “vulgar prejudice, founded on the Pride or Ignorance of their lordly Masters.” In 1763, a visit to his school also convinced Franklin, who had once argued for the exclusion of “all Blacks and Tawneys,” that Africans “are not deficient in natural understanding.”

Benezet argued his principles in scholarly treatises, notably “A Caution and a Warning to Great Britain,” also published in 1766. According to such authorities as John Locke, John Calvin, Moses, and the *Massachusetts Body of Liberties*, humans could be enslaved with legal and moral impunity provided they were “captives taken in just warres.” Benezet demonstrated that the slave traders’ business plan was to incite wars to manufacture captives. His evidence included extracts from the diaries of two slave-ship physicians. One journaled: “No trade today, tho’ ... the people are gone to war within land, and will bring prisoners enough ... in hopes of which we stay.” The other recalled:

On the coast at a place called Basalia, the Commander of the vessel, according to custom, sent a person on shore with a present to the King ... and letting him know, they wanted a cargo of slaves. The King promised to furnish them with slaves, and in order to do it, set out to go to war against his enemies, designing also to surprize some town, and take all the people prisoners: Sometime after, the King sent them word, he had not yet met with the desired success, having been twice repulsed, in attempting to break up two towns; but that he still hoped to procure a number of slaves for them; and in this design he persisted till he met his enemies in the field, where a battle was fought, which lasted three days, during which time the engagement was so bloody, that four thousand five hundred men were slain on the spot.

In January 1773, Benezet, after corresponding with British abolitionist Granville Sharp, resolved to oppose the slave trade through Philadelphia. He petitioned the Pennsylvania Assembly to increase in the import duty on Africans to a rate he thought would be prohibitive. The petition was supported by his treatises, but his prose proved too prolix for politicians; the petition was tabled. Rush’s recently-published *Sermons* showed a talent for popularization; Benezet recruited him “to lay the weight of the matter briefly before the members” and make the argument accessible to a larger audience and also to act as a stalking horse.

It is not clear why Rush enlisted in this effort. According to one historian, when, en route to Edinburgh, Rush made landfall in Liverpool, he “was outraged by the sight of a hundred slave ships in Liverpool harbor” and “from that day ... dedicated himself to Negro freedom.” Rush did journal: “Inhuman practice! Men grow rich by the Calamities of their fellow-creatures!” and did write to Thomas Bradford, “This town has been enriched by the African Trade chiefly” and, as Liverpool was Britain’s primary slaving port, may have been shocked by the number of slave ships in the Mersey roadstead. But to see a slave ship in the Delaware was not uncommon, and Africans were advertised in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and

auctioned outside Bradford's Coffee House. And even as educated in the *Catechism* he was taught to be accustomed to slavery; before he embarked for Liverpool, a Philadelphia newspaper announced auction of "the personal estate of the late Revd. Dr. Samuel Finley, consisting of two Negro women, a negro man, and three Negro children."

Perhaps Rush was impressed that Benezet's eyewitnesses were physicians, or that one sailed from Liverpool, or that the other was a Philadelphian, whose sign Rush had seen as a child, across from the Presbyterian Church. However motivated, Rush distilled Benezet's treatises into a four thousand-word *Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements in America, Upon Slave-Keeping*.

Writing as "A Pennsylvanian," he countered the "just war" rationalization with assertions that slaves were "stolen or seduced from their friends who have never been conquered" and that "the Christians who began the slave trade stirred up the different nations to fight against each other." Denying biological determinism, he anticipated modern "socio-cultural perspectives" to insist that in a slave, aberrant behavior was not abnormal. "Slavery is so foreign to the human mind," he wrote,

that the moral faculties, as well as those of the understanding, are debased and rendered torpid by it. All the vices which are charged upon the Negroes in the southern colonies ... are the genuine offspring of slavery, and serve as an argument to prove that they were not intended for it.

Employing pathos to augment logos, Rush entreated readers to:

Think of the bloody Wars which are fomented ... among the African nations ... of the pangs which attend the dissolution of the ties of nature in those who are stolen from their relations. Think of the many thousands who perish by sickness, melancholy, and suicide, in their voyages to America. Pursue the poor devoted victims to one of the West India islands, and see them exposed there to public sale. Hear their cries, and see their looks of tenderness at each other, upon being separated.—Mothers are torn from their Daughters, and Brothers from Brothers, without the liberty of a parting embrace. Their master's name is now marked upon their breasts with a red hot iron ... See! The poor wretches with what reluctance they take their instruments of labor into their hands,—Some of them, overcome with heat and sickness, seek to refresh themselves by a little rest.—But, behold an Overseer approaches them—In vain they sue for pity.—He lifts up his Whip, while streams of Blood follow every stroke. Neither age nor sex are spared.—Methinks one of them is woman far advanced in her pregnancy.—At a little distance from these behold a man, who from his

countenance and deportment appears as if he was descended from illustrious ancestors.—Yes.—He is the son of a Prince, and was torn by a stratagem, from an amiable wife and two young children.—Mark his sullen looks!—now he bids defiance to the tyranny of his Master, and in an instant—plunges a Knife into his Heart ...

He established ethos by echoing authority. In 1751, the Assembly, to mark the Golden Jubilee of Pennsylvania's Charter of Privileges, ordered a bell "with words well shaped around it ... 'Proclaim Liberty thro' all the Land to all the Inhabitants thereof.-Levit. XXV. 10.'" In 1773, A Pennsylvanian noted: "[I]n the year of the jubilee, all the Hebrew slaves were set at liberty." Reminded that *Leviticus* 25:10 had more than eleven words, the Assembly doubled the tariff on imported Africans.

Both Benezet and Rush thought this the coup de grâce to Philadelphia's slave trade. Rush thought his *Address* the misericorde, but he acknowledged authorship only in passive voice—"I am publicly credited" in a letter to a Paris physician; "the public have ascribed to me" in a letter to Franklin. When he presumed to send a copy to Sharp, suggesting it be published in London, he insisted on "still concealing the author's name from the public."

He had reason to cling to anonymity; many elite Philadelphians owned slaves—"A Farmer in Pennsylvania" kept three dozen on his plantation in the Lower Counties—and, as a "A West Indian" residing in Philadelphia, noted in a responding pamphlet, West Indian business was "a considerable branch" of Philadelphia commerce and slave-holding West Indians had recently donated a "genteel sum of money" to the College of Philadelphia. A West Indian correctly pointed out that *Leviticus* 25 had more than one verse, but marred his argument with gratuitous slaps at physicians who "take a fee from a patient, when they know his cure to be impossible" and at A Pennsylvanian, "a man of a gloomy and discontented turn of mind who has no other view ... than to make an ostentatious show of his abilities." Such insults might have required satisfaction had not noms de plume saved face, especially as Rush was no longer neglected or unknown; he was advertised as being among the "eminent and influential" invited to dine on May Day with what was now called the Sons of Saint Tammany.

The replacement of coronation by canonization may have been merely style, imported from Maryland. Or it may have indicated disaffection. But if the Sons again toasted "Unanimity between Great Britain and her Colonies," they drank in vain; Parliament had already passed the *Tea Act*.

The *Tea Act* was, in modern parlance, a bailout of the Honourable British East India Company, which for two centuries had enjoyed a virtual monopoly on British trade in Southeast Asia. It was invisible in the Colonies; the spices, saltpeter, cotton, silk, indigo, tea, and opium it procured were shipped to ports in Britain and taxed as imports before being wholesaled to merchants trading to the Americas. But in Britain the East India Company was highly visible.

In the mid-eighteenth century, East India House, the massive headquarters in London's financial district, was a source of both upper-class income—in 1769 its stock

peaked at £276 per share—and working-class employment—in 1772 the East India Company ordered so many vessels from British shipyards that Parliament intervened to protect the interests of the Royal Navy. It was also a font of fantasies for commoners who would be Kings of Kafiristan. The avatar of the “British Dream” was Robert Clive, who, at nineteen, went out to India as an East India Company agent and returned, at thirty-five, with fortune enough to purchase land, title, and a seat in Parliament. In June 1772, Clive’s story became grist for a comedy, *The Nabob*, in which “Sir Matthew Mite” comes back from the East “scattering the spoils of ruined provinces” and enters Parliament as representative of the “Borough of Bribe’em.”

But in June 1772 the East India Company itself was embarrassed. Chinese insistence on “hard currency” had forced it to borrow specie. Now, due in part to American resistance, in lieu of pounds sterling it had seventeen million pounds of tea in warehouses, with shipping costs and import duties accrued, storage costs accruing, write-offs for spoilage forthcoming and interest payments to the Bank of England coming due. Rumors of bankruptcy depressed financial markets. Although Britain’s Solicitor General, Alexander Wedderburn, deemed management “fully competent,” fellow Parliamentarian Edmund Burke declared the East India Company a “mill-stone ... tied about the neck” capable of dragging the nation “into an unfathomable abyss.”

But the East India Company was, in modern parlance, “too big to fail.” The *Tea Act* eased the cash flow problem by refunding the import duties, provided the tea was shipped to the Colonies and distributed through merchants who would pay the import duties and pass the cost on to consumers, in effect accomplishing Parliament’s goal of taxing Americans.

For Americans there was more at issue than taxation with or without representation. Though Parliament found East India Company shipbuilding “doth greatly exceed the tonnage ... requisite to carry on the trade,” Parliament was well aware the vessels had additional purpose. The East India Company’s embarrassment was also due in part to the cost of maintaining a fleet of over a hundred armed merchant ships, called “East Indiamen” and sixty-five thousand troops in “Presidency Armies.” It was these forces, not the Royal Navy or the British Army, that were enlarging the British Empire. The Crown, enjoying enlargement, granted the monarchial latitude in Far East longitudes, the East India Company was so visible it was called simply “The Company.”

East of Suez, where the best was like the worst, “Company Rule” replaced the Ten Commandments and British law. In India, the Company flew its own flag, coined its own money, had its own capital. It did not declare war—but did fight battles. It did not make treaties but did forge agreements. It did not rule but did install puppet governments. It did not levy taxes but did provide revenue collection services. And it did commit atrocities.

This was not unknown. While Rush studied in Scotland, the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, published in Edinburgh as well as London, ran articles on smallpox inoculation, the continued adventures of Lord Clive and “Animadversions on the Conduct of the E. I. Directors” in which “East-India Inquisitor” warned that the Company threatened the authority of the Crown in Britain as well as Asia and predicted it would perpetrate “the

same cruelties in this island which have deluged with native and innocent blood the plains of India." Even as Parliament passed the *Tea Act*, a Select Committee charged the Company with "infamous designs ... carried into execution by perfidy and murder" and with involvement in incidents "shocking to human nature," including mass rape and cannibalism.

In 1772, some Americans noted that the same Act that curtailed Company ship-building in Britain empowered it to build ships "in any of his Majesty's Colonies in America." Also, that an Opinion from the King's Bench, applauded by opponents of slavery, implied British offshore territories and the home countries occupied different legal universes, thereby sanctioning "Company Rule." In June 1773, a Boston newspaper published a leaked memorandum in which a Massachusetts colonial official opined "the peace and good order of the colonies" might require "an abridgment of what are called English liberties." It was dated 1769, when the author, Thomas Hutchinson, was only Acting Governor, but it showed that, even after the *Stamp Act's* repeal, British officials denied that Americans were "entitled to all the inherent rights and privileges of ... natural born subjects." Hutchinson had since been promoted to Governor. His sons, merchants in Boston, were designated distributors of Company tea.

Decades later, Rush described his role in *Tea Act* protests as "early but obscure." Through his practice, he discovered "the errors and prejudices which hung over the minds of the midling class" and informed other writers whose publications "governed the public mind" and provided "all the political information which set Pennsylvania in motion." He admitted he "was not idle ... with my pen" but implied his essays were Potemkin village propaganda, appearing "under a variety of signatures by which means an impression of numbers in favor of liberty was made." He had reason to use pseudonyms; after being outed as author of the *Address Upon Slave-Keeping*, half his patients left him and he was rumored to be insane. Still, in September he republished the *Address*, eliminating "slave-keeping" from the title, but enlarging the argument to link African slavery with American liberty.

In mid-October, Philadelphians, summoned by the ringing of the State House Bell, gathered to protest the "pernicious program of the East India Company." They voiced approval of Resolutions, previously published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, which charged collusion between Parliament and the Company. Opponents estimated the attendance at only three hundred, in a city of forty thousand. But two days later, in the *Philadelphia Journal*, "Hamden" invoked every Judeo-Christian authority from Moses to "our Saviour Himself" to inform the multitude of "machinations ... to enslave us by means of the East-India Company" and to malign tea as "a slow poison in a political as well as physical sense."

The world would little note, nor long remember the "Philadelphia Resolutions" or Hamden's exhortation. But, in Boston, the protest of the six thousand who comprised "the Body of the People" was framed as an endorsement of the "judicious resolves lately entered into by our worthy brethren, the citizens of Philadelphia," and Dr. Thomas Young, John Adams's physician, wrote that "Tea is really a slow poison ... said to be possessed of a

corrosive quality.” What the world would greatly note and still remembers is that, while Young lectured on “The Ill Effects of Tea on the Constitution” at the Old South Meeting House, the Sons of Liberty, disguised as Mohawks and Narragansetts, dumped forty-five tons of Company tea into Boston Harbor. “The People have passed the River and cutt away the Bridge” enthused John Adams. “The Sublimity of it charms me!”

Philadelphia seemed primed for similar sublimity. When a vessel laden with Company tea entered the Delaware, a “Committee For Tarring and Feathering” warned river pilots not to guide it to dock and threatened the captain with “a Halter around your Neck—ten Gallons of liquid Tar decanted on your Pate—with the Feathers of a dozen wild Geese laid over that to enliven your Appearance.” But when the ship anchored, the matter was handled with “a decorum and order worthy the importance of the cause.” The captain was escorted with courtesy—and bodyguards—to the State House Yard to hear eight thousand Philadelphians shout: “The tea ... shall not be landed.” He was then permitted to procure provisions and depart with his cargo intact.

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To punish Massachusetts for what Alexander Wedderburn termed “a flagrant instance of their rebellious disposition,” Parliament passed the “Coercive Acts” which banned town meetings, imposed martial law, and closed Boston Harbor until the Company was compensated. Even some Britons found these Acts outrageous; Catharine Macaulay warned Britons that even home country citizens were threatened as “none of the fundamental principles of our boasted constitution are held sacred by the government” and that, should the Acts motivate an American independence movement, “you ... will be left to the bare possession of your foggy islands.”

But before Intolerable Acts came unwise insult: Parliament summoned Massachusetts’s London agent for examination in a chamber named for its former function: “the cockpit.” In an hour-long harangue “decked with the choicest Flowers of Billingsgate,” Wedderburn accused the agent of leaking Hutchinson’s letters, thus becoming the “prime conductor” of American unrest. When the agent stood silent, Wedderburn put words into his mouth, lines from a melodrama in which the villain, Zanga, a Moor, confesses to having forged a letter. While three dozen high-born well-breds jeered, Wedderburn pounded on the table, demanding “whether the revengeful temper attributed to the bloody African is not surpassed by the coolness and apathy of the wily American?”

But previously Massachusetts’s agent identified himself as “Franklin of Philadelphia;” Wedderburn’s insults alienated Pennsylvania. May Day, 1774, fell on Sunday; on Monday effigies of Hutchinson and Wedderburn, the latter labeled “A Pert Prime Prater, of a Scabby Race,” were carted through the streets, hung on gallows outside the Coffee House and “Set in Flames by Electric Fire.”

In July, Rush again wrote to Sharp: “If the British Parliament had not given a sanction to the African trade by sundry acts, I should suppose ... the colonies only would be punished for making slaves of the poor Africans.” He added: “My profession confines

me from many of the duties of a good citizen," but in September, when eleven of the twelve colonies sent representatives to Philadelphia for another extralegal congress, he ventured "as far as Frankford to meet the delegates from Massachusetts" and met another religious, self-made professional, John Adams, who also became a lifelong friend.

For Philadelphia, the "Continental Congress" was a social as well as political event. Although not officially accommodated in the State House, delegates were received as foreign dignitaries; decades later, Rush boasted he entertained "nearly all the members of this first Congress ... at my table." After seven weeks of meetings at the hall of the Carpenter's Guild, it "resolved to pursue ... peaceable measures," which began with the pro forma flattery of a "loyal address to his Majesty." But Congress also created a proxy, a trade cooperative called the "Continental Association," through which it threatened to "not purchase or use any *East India* Tea whatsoever" and:

to neither import nor purchase any Slave imported after the first day of *December* next; after which time we will wholly discontinue the Slave Trade, and will neither be concerned in it ourselves, nor will we hire our vessels, nor sell our Commodities or Manufactures to those who are concerned in it.

After adjournment, Rush dined with delegates at the City Tavern, where thirty-five toasts were drunk. Decades later he recalled one: "that the fire ... recently kindled upon the altar of liberty in America, enlighten all the nations of the world." The slave trade embargo, he wrote to Sharp, "does our Congress the more honor as it was proposed and defended entirely upon *moral* and not political principles." Mistaking resolution for resolve, he declared: "Thus have we stopped the avenue of a vice which we have good reason to fear brought down the vengeance of Heaven upon our country ... We have now *turned from our wickedness* ... there will be not a Negro slave in North America in 40 years."

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Decades later, Rush described himself as "a spectator only of the events which passed ... in the winter of 1775." In fact, he made a major contribution, as what, in the modern era would be termed an acquiring editor.

His author was an English immigrant, thrice cashiered from His Majesty's Customs for "claiming to have inspected goods he did not inspect." He had abandoned his wife, flimflammed Franklin for a letter of introduction, added "e" to his surname to confuse creditors and was carried ashore in Philadelphia, half-dead from fever, as "Thomas Paine." As "Justice and Humanity," he decried the injustice and inhumanity he heard in slave auctions outside his sickroom window.

He met Rush in January 1775, at the bookstore of Robert Aitken, who was offering Paine a pittance to edit the startup *Pennsylvania Magazine*. Rush "did homage to his principles and his pen" and invited Paine to visit him. For Paine, it was both an *entrée* into Philadelphia's literary community and an opportunity to be advised by a more experienced,

better educated, and more creative writer. Paine was later lauded for his “lucid and simple style” and himself criticized the use of imagery to produce “an intemperate irritation of the passions,” but one of the first pieces to appear under his editorship was “Reflections on the Life and Death of Lord Clive,” who had recently died from accidental opioid overdose. Signed “Atlanticus,” the essay concluded with a Shakespearian soliloquy in which Clive envisions “The festive board appears to me a stage, the crimson colored port resembles blood,” imagines that “A strange unwelcome something hangs about me,” and exits with a line intimating not accident but suicide.

As that essay appeared, the April skirmishes at Lexington and Concord gave Rush’s feelings “a new tone” and he made notes for “something ... beyond the ordinary short and cold addresses of newspaper publications ... to prepare the public mind to adopt” the “necessary measure”: independence. He hesitated, recalling the consequences of his “Address on Slave-Keeping”; some of his wealthiest patients were “hostile to a separation.” But Paine “had nothing to fear from the popular odium to which such a publication might expose him.” Rush claimed Paine “seized the idea with avidity” but it was Rush who facilitated composition and publication—auditioning passages, critiquing structure, suggesting Paine seek prepublication endorsements. Realizing Paine’s working title, *Plain Truth*, had been preempted, Rush suggested *Common Sense*.

Meanwhile, a second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia, this time in the State House. Delegates cobbled provincial militias into a “Continental Army,” appointed Colonel George Washington Commander-in-Chief and assigned a committee to draft an explanation for such insubordinate behavior. Paine’s work-in-progress would blame conflict on the “monarchical tyranny in the person of the king;” Congress’s “Declaration of Causes” blamed Parliament and “ministerial rapacity,” excusing the King’s “expressions against the colonies” as “inserted in his majesty’s speech.” It was prefaced with an obsequious olive branch, extended to the “Most Gracious Sovereign” from “your Majesty’s faithful subjects” who remained “attached to your Majesty’s person, family, and Government, with all devotion that principle and affection can inspire.”

The Declaration of Causes was published on the Sixth of July, 1775. By the end of August, Rush’s apprentice, McHenry, had written a farewell poem to his mother, drawn up a will requesting his other poems be burned, and gone for a surgeon to the army in Massachusetts. Rush, with responsibilities to family, patients, and other apprentices—could not afford so galvanic a response. And although his protégé was dismissing “the peaceable principle of the Quakers” in an essay signed “A Lover of Peace,” his mentor insisted war in any cause was “an evil that extends where ... it is neither expected nor conceived to reach”—to “property destroyed; laws trampled under foot ... fruitful countries made deserts, stately cities a heap of ruins ... matrons and virgins violated.” Rush found practical and moral middle ground as a medic in the militia’s riverine squadron. And by the end of August, his thoughts had been turned from war to love.

Her name was Julia Stockton. Decades later, Rush described her as “engaging in her manners and correct in her conversation” and claimed he “determined to offer her my

hand” after she praised a sermon he himself found artless. He presented her somewhat differently to his old flame, Lady Jane:

Imagine a woman of your own size, with brown hair, dark eyes, a complexion composed of white and red, a countenance at the same time soft and animated, a voice mild and musical, and a pronunciation accompanied with a little lisp

He had first seen her when she was a toddler and he a stripling. Now she was sixteen and well-endowed with “a pretty little fortune.” Her father, Richard, was landed gentry—acreage his grandfather acquired from William Penn was now the town of Princeton. He had prepped at Finley’s school before graduating from the College of New Jersey. Her mother, Annis, *née* Boudinot, was known as a poet and a hostess—the “Mistress of Morven”—who entertained lavishly at the mansion she had designed and named for a mythical Gaelic kingdom. Rush, at thirty, was well-established with excellent prospects. In midsummer he was invited to Morven and was smitten by Julia. Decades later he reported: “After several visits my suit was blessed with success.” Meanwhile, George III, in a fit of pique or madness, rejected the suit of the Continental Congress.

On January 9, 1776, in Philadelphia, *Common Sense* “burst from the press.” It was discussed over smuggled tea in parlors, over smuggled Madeira in libraries, over rum punch in taverns where it was read aloud to the illiterate. Passages were memorized for recitation in schools and Sunday schools. One clergyman, recognizing its sermonic structure, read it from the pulpit. On January 11, at Morven, Benjamin Rush and Julia Stockton were married.

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Decades later, Rush turned quickly from “Domestic Events” to “events produced by the revolutionary state of our country” and told his children, “In the winter of 1776, I was elected a member of what was then called a Committee of Inspection”—the first in a sequence of elections and selections. In May, during their first separation, he wrote to his bride:

A melancholy silence reigns through every apartment of our house. Every room and piece of furniture proclaims that you are gone, and sympathizes with me in lamenting the absence of their mistress ... I did not know till since we parted how much you were a part of myself ... I feel some abatement of my affection for my country when I reflect she has deprived me ... of my dear Julia’s company.

He reported a planned parade “to give the Indian ambassadors ... an august idea of the military strength of our province,” but he was not in the State House Assembly Room when those ambassadors were plied with promises of friendship and trade trinkets in hopes they would not “join with our enemies,” nor when Richard Henry Lee moved to declare

“these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent,” nor when a Committee of Five was assigned to “prepare the declaration.”

He was, however, in the Carpenters’ Hall in June, elected—along with eight military gentlemen—to a “Provincial Conference of Committees,” which resolved to suspend “all Authority in this Province derived from the Crown.” Rush was appointed Chair of a committee to draft a justification. Presented that afternoon, it was “agreed to unanimously.” Rush was then appointed Chair of a committee to draft a “Resolution ... with respect to Independence.” Presented the next day, it was adopted “with the greatest Unanimity.”

That same day, the Committee of Five presented a similar document to Congress, a scene rendered famously but inaccurately by painter John Trumbull in the nineteenth century. At the time Congress adopted nothing. Two weeks later, John Adams wrote his wife, Abigail: “The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epocha, in the History of America.”

While Congress debated, Pennsylvanians elected a “Provincial Convention” to create a constitution consistent with independence. When that Convention met it also reconfigured the province’s Congressional delegation to be enthusiastic “with respect to independence.” Rush was, he wrote to General Charles Lee, “thrust into Congress.” He felt himself “unequal ... except where plain integrity is required.” A writer, not an orator, he made only one speech. But on August 2, he earned the title Founding Father by signing the engrossed Declaration of Independence.

In the last year of his life he recalled “the pensive and awful silence which pervaded the house when we were called up ... to subscribe what was believed by many at that time to be our own death warrants,” and for good reason. The painless liberation of Boston in March was followed by a painful defeat in Quebec in May. In June, General Lee successfully defended Charleston, encouraging the vote on July 2. But on July 3 Congress learned “the whole of the enemy’s fleet ... one hundred and thirty sail” had been sighted off Sandy Hook and by August 2, nine thousand British troops under General Sir William Howe were encamped on Staten Island. The Declaration printed on July 4 was signed by only one delegate—John Hancock. Until August 2 others had plausible deniability.

Decades later, Rush admitted no misgivings, but did tell his children he “was surprized to observe how little of the spirit of that instrument actuated many ... who had just subscribed to it.” It *was* ironic that, of the fifty-six men who pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to the self-evident truth that all men had a right to liberty, forty-one owned slaves. It was more ironic that, when he signed the Declaration, Rush also owned a slave.

*

Then came the times that tried men’s souls. Washington marched south from Boston and fortified Manhattan and Brooklyn, but failed to heed General Lee, who warned “whoever commands the Sea must command the Town.” In August, Howe executed an amphibious

landing in Brooklyn and outflanked Washington, who lost a fifth of his army but retreated brilliantly to Manhattan.

In mid-September Howe executed another amphibious landing, in mid-Manhattan. Washington, conceding lower Manhattan and New York City—rumors said he tried to burn it—retreated and successfully defended Harlem Heights.

In Pennsylvania, the Provincial Convention created a new frame of government. Rejecting the “Lords and Commons” implications, it had a unicameral legislature, elected annually. There was no governor but “the Great Governor.” The spirit of Penn’s Charter of Privileges, which had unified the colony despite divisions of language and religion, was retained in a Declaration of Rights guaranteeing “freedom of speech, and of writing, and publishing” and the “right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences and understanding.” All men who paid taxes could vote and hold office, even if they did not own property or believe in the Trinity.

The Declaration of Independence divided Americans into Whigs (or Patriots) who supported it and Tories (or Loyalists) who did not. The Commonwealth Constitution divided Pennsylvania into “Constitutionalists” and “Republicans.” John Adams, miffed that it was influenced by Paine’s *Common Sense*, not his *Thoughts on Government*, claimed it lacked “Equilibrium or Counterpoise” and predicted it would “produce ... Evil Work.” Rush “learned to discover the danger of the Constitution” from Adams and spoke against it in a four-hour debate at the Philosophical Society. Nonetheless, in November, it was adopted and an Assembly elected under its authority. Rush’s position in Congress became precarious.

He was ill-suited to it anyway. There was, he found, “a great deal of difference between sporting a sentiment in a letter or over a glass of wine ... and the duty of a senator.” Also, the twenty shilling *per diem* was poor compensation for having “daily to hear the most melancholy accounts of the distresses of our troops from wants of every kind.” However, he reported actual combat in dissociated tone (“When the word of command to ‘fire’ was given, the enemy gave way, and a total rout was expected, but alas, their numbers supplied their want of order, and our men were surrounded and cut to pieces or taken”). He confused hostilities with hospitality; learning the Honorable William Leslie was a captain in Howe’s army, Rush wrote to Leslie assuring that, should “the fortune of war ... throw him into the hands of the American army,” Rush’s letter, shown to Washington or Lee, would gain Leslie parole in Philadelphia, where Rush would “make my house his home.”

In mid-October Howe executed another amphibious landing, at Pelham Bay, and again threatened to outflank. Leaving the Pennsylvania Militia at the eponymous Fort Washington to cover his rear, Washington retreated to White Plains. Howe pursued and occupied the high ground around the village. Washington retreated. In early November, Howe captured Fort Washington. Washington reported, “we have lost not only two thousand Men ... but a good deal of Artillery, & some of the best Arms we had.” Actual losses were nearly three thousand, all of them Pennsylvania militiamen, five of them surgeons, one of them McHenry.

A century later an Old Soldier found the seeds of glory in Washington's retreat:

Nowhere in the annals of warfare can be found a counterpart of the winter campaign of Washington and his army ... which left the vicinity of New York a ragged, starved, defeated, demoralized band, which passed through the Jerseys and over the river ...

As Rush's symptomatology predicted, the Old Soldier made no mention of the terrorized civilians. But as the British approached Princeton, Annis Stockton buried Morven's silver and the records of the American Whig Society and fled with the children and the slaves. Richard Stockton—rumored to be a signer of the Declaration—was taken by Tories, force-marched “through rivers and creeks” in freezing temperatures to Perth Amboy and transported to the already infamous Provost's Prison in New York.

Washington, “over the river” in Pennsylvania, advised Congress to fortify Philadelphia. The Indian ambassadors, who had spent the summer and fall camping out on the State House's upper floor, descended to the Assembly Room and, as Rush recalled decades later: “One of the chiefs ... pointing to the Sun, said ‘The business of this day will end well. Yonder Sun rose clear this morning. The great Spirit is propitious. ...’” Still, the ambassadors accepted *laissez-passe* and departed for Pittsburgh. Congress recommended the states declare “a day of solemn fasting and humiliation” and prayers for assistance in the “just and necessary war” and “forgiveness of the many sins prevailing,” packed up the Declaration and adjourned to a tavern in Baltimore.

Rush removed his pregnant wife to refuge on the Lower Susquehanna in what was by then Maryland, then rode to Bristol, on the Upper Delaware to join the Pennsylvania militia under General John Cadwalader, positioned to protect Washington's southern flank. General Lee was to protect the northern flank, but Lee lingered amidst the lingerie at Widow White's Tavern in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, and was captured. Paine published “The American Crisis,” which could have been subtitled, “You Gotta Have Heart.” Washington wrote his brother, “I think the game is pretty near up.”

On Christmas Eve, Rush visited Washington and, in what sounds like a modern therapy session, “passed near an hour with him in private.” He found the General “much depressed,” and observed Washington “play with his pen and ink upon several small pieces of paper. One by accident fell upon the floor ... the inscription upon it ... ‘victory or death.’”

That, the Old Soldier noted, was the sign-and-countersign for the legendary crossing of the ice-choked Delaware and the attack on the Hessian mercenaries at Trenton. Cadwalader was also ordered to cross but, as Rush recalled, “great bodies of floating ice ... rendered the passage of the river impracticable.” Washington, as the Old Soldier put it, “dashed upon the Hessian advance” but unsupported by Cadwalader, retreated back to Pennsylvania.

By New Year's Eve all the American forces had crossed the river. The army was at Trenton, the militia at Crosswicks. There, Rush learned of the abuse of "my much honored father-in-law" and wrote:

I did not want this intelligence to rouse my resentment against the enemy, but it has increased it. Every particle of my blood is electrified with revenge, and if justice cannot be done to him in any other way, I declare I will ... drive the first rascally Tory I meet with a hundred miles, barefooted, through the first deep snow that falls.

Still, on New Year's Day, keeping peacetime tradition, Rush rode to Trenton to visit officers of the regular army. He heard of the Battle of Trenton, where—according to the Old Soldier and John Trumbull—Washington displayed a "magnanimous kindness" to the defeated enemy. Rush was more impressed by the resolution of General Hugh Mercer, a fellow physician in civilian life, with whom Rush dined. Decades later, he called it "a day which I have ever since remembered with pleasure."

But at evening an alarm was given: the British were coming. Rush was summoned into a command-level council-of-war. Washington felt militia forces had failed him repeatedly, Cadwalader's failure to cross the Delaware being the most recent case. The question to Rush: Could the Philadelphia Militia be relied upon? Rush swore it could be. Entrusted with sealed orders, he was dispatched on a midnight ride. At dawn he returned with reinforcements and fell, exhausted, onto a borrowed bed. He was awakened by "a black woman crying" and cannon fire.

From his post in the hospital, Rush only heard the battle's sound a "confusion and noise ... The canonade continued for several hours ... a few platoons of musquetry were fired" He saw, not combat, but aftermath:

The scene that followed this combat ... was new to me. The first wounded man that came off the field was a New England soldier. His right hand hung a little above his wrist by nothing but a piece of skin. It had been broken by a cannon ball ... In the evening all the wounded ... were brought to this hospital ... for the first time war appeared to me in its awful plenitude of horrors. I want words to describe the anguish of my soul, excited by the cries and groans and convulsions of the men who lay by my side. I slept two or three hours ... we heard a firing. We were ignorant from whence it came, 'till next morning ...

As the Old Soldier summarized the battle, Washington's forces "punished the flank of the British line, doubled on its own bloody tracks through the village of Princeton, and at last marched into quarters an army of victors." As Rush recalled the aftermath: "We set off

immediately for Princeton and near the town passed over the field of battle still red in many places with human blood.”

A half-century later, Trumbull painted that field in oils. In the background: the College of New Jersey’s Nassau Hall, etherealized by smoke. In the foreground: an American officer, entangled in the harness of his fallen horse, deflects a Redcoat’s bayonet bare-handed as a Royal Highlander stabs him in the back, and a British officer lies dead, one forefinger extended as if pointing the way to Fólkvangr. In the middle ground: Washington, on a chestnut stallion, great sword extended, Stars-and-Stripes a-wave beside him; behind him, on a pale horse, with upraised saber, Benjamin Rush.

Again, Trumbull’s imagery lacked accuracy—the Continental flag as yet had no stars and Rush was wielding a scalpel twenty miles away. But Trumbull might have based his composition on Rush’s personal reaction to reports he heard that day: that Nassau Hall, in which he had lived and learned, was cannonaded by artillery directed by Hamilton; that Mercer, with whom he had lately dined, was killed by a “bayonet in his belly”; that William Leslie, who might have been his brother-in-law, while leading a charge, was felled by a “fatal bullet ... in his bowels” with Rush’s letter in his pocket. Rush himself described the town—a “deserted village ... desolated” as if “with the plague and an earthquake as well as with the calamities of war,” and wrote that, after reaching Princeton, he “wept, for the first time, for a victory gained over British troops.”

But contrary to first dispatches and dramatic imagery, Mercer did not die that day. According to the Old Soldier:

General Mercer, suffering intensely with the cold and his terrible wounds, was carried off the field of battle ... to Thomas Clarke’s house. ... General Washington, hearing that he was still alive, and not killed as reported, sent ... Dr. Rush ... to attend to Mercer. ... January 7 the doctor reported him much better, saying that he expected his speedy recovery.

That prognosis was actually Mercer’s, intended to reassure his wife; Rush charted seven bayonet wounds, “the most alarming ... in his belly” and resolved “not leave him till he is out of danger.” When he did leave, after a week, he reported Mercer “so exceedingly weak from the loss of blood that he cannot be moved with safety.” The next day he wrote in agitated hand:

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.

The Old Soldier reported, “General Mercer’s body was conveyed over the river” on a “bridge of ice.” Escorted to Philadelphia by an honor guard, he lay in state at the Coffee

House before a funeral attended “by the Committee of Safety, the members of the Assembly, gentlemen of the army, and a number of the most respectable inhabitants” and interment in Christ Church Burial Ground. Decades later Rush made no mention of obsequies, gave Mercer’s cause of death as “a stroke with a butt of a musquet on the side of his head,” and told his children: “As soon as my wounded patients were out of danger I set off to attend my duty in Congress.”

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He paused, en route, for R&R with Julia. From Baltimore he wrote to her, “I was never so weary of public life and never languished more for the sweets of domestic life than since I parted last from you.” Informed the Assembly would not reappoint him to Congress, he responded: “I shall kiss the rod that smites.”

As a lame duck, he spoke more often, but no more effectively. When he declaimed: “The continent labours under a universal malady,” Richard Henry Lee quipped: “The learned Doctor ... labours under a spasm ...” Actually, he was bored; notes for that speech merged with the outline of an essay diagnosing “the malady of the continent” as a “dropsy.” While others debated, Rush drafted a Humean catalog free, as Hume suggested, of “party-rage.” Stockton had been paroled; Rush now admitted there were “conscientious Tories who ... shewed nearly equal kindness to the distressed of both parties” and sharper criticized some species in his own: “Timid Whigs” whose hopes “rose and fell with every victory and defeat”; “Speculating Whigs” who “infested our public councils, as well as the army”; “Furious Whigs” who saw “tarring and feathering of a Tory as a greater ... exploit than the extermination of a British army.” As that army no longer threatened, Congress returned to Philadelphia in March. Shortly thereafter, Rush’s essay, signed “S,” appeared in *Pennsylvania Packet*.

Decades later, Rush insisted he was “not offended nor mortified” at being “left out” of the delegation. Still, he began composing a series of letters, signed “Ludlow,” which invited the Assembly to kiss his rod. But when Congress appointed him to “a station for which I was better qualified,” Surgeon-General of the Middle Department of the Army Medical Service, he redirected his pen to draft “Directions for Preserving the Health of Soldiers.” Some of them now seem obvious—that hair be cut “thin and short in the neck” or that “the camp ... be kept perfectly clean of the offals of animals and of filth”—but Continental soldiers were famous for long-locked styles, which did imperil readiness and harbor vermin. Modern military historians credit a Prussian mercenary with instituting Rush’s recommendations for camp design, which included trench latrines, dug at a distance from kitchens.

Published in *Pennsylvania Packet*, Rush’s “Directions” confronted civilians with the reality “that a greater proportion of men perish with sickness ... than fall by the sword,” and asked readers to contemplate not heroes but would-be heroes:

The gallant youth who had torn himself from the arms of his
parents, or the partner of his joys; who had plighted his life to

his country in the field; and who, perhaps ... has courted death from a musket or a cannon ball ... forced from the scene of action and glory by the attack of a fever, and obliged to languish for days or weeks in an hospital; and, at last, to close his eyes, deprived of the sweet consolation of a dying soldier.

But Rush's intended audience was army officers, who were usually quartered separately and more comfortably than their men. Rush reminded them

there is scarcely a soldier under your command who has not a mother—a wife—a sister—or a child. ... Whenever ... your duty requires that you should attend to the health of your men, imagine you see *one* or perhaps ALL of their female and helpless connexions standing at the door of your tents or quarters, and beseeching you ... to repair immediately to the tents or huts of your men, and to attend to every thing which reason and conscience tell you are necessary for the preservation of their health and lives.

Rush happened to be sharing lodgings with one such officer—well-respected by his men, conspicuous in bravery, but disaffected because Congress passed him over for promotion. Decades later, Rush described him disparagingly, but that spring he might have commiserated with Benedict Arnold. Congress had devised a system which placed final authority over both purchasing and treatment in the hands of a single Director General, without whose consent, “No order was given or executed for food, medicines, liquors, or even apartments for the sick.” Rush's own appointment coincided with that of a new Director General, whose father was in Congress and whose hands, Rush believed, had sticky fingers. As he put it decades later: “The evils of the system soon developed themselves.”

In May a fever broke out at the Philadelphia military hospital. It spread quickly, which Rush ascribed to overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. But the Director General denied requests for more rooms and better sanitation. In June, the fever spread to the staff, headed by Senior Surgeon Thomas Young.

Rush's relationship with Young was complicated. Young was fifteen years older but also of middling origins. Both were community organizers who became resolute *independistas* during the *Tea Act* resistance. But Young was a deist, indicted in New England for speaking “blasphemous words,” and after relocating to Philadelphia had aligned himself with Paine and the Constitutionals and helped draft the Constitution Rush abhorred. Young's frontier apprenticeship hardly equaled Rush's degree from Edinburgh, and at first Rush openly questioned Young's prescriptions, particularly his dosages of the purgative clomel, which Rush thought “disproportioned to the violence and danger of the fever.” But “after mature deliberation,” Rush “resolved ... to prescribe this purge” himself, in even larger doses. In late June, Young contracted the hospital fever and despite—or perhaps because of—treatment, died.

In September, Congress ordered Rush's "Directions" distributed throughout the army, but before a pamphlet could be printed Howe's two hundred fifty-vessel armada landed seventeen thousand Redcoats in Maryland, seventy-five miles south of Philadelphia. Washington, with twenty thousand Continentals, awaited him at Brandywine Creek, forty-five miles south of the city, confident all crossings were fortified. Howe found an unguarded ford and outflanked Washington. Battle raged for eleven hours before Washington retreated. The next day, Paine used a medical metaphor—"The nearer any disease approaches to a crisis, the nearer it is to a cure"—to say, Now we got 'em where we want 'em.

Brandywine was Rush's first close-up view of combat. Tending the wounded under fire, he ignored the bugled retire and narrowly escaped capture. Afterwards, he preferred to "leave to common soldiers the joy that arises from hearing of fields being covered with dead bodies," but wrote fulsomely of "the many things I saw and heard" when, under a flag of truce, he led a squad of surgeons into the British camp "to dress the wounded belonging to the American Army who were left on the field of battle." There, he saw his "Directions for Preserving the Health of Soldiers" realized. To his chagrin, "the wounded whom we brought off from the field were not half so well treated as those whom we left." This he ascribed not to kindness but competence—but he envied that competence.

A week later, Howe attacked Washington at Malvern, thirty miles from Philadelphia. Historians have called it the Battle of the Clouds, because the torrential rains mired Howe in mud. But Washington failed to keep his powder dry and retreated.

Two days later, Hamilton, unable to defend a supply depot at Valley Forge, eighteen miles from the city, advised Congress "the enemy have the means of throwing a party this night into the city." Congress again evacuated while, as a nineteenth-century historiographer portrayed it:

Toll—toll—toll ! The State House bell, that once rung the birth-day of Freedom, now tolled its knell. It was a sad day for Philadelphia, a sad day for the nation, when the pomp of British banners and the gleam of British arms were in her streets and along her avenues; when, as far as eye could reach, was seen the long array of glaring red coats ...

In reality, Congress had wisely ordered all the bells spirited from the city, lest the British melt them down for musket balls. The Statehouse Bell was on its way into hiding in a church basement in Allentown.

Rush was in Trenton. From there he wrote to Adams, comparing "the extreme regard that our enemies pay to discipline, order, economy, and cleanliness" to "[t]he waste, the speculation ... of our medical establishment." He expressed "mortification" at conditions "throughout the corps" of "General Washington's army" especially at a headquarters. "The present management of our army would depopulate America if men grew among us as speedily and spontaneously as blades of grass." His private notes were more damning; he found the troops "dirty, undisciplined, & ragged ... bad bread; no order;

universal disgust” and the general staff worse, one officer “a sycophant,” another “vain, without dignity ... in the field, a madman,” another an “ignorant drunkard,” another a “boasting cowardly sot.” Still, he was “waiting impatiently to hear that our Army has defeated General Howe’s.”

His reference was to Washington’s planned attack at Germantown, a four-pronged design requiring precise coordination. But beset by heavy fog, the Americans became disorganized and disoriented and took significant casualties from friendly fire. One mid-twentieth century historian blamed “mischances and miscalculations by his generals” and declared the engagement “a near victory” after which Washington retreated, to Valley Forge.

Rush did not encamp at Valley Forge. As Physician General he was responsible for army hospitals between the Hudson and Potomac. Traveling among them, he witnessed the wounds of war and also heard after-action reports. A week after Germantown, he wrote to Adams from Limerick: “We lost a city, a victory, a campaign by that want of discipline and system.” As Adams sat on the Congressional committee that dispensed commissions. Rush urged promotion of General Thomas Conway, a recommendation that would have repercussions.

In mid-October he wrote to Adams from Reading, comparing “General Washington’s imitation of an army to an unformed mob ... outgeneraled and twice beaten.” He was cheered by the victory at Saratoga, credited to General Horatio Gates, although it was Benedict Arnold who rallied troops in the field and whose leg was broken when his horse was shot out from under him. Arnold refused the usual treatment—amputation. His leg was splinted, and he lived with pain and the risk of gangrene. “My heart is almost broken at seeing the distresses of my countrymen without a power to remedy them,” Rush wrote.

In late October he wrote Adams from Bethlehem, suggesting the position of Commander-in-Chief rotate annually. He had other proposals, more appropriate to his position, but impolitic as they praised the British system. But Rush was not concerned with national pride. “While I am writing these few lines,” he wrote, “there are several brave fellows expiring within fifty yards of me.”

At Christmas, Rush wrote not to Adams, but directly to Washington, bypassing the Director General, an insubordination he justified with urgency. “Every day deprives us of four or five patients out of 500 or 600 in the hospital under my care,” he reported. “When I consider the present army under your command as the last hope of America, I am alarmed & distressed ... beyond measure.” He attributed “extraordinary sickness, mortality, and waste of public stores” to a procurement system which “tempted to fraud almost beyond the possibility of detection” and concealed “abuses by under-reporting illness and mortality.” His appeal was weakened by comparison. He wrote from Princeton, having converted Nassau Hall to a hospital. Washington was at Valley Forge.

No one knows how many encamped at Valley Forge, where the topography gave protection from the British, but not from disease and hunger—especially hunger; the thirty-eight hundred barrels of flour and grain once stored there had fallen into British hands. In

February, Washington called the situation “dreadful for want of provisions ... For some days past, there has been little less, than a famine in camp. A part of the army has been a week, without any kind of flesh, and the rest for three or four days. Naked and starving ...” No one knows—or would admit—how many deserted. In October “small parties of horse” were ordered to range out ten miles to “stop all Soldiers and turn them back”; in January, Washington believed desertion was underreported; in February, he insisted “[t]here has been no considerable desertion from this camp, to my knowledge.” No one knows how many died at Valley Forge—from sepsis, dysentery, typhus, typhoid, influenza, dehydration, malnutrition. But those numbers were considerable.

In March, Rush did visit Valley Forge, and noted:

The encampment dirty & stinking, no forage for 7 days? 1500 horses died from ye want of it. 3 ounces of meal & 3 pounds of flour in 7 days. Men dirty & ragged. The commander-in-chief and all ye Major Generals lived in houses out of ye Camp.

Soon this was no longer his concern. Congress heeded his charges, but instead of inspecting hospitals, held hearings. The Director General testified: “No fatal disease prevails in the hospitals, very few die, and the hospitals are in very good order.” Rush explained he must have been “deceived by counting the number of coffins ... daily put under ground.” After he testified, he was advised to resign.



Decades later, he wrote: “I retired from the army ... and lived with my wife and one child at her father’s in Princeton. I led an inactive, and of course, a disagreeable life.” Possibly he was suffering symptoms of what a twenty-first century Sri Lankan psychologist labeled the “Psychosocial Consequences of War.” If so, Princeton was hardly a therapeutic venue.

Morven, where he had courted, brided, and bedded, had been taken by Lord General Cornwallis on the first night of occupation, then left for common soldiers to despoil; it was more mausoleum than mansion. Rush’s “honored father-in-law”—now “her father”—was stripped of wealth, health, and reputation; according to British propaganda, repeated in farmers’ news and barbers’ tales, Stockton gained parole denying the Declaration thrice before the cock crowed twice. Instead of hosting soirées, the “Mistress of Morven” kept night watch over her failing husband, penned lamentations, and wept ‘til dawn.

The college was reduced to one instructor teaching basic Latin in a living room. Nassau Hall was a hospital; where, Rush too well knew, the wounded often became the sick and died inglorious deaths. Beyond that was the field on which his friends had fallen.

Princeton’s barbers told several tales of the death of Mercer. In one, he lay beneath a massive white oak, refusing to leave the field until the battle was won. In another, he pointed out a small wound, unnoticed by other physicians, as “the fellow that will soon do my business” and died at the house of Thomas Clarke when that wound hemorrhaged so profusely the floor was still stained from his blood. Both oak and house still stood.

Decades later Rush admitted there were of “periods in my life in which I regretted the choice ... of the profession of medicine ... once, I made preparations for beginning the study of the law.” This was that time. He cited pragmatic reasons—“Princeton afforded no prospects of business”—but the real problem was cognitive dissonance. Rush, trained up in the ways of Heroic Medicine, admitted “[t]he weight of Dr. Cullen’s name depressed me every time I ventured to admit an idea that militated against his System.” But war presented what a twentieth-century philosopher of science termed “anomalies”—contradictions of “paradigm-induced expectations.” How could any physician prescribe purgation and blood-letting having seen men dying by the hundreds from dysentery and exsanguination?

Still, when he heard the British were quitting Philadelphia, Rush “suspended my new enterprise,” returned to the city forthwith. He again found no lack of patients—he attributed the “good deal of sickness” to “filth left by the British Army,” but did not witness the eleven-thousand Redcoats marching through New Jersey followed by their twelve mile-long supply train, or the forty-five hundred Continentals who pursued them, as hungry for supplies as victory. He only heard how, on June 28, battle was joined at Monmouth Courthouse, raged all day in hundred-degree heat and ended at dark with charges, countercharges, and charges of cowardice but without outcome. But when he considered the effects of military events on the human body, he reviewed data from that battle and noted: “Many were found among the slain without any marks of wounds or violence upon their bodies”; deaths he attributed to “heat excited in the body by the emotions of the mind.”

*

At dawn on July 4, 1778, in a green glen outside Philadelphia, former General Thomas Conway met General John Cadwalader in an affair of honor. The cause was unclear. It was whispered that Conway, who had resigned his commission in high dudgeon, had previously conspired with some other officers and one physician to have Washington replaced. It was also whispered that Cadwalader, who had failed to cross the Delaware at Trenton, had accused Conway of “bashfulness” at Germantown. Conway, an Irishman, demanded satisfaction in accordance with the recently-adopted Irish Code Duello. In addition to the required “seconds” and a physician—the Director General of the Army Medical Service—the engagement was observed by members of Congress, recently returned from provincial capitals whose names—Lancaster and York—mocked the Declaration of Independence. Congressional secretary John Thaxter reported the outcome to his cousin Abigail Adams; Conway “received a wound—the ball entered his Cheek and coming out under his Ear lodged in his hair. He is like to recover.”

Later that morning, in a New Brunswick tavern, General Lee—recovered by exchange at Washington’s insistence and received by Washington “as if he had been his Brother”—was charged by Washington in general court-martial with “misbehavior before the enemy” and “disrespect to the Commander-in-Chief.” Thaxter predicted conviction, as Lee “has not many Advocates.”

That afternoon, at Philadelphia's City Tavern, what Thaxter called "the political birthday of every American" was celebrated with "a large baked Pudding, in the centre of which was planted a Staff on which was displayed a crimson Flag" and with numerous toasts, each followed "by a discharge of Fieldpieces." That evening, a woman variously described as "a strumpet," a "trull," and an "infamous doxy," wearing a "head-dress in imitation of those worn by the Tory Ladies," was "paraded thro' the Streets attended by a crowd of the vulgar." The day ended with "a brilliant exhibition of Fireworks."

In August, Rush also wrote to Abigail Adams. He reported that Philadelphia, under the stewardship of General Arnold, had "undergone some purification," though it "still resembles ... the ark which preserved not only the clean but unclean animals." Mrs. Adams had half-seriously requested "remedies ... to relieve the anguish ... occasioned by parting" from her husband, in Europe on diplomatic business. In Rush's view, that business had gone well:

An Alliance has been formed with the first Monarchy in Europe, the haughty Court of Britain has been forced to sue to her once insulted colonies for peace—the capital of Pennsylvania, the Object of the expenses and blood of a whole campaign, has been evacuated—the flower of the british army has been defeated—and above all, a french fleet hovers over our coasts and adds its Strength to the Arms of the united States

Now, in an apparent fit of Liberty Mania, he admonished her: "To grieve at the Absence of a husband thus honor and this employed partakes of the weakness of those who bewail the premature translation of a friend from the humble pursuits of earth to... the kingdom of heaven."

In October, he himself faced premature translation. For eleven days he lay at "the brink of the grave" from a "malignant bilious fever" contracted, he believed, from a patient. He made his will, "took leave of life." But "divine goodness" prevailed; by November, he claimed "perfect recovery," although the fever left him gray-haired at thirty-two. By December, with the armies in distant winter quarters and no battles within range of eye or ear, Rush decided:

The time is now past when the least danger is to be apprehended to our liberties from the power of Britain. All our fears should be of our great men whether in civil or military authority.

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"These are times that tried men's souls, and they are over," wrote Thomas Paine on April 19, 1783: "The greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, gloriously and happily accomplished" The British still occupied New York City, but it had been six months since Bluecoats and Redcoats exchanged fire, and that was a mere skirmish in the

western Pennsylvania hinterlands. The thirteen states were amalgamated under *Articles of Confederation*. The Congress of that Confederation had ratified a peace treaty. In 1775, Paine, as “Humanus,” cited “horrid cruelties exercised by Britain in the East Indies” where “thousands perished by artificial famine” and peaceful natives were “blown away” to urge American rebellion. Now, he ignored that the completest revolution the world ever knew had been subsumed by the widest war the world ever knew, fought in Oceans Indian as well as Atlantic, in Indies East as well as West, to present Lexington and Yorktown as alpha and omega in “Thoughts on the Peace and the Probable Advantages Thereof.” Battles loomed on the subcontinent, but to Paine’s eyes “[t]he scenes of war are closed and every man preparing for home ... I therefore take my leave of the subject.”

Some passages in Paine’s *nunc dimittis* suggested psychological insight: “A long continued war unhinges the mind,” he wrote, “[t]he continual spectacle of woe blunts the finer feelings ... the necessity of bearing with the sight, renders it familiar ... the custom of acting by necessity becomes an apology, where it is truly a crime.” But the prevailing style was not only characteristically bombastic, but suggested a disturbing trend in American thought.

In 1775, as “Justyce and Humanity,” Paine charged colonists with having “enslaved multitudes, and shed much innocent blood” and wondered “while other evils are confessed and bewailed, why not this especially, and publicly?” In 1778, as “Common Sense,” he eschewed self-examination and embraced self-esteem: “A good opinion of ourselves is exceedingly necessary in private life, but absolutely necessary in public life, and of the utmost importance in supporting national character.” Now he summoned the Power of Positive Thinking: “America need never be ashamed to tell her birth, nor relate the stages by which she rose to empire.” Slavery, mentioned indirectly, was of small concern; “states, individually and collectively, will have leisure and opportunity to regulate and establish their domestic concerns.” And “[t]he debt which America has contracted ... ought scarcely to be mentioned.”

That last showed conscious avoidance. Four months earlier, officers of the Continental Army, still encamped near Newburgh, New York, did mention debt, in a memorial submitted “humbly” and “with all proper deference and respect ... to congress, the supreme power of the United States.”

In later centuries, both scholarly historians and popular historiographers would focus on the elite—on Washington, his generals and aides-de-camp—all patrician Americans or aristocratic European mercenaries and eligible for membership in the Society of the Cincinnati, to which no private soldier or non-commissioned officer need apply. The authors of this memorial, though commissioned officers, ignored rank, military or otherwise. Identifying with “our brethren the soldiers” they addressed Congress as obsequiously as Congress once addressed the King.

“Whenever there has been a real want of means, any defect in system, or neglect in execution, in the departments of the army,” the officers complained, “we have invariably been the sufferers, by hunger and nakedness, and by languishing in an hospital.” They offered as evidence Paymaster’s accounts showing some troops had not been paid “for four

years past." The officers acknowledged that some states, like Massachusetts, had "paid" their troops with notes—"Certificates of Indebtedness." But, the officers insisted, were the "present value ... ascertained by the monied men" the certificates "will be found to be worth little"—although speculators were willing to purchase them at discount, and some soldiers had sold "to prevent their families from actually starving." The officers were themselves embarrassed, as "our private resources are at an end, and our friends are wearied out and disgusted with our incessant applications." They begged "most seriously and earnestly ... that a supply of money may be forwarded to the army."

Under terms of enlistment soldiers could not be discharged without payment. Congress had neither money nor power to tax, and so responded with a plan: to furlough, rather than discharge, with compensation to follow. The Superintendent of Finance said each case was unique; calculation would take months ... or years.

In March, an anonymous memorandum circulated at Newburgh, urging officers to "[c]hange the milk-and-water style of your last memorial; assume a bolder tone—decent, but lively ... and suspect the man who would advise to more moderation." Historians disagree as to whether this was a call for firmer rhetoric or a proposal for coup d'état; most agree the "Newburgh Conspiracy" ended when Washington shamed officers into renewed subordination.

There is also disagreement about what happened in Philadelphia in June, when several hundred Pennsylvania soldiers, angered by their impending furlough and led by non-commissioned officers, seized the arsenal, surrounded the State House, and presented a petition to the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council.

Congress was not the addressee and was not in session when, as James Madison related, "mutinous soldiers presented themselves, drawn up in the street before the State House." Madison admitted they did so "without offering any violence beyond "uttering offensive words and wantonly pointed their Muskets to the Windows." Also that "no danger from premeditated violence was apprehended." But "spirituous drink from the tipping houses adjoining began to be liberally served out to the Soldiers, & might lead to hasty excesses."

There were no excesses; delegates, "kept ... Prisoners" only "in a manner," were "offered no insult personally." But a committee led by Hamilton demanded the Council call up the militia to defend Congress from "insult." The Council declined "unless some actual outrage were offered to persons or property." There was no outrage, but the President of Congress insisted "mutineers" had "surrounded the State House, with fixed Bayonets" and was "of opinion that the worst is not yet come." Congress again fled in fear of hostile troops.

Reassembled in Princeton's Nassau Hall, Congress:

Resolved, That the Secretary at War be directed to communicate to the Commander in Chief ... in order that he may take immediate measures to dispatch to this city, such force as he may judge expedient for suppressing any disturbances that may ensue.

On the Fourth of July Rush wrote to a friend in Congress:

Your conduct is now compared to the conduct of the British Parliament toward the town of Boston in 1774. For God's Sake! as you value all that we have gained by the Revolution, consider what you are doing. ... Learn wisdom from the conduct of Great Britain. ... If you remain one week longer at Princeton feeding one another with ideas of insulted and wounded dignity (all *Stuff* in a republic), you may lose Pennsylvania ... An hundred ludicrous anecdotes are told of you every day. I expect soon we shall see you in a ballad.

While Congress cowered in Princeton and the rough peace slouching toward Paris paused while France and the Kingdom of Mysore did battle against Britain and the Company. Sharp sent Rush tracts decrying the twin evils of slavery and a letter expressing shock at "accounts of disagreements between the Standing Army of America and the Civil Government." Rush responded with assurances that, while "*negromania* (for it is certainly a species of madness) still prevails" he "expected to see ... that disease of the mind cured" and that "[o]ur officers have peaceably retired to their farms and professions."

In April 1784, Rush again wrote Sharp, and reluctantly admitted the slave trade "has revived in the Southern states," but insisted the army had "quietly melted away," which he evidenced, without irony: "the commander in chief ... has assumed the dress and manners of a Virginia planter." He also reported that "Good Mr. Benezet is in bad health." Before he could send the letter he was forced to postscript: "Good Mr. Benezet has paid the debt of nature."

Decades later, Rush made no mention of Benezet. But as he had with Samuel Finley, Rush attended Benezet's final days, remembered his final acts—"last time he ever walked across his room, was to take from his desk six dollars which he gave to a poor widow"—and the words he spoke on his deathbed. He did tell his children of the "romantic ideas" he championed, and of the "abuse and ridicule in the public news papers" for doing so. But for some reason he did not tell them that most of those ideas originated in the moral mentorship of Anthony Benezet.

Not long after Benezet's death Rush published a pamphlet which recapitulated Benezet's opposition to what he had called "The Mighty Destroyer Displayed, In Some Account of the Dreadful Havock Made by the Mistaken Use as Well as Abuse of Distilled Liquor." Rush combined that with other causes in "An Enquiry into the Effects of Spirituous Liquors upon the Human Body, and their Influence Upon the Happiness of Society:"

... spirituous liquors destroy more lives than the sword. War has its intervals of destruction—but spirits operate at all times and seasons upon human life. The ravages of war are confined to but one part of the human species, viz. to men, but spirits act too often upon persons who are exempted from the dangers of war by age or sex; and lastly, war destroys only those persons who allow the use of arms to be lawful, whereas spirits

insinuate their fatal effects among people whose principles are opposed to the effusion of human blood.

That reflected Benezet's past writings, but also current events. In the Wyoming Valley northwest of Philadelphia, ancient grudge had broken into new mutiny.

The grudge originated in the seventeenth century, when Charles II granted the same land to two colonies. In the eighteenth century, "Pennamite" settlers came bearing deeds from Pennsylvania but found the valley settled by "Yankees" holding deeds from Connecticut. War ensued. In 1771, George III decided the dispute in favor of Connecticut; the Pennamites resolved to defend their claim by any means necessary. In 1776, *Common Sense* cited these "Pennamite-Yankee Wars" as proof "nothing but Continental authority can regulate Continental matters." In 1782, the Confederation Congress established a Commission, which, in what was called the Trenton Decree, decided in favor of Pennsylvania. Connecticut acquiesced.

In 1784, Jefferson found this resolution evidence of the nation's maturity. "These infant states," he wrote, "instead of leaving their national differences to be decided by the sword... have by wise and just arrangements submitted the causes of Nations to be weighed in the scales of justice by a tribunal." Fortunately, Jefferson kept that opinion to himself. Connecticut acquiesced, but the Yankees did not. The Pennsylvania Assembly ordered the militia to evict them at bayonet point. Yankee leaders were imprisoned, farmsteads torched and eight hundred men, women, and children were force-marched across eighty miles of mountain wilderness in freezing rains, a cruelty denounced even in Philadelphia. Stiff letters were exchanged between Connecticut and Pennsylvania.

In 1785, in western North Carolina, settlers, including Revolutionary War irregulars known as Overmountain Men, feared the state would sell their land to retire war debts. They petitioned, protested, finally called a convention, declared independence from North Carolina, wrote a constitution for the state of "Frankland" which excluded lawyers, doctors, and preachers from the legislature, and applied for admission to the Confederation.

In 1786, in western Massachusetts, farmers protested the state's refusal to accept its own Certificates of Indebtedness in payment of taxes and its alacrity in confiscating land and chattels for nonpayment. Their nominal leader was ex-Captain Daniel Shays, a veteran of Lexington and Bunker Hill but it was "Plough Jogger" who, at a town meeting, delivered the definitive address:

I have been loaded with class rates, town rates, province rates, Continental rates ... pulled and hauled by sheriffs, constables and collectors, and had my cattle sold for less than they were worth ... The great men are going to get all we have and I think it is time for us to rise and put a stop to it, and have no more courts, nor sheriffs, nor collectors nor lawyers.

The Massachusetts constitution guaranteed all “inhabitants” rights “to assemble to consult upon the common good” and to communicate with “the legislative body, by the way of addresses, petitions, or remonstrances.” The “Shaysites” petitioned and remonstrated; the legislature adjourned. The Shaysites resorted to nonviolent—but armed—direct action, to stop confiscations. The governor demanded the legislature “vindicate the insulted dignity of government.” The legislature passed a *Riot Act* forbidding town meetings and authorizing sheriffs to shoot protesters. The Shaysites responded with recycled Revolutionary rhetoric—“the tyrannical government of Massachusetts,” “The seeds of war are sown.” Former Sons of Liberty found their language offensive; Samuel Adams called it treason, punishable by death. When the state was unable to recruit soldiers to suppress other soldiers who were protesting they had not been paid, Boston merchants hired mercenaries.

In 1787, Rush, considering the effects of the Revolution on the body, made a leap and glimpsed what a twenty-first century Dutch professor termed “massive traumatic stress resulting from armed conflict.” Rush saw the minds of the citizens of the United States were wholly unprepared for their new situation:

The excess of the passion for liberty, inflamed by the successful issue of the war, produced ... opinions and conduct which could not be removed by reason, nor restrained by government ... The extensive influence which these opinions had upon the understandings, passions, and morals ... constituted a species of insanity, which I shall take the liberty of distinguishing by the name of *Anarchia*.

Decades Much later, he summarized what he believed would be effective treatment:

It occurred to thinking men that all our evils originated in the weakness of the general government.” These evils were pointed out in many publications ... a convention was finally called to correct the defect of the confederation.

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Both scholarly historians and popular historiographers have elevated the “thinking men” to the “Annapolis Convention” and the convention to which Rush referred as the “The Great” or “Grand.” But the men were an ad hoc commission appointed only to “consider ... commercial intercourse,” and met in the capital of Maryland but not in the capitol, but in a tavern across the street. All thirteen states were invited to send representatives. Four did not bother—including Maryland. Representatives from the other four states did not arrive before last call.

The twelve men from five states thought it inadvisable “to proceed on the business of their mission, under the Circumstances of so partial and defective a representation.” Still, they elected a chairman—The Farmer, now, in Delaware—and prepared a “Resolution” wherein they did warn of “defects ... so serious, as ... to render the situation of the United States delicate and critical.” They thought enumeration of those defects “a useless intrusion

of facts and observations,” but did call for a “[f]uture convention with more enlarged powers ... to meet at Philadelphia on the second Monday in May next.”

The Resolution was delivered to Congress, but Congress did not find discussion “expedient.” As he told his children, Rush “received a letter from Mr. Dickinson ... calling me to come forward.” Combining language from a letter he had written months before and a forthcoming clinical article, Rush assembled an “Address to the People of the United States ... On the Defects of the Confederation.” It was published in Philadelphia in January 1787.

Unlike the Annapolis Twelve, Rush enumerated. He also insulted, declaring Congress itself a defect and predicting it would “become more dangerous” because the Articles mandated term limits, thus “turning men out of power or office, as soon as they are qualified for it.” Rush demanded: “Do we dismiss a general—a physician—or even a domestic, as soon as they have acquired knowledge sufficient to be useful to us?”

He concealed criticism of Washington in an allusion to Plato’s metaphorical ship of state, likening “patriots and heroes” with a “passion for retirement” to

skilful mariners, who, after exerting themselves to preserve a ship from sinking in a storm, in the middle of the ocean, drop asleep as soon as the waves subside, and leave the care of their lives and property, during the remainder of the voyage, to sailors, without knowledge or experience.

And although Congress had taken no action on the Annapolis Resolution, Rush presumed to announce “a convention is to sit soon ... for the ... purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation.”

A month later, Congress did call the convention, no doubt hoping assent would rid them of this turbulent physician. Congress did not call it a *grand* convention; that phrase came from *The Pennsylvania Packet’s* report of the arrival of “His Excellency, General Washington” who was “escorted into the city by the troops of horse, and saluted ... by the artillery ... and the ringing of bells.”

Washington was General no longer; “The Curtain of separation” was drawn, “the military scene to him ... closed for ever.” Although he owned eight thousand acres, and had two hundred sixteen slaves to do the plowing, his public persona was A Farmer in Virginia. But he was also president of the Society of the Cincinnati, the organization of ex-Army officers named in homage to Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, who, as historians had it, was a humble farmer “called from the plow” by the senate of the Roman Republic, in a time of emergency. Installed as a *Magister* with dictatorial powers, Cincinnatus saved the republic by leading the army to victory in a day, then relinquishing power and retiring again to tillage. Some saw Washington as a reincarnation. Less mystically, he was head of a Virginia delegation which had a Plan of Government ready to propose.

Decades later Rush implied he did not “come forward in support of a proposed Constitution” until he had already “heard enough” of its “form and principles ... to be

satisfied.” In fact, he had heard nothing when he enlisted as a Federalist apparatchik. He knew the ideas Adams expressed in *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States*; Rush had seen the work through the Philadelphia press. The Virginians, noting the influence—and acidity—of his January “Address,” may have shared some aspects of its Plan, but not all. On the first day of the Grand Convention nothing was said of form and principles; that day was devoted to pomp and circumstance as, by acclamation, Washington was elected to preside.

On the second day, the convention created rules. Franklin, who represented Pennsylvania, or McHenry, newly arrived from Maryland, may have informed Rush that they were to be called “Deputies,” that no record would be kept of yeas and nays as “evidence of the votes ... being hereafter promulgated must furnish handles to the adversaries” and that, after daily adjournment, Deputies were to stand as Washington passed down the aisle. But neither they, nor Dickinson, who arrived on the third day, could have informed Rush of all aspects the Virginia Plan, or any aspect of the competing South Carolina Plan, as before either was read the Convention “Resolved ... That nothing spoken in the House be printed, or otherwise published or communicated without leave.”

The intellectual isolation consequent to this rule, combined with the homogeneity of the deputies and the pressure to produce a government after what was decried as a previous failure, predicted to flawed decision-making, known in the twentieth century as “groupthink.” Rush may have sensed this. When he did come forward in support he signed the name of an Elizabethan writer who advised: “hide not your case ... from your confessor, lawyer and physician.”

“To the Freemen of the United States” appeared on the Convention’s fourth day. Lacking facts, “Harrington” waxed evangelical, moving readers through the emotive stages—humiliation, helplessness, fear—common in religious conversion. “The name of an American which was so respectable in the year 1782 ... is now treated every where with obloquy and contempt,” he told his audience. The Confederation was “ineffectual ... to prevent hostilities ... and insurrections,” placing the nation “upon the brink of a precipice.” A “federal Shays” supported by “a body of men ... who may form themselves into an order of hereditary nobility” might “by surprize or stratagem, prostrate our liberties at their feet.” Resurrecting a revolutionary trope, Harrington demanded,

Are the freemen of America to be summed up in the account
of universal slavery, and transferred, like cattle at an auction, to
the highest bidder? Are our fields to be scratched (for they will
not then be cultivated) by the hands of slaves?

Salvation was offered by a federal government, in which agrarians “who groan beneath the weight of direct taxation” would find “a government whose extensive jurisdiction will enable it to extract the resources of our country by means of imposts and customs,” to which “citizens ... who inhabit the western counties of our states” could “fly ... for protection” and from which “Lovers of peace” could receive “perpetual peace with the nations of Europe.”

Lacking works, Harrington preached faith. Faith in the Grand Convention as “no age or country ever saw more wisdom, patriotism and probity united in a single assembly.” Faith in “the immortal Washington” who “has again ... obeyed the voice of God and his country, by accepting the chair of this illustrious body of patriots and heroes.” Faith in Franklin, Dickinson, and other “names ... synonymous with liberty and fame.” Who, Harrington demanded, could “doubt of the safety and blessings of the government we are to receive from their hands?” Who could “not long to receive from them the precious ark, that is to preserve and transmit to posterity the freedom of America?”

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In the early nineteenth century, Jefferson observed:

Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence, and deem them like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment.

Two decades later, Madison's posthumously published—and *post facto*-augmented—*Notes on the Convention* reinforced this tendency toward sanctification with an anecdote that suggested a benediction from the most venerable Deputy:

Whilst the last members were signing it, Doctr. FRANKLIN looking towards the Presidents Chair, at the back of which a rising sun happened to be painted, observed to a few members near him that Painters had found it difficult to distinguish in their art a rising from a setting sun. I have, said he, often in the course of the Session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that behind the President without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting: But now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting Sun.

By the mid-twentieth century, the Constitution was an icon of what one sociologist termed an “elaborate and well-institutionalized civil religion.” Its “origin story,” rendered as a, historiographical “narrative, taken from source” and perspicaciously titled *Miracle at Philadelphia*, became a non-fiction bestseller. The historiographer, after *en passant* reference to water, wine, and a wedding, claimed to have taken the title from Deputies’ quotes. But what Madison actually wrote to Jefferson was: “It is impossible to consider the degree of concord which ultimately prevailed as less than a miracle.” And what Washington actually wrote to Lafayette was: “It appears to me ... little short of a miracle, that the Delegates from so many different states ... should unite.” He added he was not “such an enthusiastic, partial or indiscriminating admirer ... as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real (though not radical) defects.”

But Rush was on record as an enthusiastic, total, and indiscriminating admirer. The Convention's secrecy created an information vacuum which over thirty newspapers filled with Harrington's exhortation—and Rush was sure “sentiments contained” therein would “discover its author.” In Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where Rush was well known as a trustee of the nascent Dickinson College, the essay was reprinted, as “Harrington” on the Fourth of July.

As the Convention proceeded, Rush again published essays "under a variety of signatures" propagandizing federalism as he had liberty, hammering Federalist talking points: Government under The *Articles of Confederation* had fatal flaws; the Constitution-in-progress would have no flaws at all. He assured domestic correspondents, “all will end well from the federal convention,” and inoculated a foreign correspondent against not-yet-voiced objections to a not-yet-extant document. He had objected to military gentlemen in Mrs. Macaulay's legislature but now predicted—approvingly—were the Constitution not adopted through “the gradual operation of reason:”

force will not be wanting to carry it into execution, for not only all the wealth but all the military men of our country (associated in the Society of the Cincinnati) are in favor of a wise and efficient government.

Some Deputies' private accounts reveal crises and near-catastrophic disagreements, but in mid-August an anonymous correspondent to the *Pennsylvania Gazette* congratulated them on a “long and peaceable session,” offering “the punctuality with which the members of the Convention assemble ... and the long time they spend in the deliberations” as evidence “they are entitled to the universal confidence of the people.” Rush, in private letters, claimed “reason to believe ... the federal Constitution will be wise, vigorous, safe, free, and full of dignity” and tried out similes—“the new federal government like a new continental wagon will upset our state dung cart.”

In September, he combined that figure with sarcasm in “An Address to Antifederal Junto in Philadelphia.” As “Daniel Shays,” he offered advice to those who wished to “lock ... the wheels of the great continental waggon.” They must, “snarl at the Convention in every company,” write letters to the frontier countries, where the people is most easily deceived” by “hard words, such as aristocracy, monarchy, oligarchy ... none of which they will understand.” When asked to support the new plan of government, “You must say ‘you have not read it’ or ... that ‘you want time to consider of it.’” Possibly, Rush wrote that before he himself had time to consider. But when the deputies adjourned *sine die* and repaired to the City Tavern, he was in no position to admit defects in “the precious ark” much criticize its compromises with evil.

In January, even as his acidic “Address” appeared in the *American Museum*, the *Columbian Magazine* published Rush's saccharine fantasy, “Paradise of Negro Slaves—A Dream.” In conceit, it claimed inspiration from Thomas Clarkson's prize-winning “An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, Particularly the African;” Clarkson acknowledged, as *his* inspiration, Benezet's *Historical Account of Guinea*. As Rush's anonymous persona describes it, Clarkson's “pathetic essay made so deep an impression upon my mind that it followed me in my sleep” and “produced a dream,” in which he is

conducted to a country ... inhabited only by negroes. They appeared cheerful and happy. Upon my approaching a beautiful grove, where a number of them were assembled for religious purposes, I perceived at once a pause in their exercises, and an appearance of general perturbation. They fixed their eyes upon me—while one of them, a venerable looking man, came forward, and in the name of the whole assembly, addressed me in the following language: “Excuse the panic which you have spread through this peaceful and happy company: we perceive that you are a *white man*.—That colour which is the emblem of innocence in every other creature of God, is to us a sign of guilt in man. The persons whom you see here, were once dragged by the men of your colour from their native country and consigned by them to labour—punishment—and death.”

The dreamer accepts their fear as reasonable but claims “I have been your advocate” whereupon the Negro, recognizing him: “ran up and embraced me in his arms, and afterwards conducted me into the midst of the assembly ... where, I was seated upon a bank of moss” The Negroes then give testimonies of the cruelties of slavery—a nascent form of the narratives that galvanized nineteenth-century Abolition meetings. Then:

All at once, the eyes of the whole assembly were turned from me, and directed towards a little white man who advanced towards them, on the opposite side of the grove ... His face was grave, placid, and full of benignity. In one hand he carried a subscription paper and a petition—in the other, he carried a small pamphlet, on the unlawfulness of the African slave-trade, and a letter directed to the King of Prussia, upon the unlawfulness of war ... I beheld the whole assembly running to meet him—the air resounded with the clapping of hands—and I awoke from my dream, by the noise of a general acclamation of—ANTHONY BENEZET!

A modern narratologist would recognize Rush's “Paradise” as dream sequence, and criticize it as too didactic to be truly artistic. At the end of the nineteenth century, Sigmund Freud, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, dismissed “artificial dreams contrived by poets ... intended for ... symbolic interpretation.” Still, Freud was “forced to admit” dreams had de facto power due to “stubbornly retained popular belief.” In eighteenth-century America, dreams had palpable presence, due not only to superstition but to religion and science.

In those days, Americans took their Bible literally. Pennsylvania's Constitution required assemblymen “acknowledge the Scriptures ... to be given by Divine inspiration.” Rush questioned soteriological doctrines, but “not ... at any time of my life ever entertained a doubt of the divine origin of the Bible.” And Testaments Old and New presented dreams as vehicles for Providential communications, either direct or as interpreted by “diviners.”

Medical texts also respected dreams. Hippocrates of Kos, the “Father of Medicine,” averred, “[h]e who has learnt aright about the signs that come in sleep will find that they have an important influence upon all things.” Artemidorus of Ephesus, whose *Oneirokritikon*—which also translates as *The Interpretation of Dreams*—was more “Freudian” than Freud, explained “a dream operates as a vision calling attention to the prediction of what is to come, and after sleep it naturally tends to rouse and impel the soul to active undertakings.” Cullen, in Edinburgh, theorized about dreams and Rush, soon after his return to Philadelphia, submitted a paper on dreams to the American Philosophical Society. It did not survive peer review, but Rush continued to collect dream accounts almost as diligently as Freud.

It would be too ... *Oedipal* to interpret “Paradise of Slaves” as a wish to supplant his mentor/father Benezet, but the essay does suggest Rush wanted to be seen also as an advocate of Africans. And he was roused to active undertakings; in April he helped resuscitate the Society for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage, founded by Benezet and comatose since his death.

Credit for the Society’s revival is often assigned to Franklin, who did serve as president. But Rush wrote a new constitution and loquaciously renamed the organization the “Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully held in Bondage, and the Improvement of the Conditions of the African Race.” The Preamble declared: “the Creator” made “all the children of men ... members of the same family, however diversified they may be, by colour, situation, religion, or different states of society” and stated a revolutionary mission:

to extend the blessings of freedom to every part of the human race; and in a more particular manner, to such of their fellow creatures as are entitled to freedom by the laws and constitutions of any of the United States, and who, notwithstanding, are detained in bondage, by fraud or violence.

Rush was elected a corresponding secretary, but not without objection; the original constitution insisted “No person holding a slave shall be admitted” and Rush was not in compliance.

In May, Rush took tea with Franklin, who “spoke in high terms against Negro Slavery” and recalled having printed “a book 40 years ago against it.” Franklin was perhaps being supportive—or defensive—as he once kept slaves, and his 1751 “Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries” opposed the slave trade out of a partiality for “the complexion of my country.” But the tea time conversation probably focused on what Rush described to Lettsom as a “petition [to] our Convention ... to make the suppression of the African trade ... an essential article of the new Confederation.”

Due to the Convention’s secrecy, Rush may have been unaware that petition was never presented, when, in August, he again used an artificial dream to advocate a Benezet-related cause. In “The Benefits of Charity,” a Dreamer, “conveyed, suddenly into the kingdom of Heaven” sees “a large book, lettered on the back ‘the Judgements and Mercies

of God' flanked by two angels with a large breast plates, on one "engraved in flaming characters, The Destroying Angel, on the other in letters of gold, The Angel of Mercy." As the latter angel explains, the book records all God's judgments of earthly behavior, punishments ordered and mercies granted. Allowed to examine it, the Dreamer sees that the Destroying Angel has been sent to Philadelphia on several occasions, bearing fire, famine, civil war, but each time the Angel of Mercy has won the city a stay of execution by pointing out the establishment of some charitable institution—the Pennsylvania Hospital, the Dispensary for the Medical Relief of the Poor, the Society for the Relief of Prisoners. The Dreamer is told an impending calamity—an earthquake—can be forestalled if "the inhabitants shall unite and establish free schools ... before the first of May 1788." But prior to that denouement Rush described an earlier salvation:

In the month of March 1787, the wickedness of Philadelphia increased to such a degree, as to awaken the divine vengeance ... the destroying angel was commanded to let loose ... the calamities of sickness and death. He appeared with a box in his hand, in which was confined the contagion of a malignant fever. The angel of mercy ... pointed to the Society for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery ... The destroying angel buried his box, and retired again to heaven.

On first looking into the Constitution, Rush must have looked up in dread.

*

At the end of the nineteenth century, Freud presented, as a classic case, Miss Lucy R., a governess employed by a wealthy widower. Freud, who had only a recently begun referring to himself as a "psychoanalyst," tried to treat what would now be diagnosed as depression using his developing psychoanalytic protocol, but Miss R. was unavailable for daily sessions and resistant to hypnotism; "the analysis was made while she was in a state not perhaps differing much from the normal." Basically, Freud asked her questions while he held her hand.

His analysis: Miss R., after an unusually "serious and friendly" conversation with her employer, formed "a secret hope," which was subsequently "crushed." Her symptoms resulted from both disappointment and from self-protective repression of both her feelings and her awareness of them. Despite limited treatment, Miss R. brought this to consciousness; she herself explained: "I did not know it, or rather, I did not wish to know it. I wished to crowd it out of my mind, never to think of it." Freud admitted: "I have never managed to give a better description than this of the strange state of mind in which one knows and does not know a thing at the same time."

Nine days after the Constitution was published, Rush, again wrote to Lettsom. He made no mention of a Pennsylvania Abolition Society petition, but, like Franklin, garrulously revisited the glory days, when "Anthony Benezet stood alone in defending the claims of the Negroes to the rights of humanity ... " and he himself wrote a "tract in favor

of the poor Africans” which, while it “procured me many enemies” diminished “the practice of Negro slavery in our state.” Rush insisted “the influence of Pennsylvania chiefly” produced a “prevalence of sentiments favorable to African liberty in every part of the United States.” To this self-serving—or self-protective—summary, he added: “You will see a proof ... in the new Constitution ... In the year one thousand seven hundred and eight there will be an end of the African trade in America.”

Freud might have explained that slip as the fulfillment of Rush’s subconscious wish that the slave trade had ended before he was born. But Freud also found errors in writing dates indicative “that even in healthy, not neurotic, persons resistances are found against the ... idea of painful thoughts.” Freud likewise explained “lapses in reading,” and Rush surely misread the Constitution’s Article 1, Section 9: “The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight.” But even to Freud, such lapses did not indicate a total breakdown; he himself admitted:

I saw something which did not fit in at all with my expectation; yet I did not allow what I saw to disturb my fixed plan in the least, though the perception should have put a stop to it. I was unconscious of any contradiction in this ...

Had he looked back a century he might have found Dr. R a classic case.

Other writers did consider the Constitution’s defects, although the most eloquent, signing “Centinel,” focused first on Federalist strategy. “The wealthy and ambitious,” Centinel charged, seized on “distresses and difficulties ... proceeding from various causes,” ascribed them “to the impotency of the present confederation,” leading the people to fear “ruin and annihilation as a nation” and to expect “full relief from the adoption of the proposed system of government.” The strategy of “these characters” was to “lull all distrust” by gaining the concurrence of “the two men in whom America has the highest confidence,” imposing on the “unsuspecting goodness and zeal” of Washington and the “weakness and indecision attendant on old age” of Franklin.

Centinel also detected deviousness in “the injunction of secrecy imposed on the members of the late Convention ... obviously dictated by the genius of Aristocracy,” which thought repression of “ex parte discussion” was “more likely to obtain unanimity in the Convention” and give the eventual report “such a sanction in the public opinion, as to banish all distrust, and lead the people into an implicit adoption of it without examination.”

Centinel seemed paranoid only because he was not in possession of all the documents. But in June Madison apologized to Jefferson:

I have exhausted all the means which I can make use of for gratifying your curiosity. It was thought expedient in order to secure unbiassed discussion within doors, and to prevent

misconceptions and misconstructions without, to establish
some rules of caution which will for no short time restrain even
a confidential communication of our proceedings.

After the Convention adjourned, Washington minimized discord even in his diary, writing: “the Constitution received the Unanimous assent of 11 states and Colo Hamilton from New York.” But “unanimous” meant only that at least one deputy from each state signed the Convention report. Some deputies refused—including two Virginians. Some had already departed in “decided and unreserved dissent;” Hamilton was the only New Yorker left. Madison’s signing scene, with its optimistic Freemasonic mysticism was probably invented.

But we the People were not to know details, including that “We the People” was a revision to obscure disagreements between our deputies—and the fact that They the People of Rhode Island had no deputies at all. The Convention’s final resolution was to place the journal in Washington’s keeping, to be released only if the plan was ratified, if then. Thus did the Constitution come forth as if immaculately conceived in the same womb as the Declaration of Independence.

As Centinel charged, it was to remain immaculate. Although merely a report “laid before the United States in Congress Assembled” the Convention appended an “opinion” that it should be “submitted to a Convention of Delegates, chosen in each State by the People thereof ... for their assent and ratification.” Congress debated whether the “opinion” an *ad hoc* committee created by Congress could preclude amendments by Congress or by the state conventions—in particular, the addition of bill of rights, but after four days, Congress proved it was indeed ineffectual and “resolved unanimously, That the said report ...” be ratified “in conformity to the resolves of the Convention.”

But Centinel considered not only things not seen; he found in several clauses of the Constitution cause for fear. That “Congress shall have the power to lay and collect Taxes ... to provide for the common Defence and general Welfare” allowed that “Congress may construe every purpose ... to be for the general welfare, and thereby seize upon every object of revenue.” That Congress was empowered to “raise and support Armies” licensed a standing army, “that darling and long wished for object of the well-born of America ... a fatal instrument to overturn the public liberties.” And that the Constitution established itself as “the supreme Law of the Land ... Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding” meant that, by ratifying it, Pennsylvanians would “surrender ... forever ... liberties and privileges secured to you by the constitution of this commonwealth.”

Centinel, rebutted by James Wilson, one of Pennsylvania’s deputies, in a “passionate but tightly reasoned” speech in the State House Yard, dismissed all apprehensions. “Why should we be alarmed with visionary evils?” he asked. “I will venture to predict that the great revenue of the United States must, and always will, be raised by impost.” Any “dread of military violence” was an “effusion of a wild imagination or a factious spirit.” Fear of “a standing army in the time of peace” was ridiculous; he did not “not know a nation in the world” which did not “maintain the appearance of strength in a

season of the most profound tranquility.” His was the first defense of the Constitution by a member of the Convention; it was reprinted in thirty-four newspapers.

A decade later Rush told his children: “the zeal I had discovered in my publications ... induced the citizens of Philadelphia to elect me a member of the convention that met ... to adopt or reject the proposed federal constitution.” On the day his election was announced, Centinel published a sermon.

He began with scripture: *John 3:20—For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light—and Luke 12:3—Whatever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light*—but after New Testament invocation went Old Testament on the Constitution. Article 1, section 9 was inserted, Centinel charged, “to secure to the southern states the right of introducing negroes for twenty-one years to come.” Unlike Rush, Centinel considered the remainder of the clause: “but a tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person”—a serious consideration if, as Wilson predicted, the new government was to support itself with import duties, and a moral dilemma for Rush.

The strategy behind his 1773 pamphlet had been to discourage the slave trade through economic disincentive. He had proclaimed the Assembly’s vote to increase the import duty “an almost total prohibition.” The Constitution eliminated any state’s right to impose such a duty, replacing it with a federal lower duty which could not be increased, if it were ever applied at all. And if it were, the entire nation became a beneficiary of the slave trade. In 1774, Rush had called the boycott threatened by the Continental Congress a turning “from our wickedness” that gave “good reason to fear brought down the vengeance of Heaven.” In August, he had dramatized that fear. The Constitution allowed a returning toward wickedness, hidden by dissimulation, as Centinel exposed:

We are told the objects of this article are slaves ... The words, dark and ambiguous; such as no plain man of common sense would have used, are evidently chosen to conceal from Europe, that in this enlightened country, the practice of slavery has its advocates among men in the highest stations.

In September, he had done exactly that, writing to Lettsom, in London: “No mention was made of *Negroes* or *slaves* in this Constitution only because it was thought the very words would contaminate the glorious fabric of American liberty and government.”

Centinel’s sermon should at least have given Rush pause. But pause was not on the Federalist agenda; what Centinel called a “frenzy of enthusiasm” was exceeded only in once-vassal Delaware, where a convention ratified the Constitution unanimously after deliberating for four days at a tavern called the Golden Fleece. Other major states scheduled their conventions for the New Year; their delegates were informed by public commentary, including the eighty-five “Federalist” essays authored by “Publius.” Pennsylvania’s convention sat in late November and had access to only twenty.

Rush had access to those; Hamilton expressed him early numbers, and suggested “some ... might have a good effect upon some of your Quaker Members of Convention.” But he also had access to the opinion of David Ramsay, a fellow Pennsylvania and graduate

of the College of New Jersey, a former pupil, now a prosperous physician, historian, and politician. Ramsay, while willing “to adopt the constitution without any alteration” suggested “objections might be obviated if the first state convention ... would nevertheless express their approbation of some alterations being made ... Should your State adopt this line ... it would probably be followed by the others.” Rush heeded Hamilton.

Unlike the Grand Convention, the Pennsylvania Convention resolved its doors be left open, and further, that “[e]very objection that can be suggested ... will be listened to with attention, answered, and perhaps obviated.” Newspapers published both Federalist and anti-Federalist speeches, with commentary. The official stenographer was Thomas Lloyd, the “Father of American Shorthand,” a dedicated—some said bribed—Federalist; objections were noted only sketchily, and the published journal read like a monologue by Wilson with interjections from sidekicks Chief Justice Thomas McKean and Rush. But even in the journal, Wilson’s response to one objection is telling. A delegate from Western Pennsylvania wondered whether the conspicuous avoidance of the word “slave” in the importation and migration clause was “[i]ntended to grant to Congress ... the power to admit the importation of slaves.”

Wilson began his response with an anecdote about a sailor who was both illiterate and ignorant of the accommodation of “lining out” hymns. Wilson then lined out the clause, while praising “the care that the Convention took in selecting their language” to allow Congress to tax “only those imported” not European migrants. The anecdote indicated both Pennsylvania prejudices. The argument recapitulated Franklin’s 1751 essay on populations and anticipated three centuries of American immigration policy.

According to one sympathetic historian, Rush “spoke often and eloquently and with effect.” In truth, Rush embarrassed himself. Like Franklin in the Grand Convention, Rush moved for prayer; like Franklin’s, his motion was tabled. In debate, he exacerbated preexisting divisions by, in general, maligning the state constitution to praise the federal, in particular disparaging “states which have encumbered their constitutions with that idle and superfluous instrument” and calling it “an honor” that the federal Constitution “has not been disgraced with a bill of rights.”

Rush was likely suffering from sleep deprivation and anxiety; his eighth child had been born two weeks earlier and Rush well knew the risk of infant mortality. The press, however, made no allowances for the as-yet-codified effects of stress. One journalist sneered:

Dr. Rush then proceeded to consider the origin of the proposed system, and fairly deduced it from heaven, asserting that he as much believed the hand of God was employed in this work, as that God had divided the Red Sea to give a passage to the children of Israel or had fulminated the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai! Dilating some time upon this new species of divine right, thus transmitted to the future governors of the Union.

Like Franklin, Rush pled for unanimity. But Franklin did so in the course of calling the question. Rush rose after the question had been called and “entered into a metaphysical argument, to prove that the morals of the people had been corrupted by the imperfections of the government.” As even the Federalist-controlled *Journal* reported he made “a pathetic appeal” for unanimity which would make him “disposed to run across the room, and take every member of the opposition in my arms.” Unanimity was not forthcoming, but the next day’s *Independent Gazetteer* did report “public rejoicing” at ratification:

[S]hip carpenters and sailors conducted a boat, on a wagon drawn by five horses, through the city, to the great amusement of many thousand spectators. On their way through the different streets, they frequently threw a sounding line, and cried out, “three and twenty fathoms, foul bottom”; and in other places, “six and forty fathoms, sound bottom-safe anchorage”;

alluding to the numbers that composed the minority and majority of the late Convention of Pennsylvania.

In mid-December that minority published an “Address and Reasons of Dissent.” It was marred by indignation at recent insults and by reiteration of old complaints, now irrelevant—although “Daniel Shays” might have been stung by: “Whilst the gilded chains were forging in the secret conclave the meaner instruments of despotism without were busily employed in alarming the fears of the people with dangers which did not exist.” But the minority’s most persuasive complaint was “the omission of a BILL of RIGHTS ascertaining and fundamentally establishing those unalienable and personal rights of men.”

On Christmas Day, Rush assured a suburban correspondent, “[t]he minority of Pennsylvania have nearly exhausted their malice. There will be no opposition by arms in any county in this state.” But that day Centinel renewed his campaign against “harpies of power” and “crafty and aspiring despots.” The next day, rhetoric became riot at a place Rush considered an outpost of enlightenment.

Even before Wilson’s Statehouse Yard speech, the burghers of Carlisle “[r]esolved: That the said Constitution is most warmly approved of.” The day after Christmas, “notice being given by ringing the bell,” the Federalist burghers met in the public square, “to testify their approbation of the ratification.” The celebration was disrupted by anti-Federalist husbanders and freeholders armed with barrel staves and bludgeons. The next day Federalists, armed with muskets and bayonets, completed their celebration, repairing afterwards to a tavern to toast Wilson and McKean. But outside an anti-Federalist cortège, led by a militia captain shouting he was “inspired from Heaven” paraded effigies of Wilson and McKean through the town and, as the same bell tolled, hanged and burned them in the courthouse square along with a copy of the Constitution.

Carlisle inspired a statewide movement to nullify ratification. Some of the rhetoric was pointedly *ad hominem*. In Pittsburgh, “Hampden” attacked “characters” who supported the Constitution “as if it was accompanied with such miraculous divine energy as divided

the Red Sea and spake with thunder on Mount Sinai." In Philadelphia, Centinel condemned "Doctor Puff" from whose "creative pen thousands of correspondents rise into view." Even in Massachusetts, "Helvidius Priscus" sneered at "a *southern doctor* ..." who "believes the finger of God was as much employed in fabricating the federal republic as in dictating the ten commandments."

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In early 1788, Rush informed a prospective editor he was "withdrawing myself from ... public life ... not because I am hurt by the slander of my enemies" but because "I consider the federal ship as nearly moored. Let the proper officers now repair her rigging and stop her leaks. I am only a passenger." But the ship had already gone off course in Massachusetts, where some delegates demanded amendments to the allegedly unamendable. To secure passage Federalists agreed to add to "Assent & Ratification" a "Recommendation & Injunction" that "certain amendments" be made by the new government. The strategy Ramsay suggested to Rush became known as the Massachusetts Compromise.

Even that aroused anti-Federalist objection. From Plymouth, "A Columbian Patriot," a prerevolutionary playwright, inspired to postrevolutionary polemics by Catherine Macaulay, rejected "[t]he very suggestion, that we ought to trust to the precarious hope of amendments." Federalists, she warned, Madison and Hamilton in particular, were installing "a most complicated system of government, marked ... with the *dark, secret, and profound intrigues* of the statesman" and the "ideal projects of *young ambition*, with its wings just expanded to soar to a summit." Where Federalist writers summoned Daniel Shays; A Columbian Patriot conjured Thomas Hutchinson.

But ratification was ratification. Massachusetts Federalists celebrated by formalizing Pennsylvania's impromptu celebration. The boat became a model ship mounted on a sledge, drawn by thirteen horses, followed by militia companies and trade societies—at least a thousand men, slogging through Boston's snow-choked streets to City Hall, where thirteen toasts were drunk.

And as Ramsay predicted, the Massachusetts Compromise lubricated the ratification process. In Maryland, the pre-Convention conversation had been "carried on with a warmth and violence" after one deputy presented the legislature with a damning report and the people with a pungent query:

[W]hat you would think of a physician who, because you were slightly indisposed, should bring you a dose which properly corrected with other ingredients might be a salutary remedy, but of itself was a deadly poison, and with great appearance of friendship and zeal, should advise you to swallow it immediately, and trust to accident for those requisites necessary to qualify its malignity, and prevent its destructive effects?

The Maryland convention ratified, delegates remained as “private citizens” to discuss “amendments and alterations” and according to one Baltimore newspaper “the bitterness of partisanship disappeared.” Afterwards, the town recapitulated the ritual codified in Boston.

In the late twentieth century, a German historian marveled that these celebrations, though recognized as a discrete phenomena labeled “federal processions,” had “almost completely escaped” scholarly attention. Noting “the term ‘procession’ itself has strong religious connotations,” he argued, “[o]n the deepest level the federal processions invested the Constitution ... with a religious or quasi-religious legitimacy.” In Catholic Maryland, since 1771, May First had been Saint Tammany Day. In 1788, Federalists made The Affable One their patron saint.

That morning, three thousand men mustered on a hill in East Baltimore and stepped off to a seven-gun salute. Forty-five craft guilds were represented. Prominence was given to the maritime trades—shipwrights, sailmakers, caulkers, seamen ordinary and able, and captains, some also shipowners. Men of “learned professions”—judges, lawyers, doctors, and clergymen—were relegated to the rear. The centerpiece was *The Federalist*, a fifteen-foot miniature sloop, mounted on a horse-drawn carriage but fitted out for sea. Her captain was an ex-lieutenant in what passed for a Continental Navy.

Led by a “band of music,” the procession moved past the shipyards of Fell’s Point, through the streets of Baltimore City to Signal Hill, a picturesque rise overlooking the harbor. Food was served. Thirteen toasts were drunk. There was dancing and “illuminations.” In the rockets’ red glare, *The Federalist* was launched and sailed down the Patapsco toward Annapolis.

Eventually, she put to sea—or rather, bay—sailing south along the Chesapeake shore. As *The Federalist* navigated, Federalists maneuvered, using the Massachusetts Compromise strategy to secure ratifications in South Carolina and New Hampshire. As she reached the Potomac and worked her way upriver, they publicized success with federal processions. As she reached her final mooring at Mount Vernon, Virginia ratified the Constitution.

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At sunrise a full peal of bells rang out from Christ Church steeple; the ship *Rising Sun*, anchored off Market Street, discharged her cannon in salute to the day. At the wharves all vessels were decorated, and along the harbor from South Street to the Northern Liberties ten ships were ranged, each bearing at its masthead a broad white flag inscribed with the name of a state in gold By eight in the morning the procession was assembling; at nine-thirty it began to move.

Thus did the Historiographer who proclaimed the Constitution a miracle depict dawn, July 4, 1788 in Philadelphia, and the start of what was billed “The Grand Federal Procession.” It was not a grand finale; three states had not yet voted. But Virginia’s ratification satisfied legal and practical requirements, Philadelphia Federalists coopted “the political birthday of every American” as the birthday of a new America.

But it *was* grand; the official Chronicler estimated five thousand men were in the mile-and-a-half-long caravan, along with carriages, floats, and horses. The number of onlookers was inestimable, but in the Historiographer's rendering, "[s]pectators crowded the footways, stood at open windows and on the roofs of the houses, gazing down at the tramping bright lines of marchers."

And it was grandiose. It emphasized the tenors and enlarged the vehicles of previous processions and brought the metaphors to life. A late-twentieth century Critic reviewed it as "an ambitious act of political street theater, scripted by federalist supporters ... performed in the streets of Philadelphia."

The "federal ship," first seen as an anonymous skiff, was magnified into a 33-foot model frigate, christened *Union*. Powered by ten horses, armed with twenty guns, she was manned by twenty-five actors who pantomimed "ceremonies" of the sea. Even her keel was pedigreed; as the Chronicler proclaimed, "Her bottom was the barge ... taken in the memorable engagement of captain Paul Jones, in the *Bon Homme Richard*" and she "commanded universal attention and applause." She cruised on "a large sheet of canvas painted to represent the sea ... tacked all around her water line" and extending to the ground "to conceal the wheels and machinery ... nothing incongruous appeared to offend the eye."

A Boston newspaper had illustrated the ratification process as the erection of a series of pillars to support a common roof. That graphic was realized as a wooden tower in Baltimore; in Philadelphia, became a 36-foot high dome, supported by ten Corinthian columns, set on a carriage drawn by ten white horses and labeled NEW ROOF, or GRAND FEDERAL EDIFICE.

The "New Constitution"—idolized, framed, illuminated, legended THE PEOPLE in gold—was carried by the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court "in a lofty ornamented car, in form of a large Eagle" on a twenty-foot-long float drawn by six white horses. The float's rear wheels eight feet in diameter, its front wheels six-and-a-half. The eagle's body—another thirteen feet high—was painted blue, its breast "emblazoned with 13 silver stars in a sky-blue field; and underneath, a shield bearing 13 stripes, alternate red and white. The dexter talons of the eagle embraced an olive branch: the sinister grasped thirteen arrows."

Foreign allies were acknowledged by a man on horseback bearing a white flag emblazoned with *fleurs de lys* and stars, and legended SIXTH OF FEBRUARY, 1778—the day France signed the Treaty of Alliance—and by a carriage, conveying representatives and flying the ensigns of Morocco—the first nation to extend international recognition to a "United States of America"—Sweden, Prussia, the United Netherlands.

Like its precedents, the Grand Procession featured tradesmen, described by the Historiographer in Homeric catalogue:

brickmakers and clockmakers, fringe and ribbon weavers;
saddlers and cordwainers; boat builders, sailmakers, ship
joiners, ropemakers, carvers, gilders, coopers; blacksmiths and
coachmakers, skinnners and glovers; goldsmiths and gunsmiths,

the brewers and bakers dressed in spotless white; tailors, perukemakers, barber-surgeons and staymakers.

The Chronicler's list also included tobacconists, sugar refiners, distillers.

And, in what the Critic called "an extended pun on collective nation-making" industry itself was displayed on "horse-drawn stages." On one, mottoed FEDERAL ARMORY, gunsmiths manufactured muskets. On another, metal founders cast a three-inch howitzer. On another, cotton was spun into cloth for "federal rib" and livery lace. The "Tradesman of Philadelphia" was too ill to attend the parade, but his Way to Wealth was present in a print shop, complete with working press, on which chapelmen struck off copies of an occasional ode and tossed them to the crowd. The Chronicler found this "more miraculous than the ship or the dome," but then, it was he who had written:

See where Columbia sits alone,
And from her star bespangled throne,
Beholds the gay procession move along ...
"Tis done! 'tis done! my sons, she cries,
"In war are valiant and in council wise ...
"My sons for freedom fought, nor fought in vain,
"But found a naked goddess was their gain;
"Good government alone can shew the maid
"In robes of social happiness array'd."

His description of "horse, artillery, and infantry" regiments was less risqué: "completely dressed, and accoutred" in "the uniform of their respective corps" they "gave a beautiful variety" and "evinced that both soldiers and citizens united in favour of the new government." The Historiographer added color: "The First City Troop of Light Dragoons led off, resplendent in their blue coats faced with red, their white saddleclothes edged in blue."

The parade took a mile-long detour to receive "a salute in military form" from a "company of continental troops, which happened to be in the city." As a result, it was afternoon when the trailing elements—lawyers, physicians and clergymen, a rear guard of cavalry—reached the broad lawn of a vacant mansion, for the day dubbed "Union Green." There Wilson delivered an oration that disparaged Greece and Rome in comparison to America and the Constitution from which all blessings were to flow. His style was typical but the list strangely, began not with prosperity but

with peace; the mild and modest harbinger of felicity. How seldom does the amiable wanderer choose for her permanent residence the habitations of men! ... Why may we not hope, that, disentangled from the intrigues and jealousies of European politics ... our councils will be directed to the encouragement, and our strength be exerted in the cultivation, of *all the arts of peace?*

Wilson concluded—eventually—by picturing a country in which “Peace walks serene and unalarmed over all the unmolested regions,” which peroration the militia punctuated with a three-round *feus-de-joie*.

The seventeen thousand invited picnickers then adjourned to “Tables ... plentifully spread with a cold collation,” although some uninvited “land pirates” had liberated whole hams and legs mutton. Although “[n]o spirit or wine of any kind were introduced: American porter, beer, and cyder ... were very abundant” in “Hogsheads, butts, and barrels.” Toasts, announced by trumpets, were drunk to We, the People, Members of the Grand Convention, General Washington, Louis XVI—who then still wore both crown and head—and hope that “reason, and not the sword, hereafter decide all national disputes.” Each was followed by a ten-round salvo from the artillery—including the just-cast howitzer—and answered from the Delaware by the cannon of the *Rising Sun*.

Rush's place in these festivities is unclear. But a few days later, “A Gentleman in this City” offered “Observations on the Federal Procession ... too minute or speculative” for the “account published by ... the committee of arrangement.” A Gentleman's view varied somewhat from other accounts:

The first thing that struck me on viewing the procession was the *occasion* of it. It was not to celebrate a victory obtained in blood over any part of our fellow creatures. No city reduced to ashes—no army conquered by capitulation—no news of slaughtered thousands brought the citizens of Philadelphia together. It was to celebrate a triumph of knowledge over ignorance, of virtue over vice, and of liberty over slavery. It was to celebrate the birth of a free government, the objects of which were to lessen the number of widows and orphans by preventing the effusion of human blood, to save human nature from the disgraces and desolations of war, and to establish and extend the blessings of peace throughout the continent of America.

The German Historian found “[m]ost of the images and techniques” of federal processions “stood in the tradition of ... public festivities such as church processions, crowning ceremonies ... transferred from Europe.” But A Gentleman “distinguished this procession from the processions in Europe” where “[t]he military alone partake of the splendor ... farmers and tradesmen are ... introduced ... only to add to the strength or length.”

The Historiographer's images—“tramping bright lines of marchers,” “horses stepping high,” “a band of music, playing for dear life”—suggested vigor and volume. A Gentleman noted “old and weakly people in the procession” and that “a solemn silence reigned,” and praised “the variety of colors” seen not in military uniforms but in tradesmen's costumes and “the dresses of the citizens.”

He did not mention toasts, much less trumpets and volleys, but “derived no small pleasure, or rather triumph” from the absence of spirituous liquor, claimed “there was

scarcely one person intoxicated” on Union Green and proposed erection of a monument with an inscription damning liquor as “antifederal.”

He ignored Wilson’s oration, but reported “speeches ... made by different gentlemen that arose out of the incidents of the procession.” One speech: “this was an emblem of the obstructions and difficulties the Constitution had met with.” Rather than reveal that incident—the giant eagle threatened to overturn—A Gentleman instead enthused that the Constitution was borne on a “triumphal car ... raised above every other object” and, as in Hebrew ritual, the document was “carried by a great law-officer to denote the elevation of the government and of law and justice above everything else.”

The Chronicler only briefly acknowledged religious participants. But A Gentleman reported “[p]ains were taken to connect Ministers of the most dissimilar religious principles together ... thereby to shew the influence of a free government in promoting Christian charity” and even further toleration:

The Rabbi of the Jews, locked in the arms of two ministers of the gospel ... could not have been a more happy emblem contrived, of that section of the new constitution, which opens all its power and offices alike, not only to every sect of christians, but to worthy men of *every* religion.

A Gentleman described the Grand Procession as giving “universal pleasure. Never upon any occasion during the late war did I see such deep-seated joy in every countenance,” but some of his own “Observations” had, not a negative, but a melancholy tone. The historiographer, Chronicler and Madison—and, allegedly Franklin—saw significance in a rising sun. A Gentleman noted:

The sun was not to be seen till near two o’clock, at which time the procession was over. A pleasant and cooling breeze blew all day from the south, and in the evening the sky was illuminated by a beautiful aurora borealis.

And while he found the federal ship ... “moving upon dry land conveyed emotions to every heart that cannot be described,” he lamented that “[s]he was a ship of war.” And he did “wish the procession could have been conducted without blending the emblems of peace and war together.”

Perhaps his tone reflected that, as Rush, in his own voice, wrote to a friend in Carlisle, that year “[i]t has pleased God to visit my family with several afflictions.”

The first was the death of his infant son, from what Rush diagnosed as pleurisy—a tragedy he did not mention to his children as he believed “care should be taken never to mention the names of the deceased” and that “there is science, as well as sympathy in this silence.” His authorities for these beliefs were archaic, but his understanding of grief anticipated modern research:

Physicians, in their unsuccessful efforts to save life, are often obliged to witness this passion ... Its symptoms are acute and chronic. The former are, insensibility, syncope, asphyxia, and apoplexy; the latter are, fever, wakefulness, sighing, with and without tears, dyspepsia, hypochondriasis, loss of memory, gray hairs, marks of premature old age in the countenance, catalepsy, and madness. It sometimes brings on sudden death, without any signs of previous disease ... Dissections of persons who have died of grief show congestion in, and inflammation of, the heart ... But there are instances, in which the sympathy of the heart with the whole system is so completely severed by grief, that the subject of it discovers not one mark of it in his countenance or behaviour ... he sometimes exhibits signs of unbecoming levity in his intercourse with the world.

His "first remedy" was opium; perhaps prescribed also for Julia, who was "much afflicted from the loss of our youngest boy." But he also recommended treatments that "belong to another profession." In his own case, these were not easily procured. As he did tell his children:

I now felt a strong desire to partake of the Lord's Supper. In consequence of my having renounced the Calvinistical opinions of the Presbyterians, I did not expect to be admitted to commune with them. I therefore submitted to confirmation with my dear wife in the month of February 1788, and a few days afterwards received the blessed Signs of the death of Jesus Christ in St. Peter's Church.

But he was "attacked upon my return from church by a severe pleurisy." For nine days he lay close to death, aware he was "seized with the same disorder" that killed his son. He settled his affairs, gave "minute directions" for his funeral ... "I realized death." His recovery was "the next thing to a miracle" but it both "pleased God to restore me and for some time afterwards to continue upon my mind a considerable sense of divine things." Certainly farsighted ideas emerged from his convalescence.

In April Rush again wrote Lettsom and reiterated nearly word-for-word his version of the history of American abolitionism. But he added a psychological insight:

The singing and dancing to which the Negroes in the West Indies are so much addicted are the effects of mirth and not of happiness. Mirth and a heavy heart I believe often meet together and hence the propriety of Solomon's observation that "in the midst of laughter the heart is sad" ... instead of considering the songs and dances of the Negroes in the West Indies as marks of their happiness, I have long considered them

as physical symptoms of melancholy or madness, and therefore as certain proofs of their misery.

Rush's insight would be corroborated in 1845 when "An American Slave," escaped to the North, was "utterly astonished ... to find persons who could speak of the singing, among slaves, as evidence of their contentment and happiness. It is impossible to conceive of a greater mistake." A Gentleman's observation of one of the Grand Procession's industrial displays looms as less perspicacious in historical hindsight:

On that stage were carried the emblems of the future wealth and independence of our country. Cotton may be cultivated in the southern and manufactured in the eastern and middle states in such quantities in a few years as to clothe every citizen of the United States. Hence will arise a bond of union to the states more powerful than any article of the new Constitution.

The Historiographer concluded her story with an account of the Grand Procession. She relied heavily on Chronicer's account, and might reasonably have used a quote from his ode as her exit line. But it was A Gentleman, not Washington or Madison, who called the Constitution "as much the work of a divine providence as any of the miracles recorded in the old and new testament," so she ended with a quote: "'Tis done,' Rush wrote. 'We have become a nation.'" But, although the Histoigrapher ascribed the quote to Rush, A Gentleman's conclusion differed, perhaps because he recalled that aboard Plato's metaphorical "ship of state" We the people were shortsighted ship owners and our leaders, sailors adept at rigging and maneuvering but ignorant of navigation. Or perhaps it was because his firstborn son served "in the character of a Midshipman" on board that ship of war.

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Before its publication Rush added a postscript to A Gentleman's "Observations:" The Grand Federal Procession "made such an impression upon the minds of our young people that 'federal' and 'union' have now become part of the 'household words' of every family in the city." Historical hindsight also makes that ironic; as that addendum appeared, the bringing of a book to America was fertilizing the seeds of disunion. It was titled *Notes on the State of Virginia*.

Thomas Jefferson's first—and only—book originated in a questionnaire, "Queries," distributed to the several states by a French diplomat; apparently Louis XVI wanted information about the land which owed him all those *Louis d'or*. Then Governor Jefferson undertook to respond for Virginia. The task was complicated; questions which, in Europe, would have been satisfied by short answers, in America, required essays—e.g., "An exact description of its limits and boundaries." For this and other reasons—e.g., the British invasion of Virginia led by Benedict Arnold—the task took over a year.

Both Jefferson and the French diplomat had recently been elected to the American Philosophical Society. After drafting his responses, Jefferson wrote to Charles Thomson, an influential APA member, inquiring if “some of the subjects might, if more fully handled, be a proper tribute to the society” and if so, “to what degree of minuteness one should descend.” Thomson encouraged Jefferson’s “philosophical researches.” During the next six years Jefferson “corrected and enlarged,” using the “Queries” as outline and chapter titles.

Most of Jefferson’s responses were objective and dispassionate; his answer to Query XIV, “The Administration of Justice and the Description of the Laws?” began with a dry legal discourse enlivened only by historical context: Independence required revisions to reflect Virginia’s sovereignty, a task assigned to a Committee of Revisors, chaired by Jefferson.

Other states seized this opportunity to advance the revolution. In Pennsylvania a new constitution allowed the landless into the electorate and the legislature. Rush decried the legislature as a “mobocracy” and sneered that its laws “breathe the spirit of town meetings and porter shops,” but in 1780 that spirit passed America’s first “Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery.” In Massachusetts, a new constitution made it law that “All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights.” After Mumbet, an illiterate female slave, heard the Constitution read in a town meeting she sued for her freedom; a jury of her peers and the state Supreme Court agreed slavery was “inconsistent” and abolished it ungradually.

In Virginia, the state constitution was more conservative, as were the proposed revisions to statutes; laws of inheritance were adjusted, slaves remained inheritable. But in *Notes*, Jefferson claimed the Revisors had drafted an amendment “[t]o emancipate all slaves born after passing the act.” He admitted “[t]he bill reported ... does not itself contain this proposition” but described it in detail. In this alleged proposal American-born black children were to:

continue with their parents to a certain age, then be brought up, at the public expense ... till the females should be eighteen, and the males twenty-one ... when they should be colonized to such place as the circumstances of the time should render most proper.

To address the resulting labor shortage, the government was “to send vessels at the same time to other parts of the world for an equal number of white inhabitants; to induce whom to migrate hither.”

Jefferson anticipated the obvious: “It will probably be asked, Why not retain and incorporate the blacks into the state?” His initial justifications were “[d]eep rooted prejudices entertained by the whites; ten thousand recollections, by the blacks, of the injuries they have sustained; new provocations ... which will probably never end but in the extermination of the one or the other race.” His final justification was “the real distinctions which nature has made.”

Here Jefferson's discourse digressed abruptly. The first digression indicates incognizance of the "deep-rooted prejudice" implicit in the concept of "real distinctions," which became apparent as Jefferson continued:

The first difference which strikes us is that of color. Whether the black of the negro resides in the reticular membrane between the skin and scarf-skin, or in the scarf-skin itself; whether it proceeds from the color of the blood, the color of the bile, or from that of some other secretion, the difference is fixed in nature and is as real as if its seat and cause were better known.

He presented further distinctions as scientific observations, but added subjective disparagements—e.g., "They secrete less by the kidneys, and more by the glands of the skin, which gives them a very strong and disagreeable odour." Claiming the authority of personal observation, he presented disparagements as symptoms of mental deficiency. He allowed "that in memory they are equal to the whites" but "in reason much inferior, as I think one could scarcely be found capable of tracing and comprehending the investigations of Euclid." He noted also "want of forethought" and an "existence appears to participate more of sensation than reflection." He asserted emotional deficits evident in reduced affect display—"that immovable veil of black which covers all the emotions"—and anhedonia—"love seems with them to be more an eager desire, than a tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation ..." while "their griefs are transient." At the same time black males were hyper-sexual—"more ardent after their female"—but also had a "preference for whites" akin to that of "the Oranootan for the black women over those of his own species." Following a defensive allusion to Classical slavery, Jefferson appealed to Parisian philosophes, Enlightened Edinburghers, and the American Philosophical Society:

Will not a lover of natural history then, one who views the gradations in all the races of animals with the eye of philosophy, excuse an effort to keep those in the department of man as distinct as nature has formed them? ... Many of their advocates, while they wish to vindicate the liberty of human nature, are anxious also to preserve its dignity and beauty. Some of these, embarrassed by the question, 'What further is to be done with them?' join themselves in opposition with those who are actuated by sordid avarice only.

Jefferson's digression concluded with a compulsive repetition regarding "unfortunate difference of color, and perhaps of faculty" a "powerful obstacle to the emancipation of these people." Then, as abruptly as he had digressed, he resumed his subject and tone: "The revised code further proposes to proportion crimes and punishments. This is attempted in the following scale"

Jefferson's Notes was published in England in 1787. Although its subject was a no-longer-British country, Query XIV had immediate relevance: a problem perceived in the presence of two non-Anglo-Saxon, non-Celtic, non-Norman populations. The first, "Lascars," were seamen and soldiers from the Subcontinent stranded in Britain by various agencies, including the Company. The second, "Black Loyalists," American slaves granted freedom after enlistment in the British Army who, like white Loyalists, were evacuated to Great Britain after the Revolution. These groups were conflated in the term "the Black Poor."

A "Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor," founded in 1786, provided temporary assistance, but saw a permanent solution in a plan to resettle Black Loyalists on the West African coast. Though well-intentioned, the plan ignored cultural realities. Color notwithstanding, natural-born Americans would, in Africa, be tribeless strangers in a strange tribal land and, given the tactics of the slave trade, in danger of being re-enslaved as "Captives taken in just warres." Jefferson acknowledged this in his reference to advocates joining the avaricious.

Some members of the British Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade also recognized this danger. But some realized Jefferson's *Notes* were more dangerous, as they implied black Americans, however loyal, were incapable of integration into British society. One of Jefferson's disparagements ("Never yet could I find that a black had uttered a thought above the level of plain narration") was particularly damaging as Jefferson evidenced it with criticism of the writings of two blacks well known in Britain.

Ignatius Sancho was an African-Briton, brought to England at age two. An actor, composer, and writer, his letters, published posthumously in 1782, had made him known, especially among Abolitionists, as "the extraordinary Negro." But Jefferson found that Sancho's imagination was "wild and extravagant" and that his letters "do more honour to the heart than the head"—an odd criticism, as Jefferson himself had recently penned a love letter to a married woman framed as a "dialogue ... between my Head and my Heart."

Odder was his dismissal of Phillis Wheatley, who was brought from Africa to America at six, and from America to England in 1773, where she saw her *Poems on Various Subjects* published to both acclaim as well as curiosity. Jefferson considered "[t]he compositions published under her name"—which he misspelled—"are below the dignity of criticism."

Jefferson undercut his argument by insinuating plagiarism in both cases, but he himself was not entirely unoriginal. When he "advanced it ... as a suspicion only, that the blacks ... are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind," he paraphrased Hume, who, in "On National Character," wrote, "I am apt to suspect the negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites." And although Jefferson's Query XIV codified the tropes of modern racism—and laid the Cornerstone of the Confederacy—his theses merely expanded Hume's opinion that "[t]here scarcely ever was a civilized nation of that complexion, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation."

Hume's opinion, though paradigmatic, appeared only in an out-of-date footnote. Jefferson elevated footnote to body text. And that he was a Virginian and a slave owner

gave his ideas credibility; his disparagements were based on observations of a number of subjects over an extended period of time. His argument was statistical—and phrased in elegant English, illuminated with Latin.

In his prize-winning essay, Clarkson had found it necessary to deal with Hume, as the idea that Africans were “an inferiour link of the chain of nature, and designed for servitude” lent justification to the Slave Trade. In 1787 Clarkson and other members of the British Society requested that the Pennsylvania Society, forward “such accounts of mental improvement, in any of the blacks, as might fall under their notice, in order the better to enable them to contradict those who assert that the intellectual faculties of the negroes are not capable of improvement equal to the rest of mankind.”

When Jefferson’s *Notes* was published in Philadelphia in 1788, Rush surely recognized Query XIV as a threat. Rush was well aware of Hume’s footnote. In his “Address on Slave-Keeping” he dismissed Hume’s suspicion with “I need hardly say any thing in favour of the intellects of the Negroes ... although these have been supposed, by some, to be inferior to those of the inhabitants of Europe.” The assumption of both the “Address” and the Pennsylvania Society constitution was that “slavery” was “so foreign to the human mind that the moral faculties, as well as those of the understanding are debased.” Jefferson presented mental, emotional, and presumably moral, faculties as “fixed in nature”; enslavement was not an intervening variable. And where Rush’s answer to “What further is to be done with them?” was “to entitle them to all the privileges of free-born British subjects,” Jefferson’s answer was “when freed ... to be removed beyond the reach of mixture.”

In January 1789, the *American Museum* published the British Society’s request and two responses from the Pennsylvania Society. One response presented James Derham, born a slave but taught to read and write. His first master, a Philadelphia physician, used Derham as an assistant and he “became so well acquainted with the healing art” that he was purchased by a succession of physicians, until, in New Orleans, he purchased himself. The unnamed reporter attested: “I expected to have suggested some new medicines to him, but he suggested many more to me.” *American Museum* headlined the more sensational response: “Account of a Wonderful Talent for Mathematical Calculation.” This showcased “lightning calculator” Thomas Fuller, an untutored, illiterate slave in “the state of Virginia.” It concluded with an anecdote. Fuller’s interviewer said it a pity Fuller had been denied an education. Fuller replied: “No, Massa, it is best I got no learning, for many learned men be great fools.”

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The Constitution provided for a “District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government.” In the interim, the First Congress was to convene in New York City, in the building on Wall Street used by the Confederation Congress. The scheduled date was March 4, 1789, but a quorum was not achieved until April 1.

Congress's first business was the counting of electoral ballots, to elect Washington President. Its first substantive legislation, a tariff "for the support of government, for the discharge of the debts of the United States, and the encouragement and protection of manufactures." Duties were imposed on a range of imported items, from alcoholic beverages and anchors to whips and walking sticks. Objections were raised to a proposed tariff on molasses, a critical raw material in the manufacture of rum, which, in turn, was critical to "the importation of such persons as any of the States thought proper."

Unlike the British slave trade, the American trade never settled into the neat triangular pattern often depicted in history texts, as lyricized in a mid-twentieth century Broadway musical, the "beautiful waltz" of "Molasses to rum to slaves." Distilleries in New England—particularly Rhode Island—slave "factories" on the African Coast and "trapiches" in the Sugar Islands were perennial vertices, but the dance was often a quadrille involving Southern colonies on the mainland. Owners purchased slaves but also rum, which, was distributed to slaves in order to—as one historian put it—"stabilize plantation life"—at establishments like Mount Vernon. After some debate the tariff on molasses was lowered by sixty percent. No duty was imposed on imported persons. Washington signed the bill into law on the Fourth of July, 1789.

Congress's first session was frenetic. There was much to be done and where the unicameral Confederation Congress had defects, the bicameral United States Congress had checks and balances. Still, in six months Congress accomplished a great deal. After resolving that any alterations would be "amendments" rather than "revisions" so the Constitution could "remain inviolate," Congress honored Massachusetts Compromise agreements, sending twelve proposed amendments to the states. It framed an executive branch with departments of Foreign Affairs, War, and Treasury, headed by "Secretaries" rather than ministers, and, on second thought, changed "Foreign Affairs" to "State." It fabricated a federal judiciary—justices, jurisdictions, and an attorney-general to advise on points of law. Both houses approved a site in Pennsylvania for a Seat of Government but not the same site; Congress adjourned at the end of September, leaving that question undecided.

The President appointed his wartime aides, Henry Knox, Alexander Hamilton and Edmund Randolph, as Secretary of War, Secretary of the Treasury and Attorney General, respectively, and wrote to Thomas Jefferson, en route from France, offering appointment as Secretary of State. After attending to private business regarding "Negroes ... horses, stock of all sorts" from the estate of his recently deceased mother, he set out on a goodwill tour of New England. Many among the crowds who gathered to catch sight of him also caught a "sort of epidemical cold" which came to be called "the President's Cough."

Congressional Cough might have been more accurate. As Rush wrote in an epidemiological study:

In the beginning of October a number of the members of the first Congress ... arrived in Philadelphia, much indisposed with colds. They ascribed them to the fatigue ... but from the number of persons who were affected, from the uniformity of

their complaints, and from the rapidity with which it was propagated through our city, it soon became evident that it was the ... Influenza. The symptoms ... were generally a hoarseness, sore-throat, a sense of weariness, chills, and a fever ... Many complained of acute pains in the HEAD ... The pain, in one of these cases ... was so exquisite, that my patient ... felt as if he should lose his reason ... It spread from New York and Philadelphia in all directions ... and pervaded every state in the union.

In January 1790, Congress, presumably recovered, reconvened and received reports. As mandated by the Constitution, the President gave information on the "State of the Union" sounding a pedal point of national philosophy: "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace ... " This was embellished in a plan authored by Secretary Knox, who attempted "to suggest the most efficient system of defence ... Compatible with the interests of a free people ... " but also with the interests of a United States "Commencing their Career of empire." While Knox agreed with Centinel that "a standing army ... cannot in peace be considered as friendly to the rights of human nature," he thought future readiness required "that all men of the legal military age, should be armed, enrolled, and held responsible for different degrees of military service."

Secretary Hamilton also presented a report, which departed drastically from previously announced Federalist policy. Wilson, and Publius, in *Federalist #12*, insisted the federal government could and would be funded by import duties. Now Hamilton reported income from that source was inadequate.

His plan for debt reduction was for the federal government to "assume" the war debts of the prior Congress and the states and issue financial paper backed by the "faith and credit" of the federal government which he had just reported was underfunded. He acknowledged the need for "public faith" but the faith he deemed most desirable was that of "public creditors"; he proposed to pay "the price of liberty" by ignoring appeals from holders of Certificates of Indebtedness who had sold at deep discount.

His plan for revenue was a tax on distilled spirits. This seemed consistent with Federalist policy; in *Federalist #12*, Publius projected "[t]he single article of ardent spirits ... might be made to furnish a considerable revenue." But Publius wrote of imports; Hamilton proposed an excise tax on sprits distilled "within the United States ... from materials of the growth or production of the United States," with different formula of assessment for spirits produced "in any city, town or village" and "in any other place, than a city, town or village." The latter applied to frontier farmers who distilled grain produced by their own labor into whiskey. The former applied to commercial operations which distilled molasses produced by slave labor into rum. Hamilton's formula favored the former.

Rush was outraged by Hamilton's report. He wrote to Madison, who had proposed kinder and gentler treatment of Certificate-holders, swearing he wished "my name was blotted out from having contributed a single mite towards the American Revolution." While he did not feel disposed to publicly oppose it, he promised "I shall leave a testimony

upon record against it for the information of my children, for they are the only part of posterity by whom I wish to be remembered or known hereafter.”

Rush was no fan of spirituous liquor, but was well aware all distilled spirits were not created equal. And Hamilton's report contained a coded reference, phrased as a rhetorical query:

Is it in the power of the United States ... to make a provision equal to the purpose of funding the whole debt ... in addition to the sum which will be necessary for the current service of the government? The Secretary will not say that such provision would exceed the abilities of the country; but he is clearly of opinion, that to make it would require the extension of taxation to a degree, and to objects, which the true interest of the public creditors forbids.

What “objects” Hamilton meant was clear to anyone versed in Blackstone, and someone in the Pennsylvania Abolition Society saw his reference as an opportunity. In early February the Society submitted a “Memorial,” signed by Franklin, to each house of Congress, begging “serious attention to the Subject of Slavery” and “for the Congress to devise means for removing this Inconsistency from the Character of the American People.” It concluded by urging that Congress “[s]tep to the very verge of the Powers vested in you”—a reminder that the Constitution permitted a duty on imported persons which would simultaneously reduce the deficit and discourage the slave trade. The House appointed a Select Committee. Some Senators attacked Franklin in language that recalled the vituperations of Wedderburn.

In early March the House's Select Committee reported that “Congress have the authority, if they shall think it necessary, to lay at any time a tax or duty” but “the General Government is expressly restrained from prohibiting the importation.” Two weeks later, Madison reported to Rush:

The Petitions on the subject of Slavery have employed more than a week, and are still before a Committee of the whole. The Gentlemen from S. Carolina & Georgia are intemperate beyond all example and even all decorum. They are not content with palliating slavery as a deep-rooted abuse, but plead for the lawfulness of the African trade itself—nor with protesting agst. the object of the Memorials, but lavish the most virulent language on the authors of them.

In late March “Historicus,” in Philadelphia's *Federal Gazette*, presented what purported to be a speech given “100 Years since by Sidi Mehemet Ibrahim, a member of the Divan of Algiers” in response to a “Petition ... for the Abolition of Piracy and Slavery.” Historicus established provenance by citing “Martin's Account of his Consulship”; a Samuel Martin had, in fact, been British Consul to Algiers between 1672 and 1680. But phrases in what

was titled “The African’s Speech” bore remarkable resemblance to phrases uttered by certain federal officials—e.g., “What is to be done with them? I have heard it suggested, that they may be planted in the Wilderness where there is plenty of land for them to subsist on.” Historicus reported that, in seventeenth century Algiers as in eighteenth century America:

The Result was, as Martin tells us, that the Divan came to this Resolution; “The Doctrine, that Plundering and Enslaving the Christians is unjust, is at best problematical; but that it is the Interest of this State to continue the Practice, is clear; therefore let the Petition be rejected.”

In April, Rush privately attributed “The African’s Speech” to Franklin, and in his public account of the influenza noted another events of that month:

The showers which fell on the night of the 17th, will long be connected in the memories of the citizens of Philadelphia with the time of the death of the celebrated Dr. Franklin. Several pleurisies appeared during this month ... In the last week of the month, the influenza made its appearance. It was brought to the city from New-England, and affected, in its course, all the intermediate states ... Several persons who were affected by it had symptoms of madness, one of whom destroyed himself by jumping out of a window.

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In January 1792, Benjamin Rush declined to dine with Thomas Jefferson, saying he was “obliged to lecture every day at 4 o’clock.” He added “[t]he difficulty, and novelty of the subject of my present course of lectures ... has prevented my claims upon you for a visit.”

It was a curious shunning. In December 1791, Penn’s “greene country towne” had become the national capital. Jefferson was a rising star in foreign diplomacy, domestic politics, and the American Philosophical Society; his table was noted for both French haute cuisine and the presence of movers and shakers. In one lecture Rush would tell students, “[t]he education of a physician gives him a peculiar insight ... in modern times, and in free governments, they should disdain an ignoble silence upon public subjects.” In declining Jefferson’s invitation, Rush lost a chance to speak truth to power.

Philadelphia Federalists had avidly pursued such access. After ratification, the convention passed resolutions offering “any place in Pennsylvania ... which ... the Congress may choose for the seat of the government” and, pending survey and construction, “the use of ... the public buildings within the city of Philadelphia, or any other part of this State.” The First Congress was already scheduled to convene at New York City’s newly renovated Federal Hall, but before it could reach a quorum Rush warned Adams: “By delaying the

removal of Congress to Philadelphia you ... will probably be dragged in a few years to the banks of the Potowmac, where Negro slaves will be your servants by day, mosquitoes your sentinels by night, and bilious fevers your companions every summer and fall." He was being facetious; at the time, it seemed certain a site in Pennsylvania would be chosen.

Neither Pennsylvania's proffer nor Rush's lobbying prompted relocation from Wall Street to Chestnut Street; that was part of a wheel-and-deal done by Hamilton and Madison involving debt, tariffs, and the interests of what Jefferson called the "stock-jobbing herd." The bargaining began at his dinner table, but Jefferson claimed to be "unaware of its object" and later called it "corruption."

Historians call it the "Compromise of 1790." Its first legislative component, the *Residence Act*, passed on July 1, sited the permanent capital "on the river Potomac, at some place between the mouths of the Eastern Branch and Connogochegue"—which signified, but did not say, south of the Line surveyed by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon to clarify the borders of Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania in 1767. By 1790, that Line demarcated states where slavery was being abolished from states where it remained a robust institution.

Although Pennsylvania was not the state least supportive of slavery, the Gradual Abolition Act of 1780 had both discouraged the institution and encouraged a free black community, especially visible in Philadelphia. In 1786, a Philadelphia-born black who had purchased his freedom and changed his name from "Negro Richard" to "Richard Allen" began holding services for black Methodists in, as was Wesleyan tradition, the "open air"—which was to say, in plain sight. In 1787, as Franklin and Rush were reforming the Pennsylvania Society for—among other things—"the Improvement of the Conditions of the African Race," Allen and other "free Africans and their descendants, of the City of Philadelphia" were forming a Free African Society "for the benefit of each other." In 1788, the Assembly amended the 1780 Act to provide for confiscation of vessels fitted out for the slave trade and fining of their owners; even Rush approved of this act of the mobocracy, announcing "the commerce in African slaves has breathed its last in Pennsylvania."

In his federal enthusiasm, Rush did not realize ratification mooted that part of the Amendment. But—whether Rush admitted it or not—under the Constitution the nation's laws were more supportive of slavery, beginning with the Tariff of 1789. When North Carolina and Rhode Island joined the Union their votes represented financial and social interests favorable to both the trade and the institution. The *Residence Act* decreed that, literally and metaphorically, the GRAND FEDERAL EDIFICE would rise from land that supported slavery.

It would take time to build a capital, even using slave labor. Despite renovations, New York's Federal Hall did not meet federal requirements. Congress resolved to take advantage of proffered hospitality and move to Philadelphia for a decade. Before leaving New York, it passed the final component of the Compromise of 1790: a new tariff, under which "imported persons" remained duty free.

"The month of December, 1790 was extremely and uniformly cold," Rush wrote in his monograph on influenza. "Many people complained of Colds ... ascribed wholly to the

weather.” But relocation of the federal government brought, if not physical illness, then psychological conflict. One of the city’s most historic houses was a three-story brick mansion near Fifth and High Streets. Before the Revolution it was home to the last of Pennsylvania’s colonial Proprietors. During the British occupation it was the residence of General Howe. During the American reoccupation it was the residence of General Arnold. It was now the residence of President Washington and his family—and his nine slaves.

Two slaves, in particular, illustrated the legal contradictions of American slavery. Both were “natural born” Americans.. Ona Judge, a skilled seamstress and Martha Washington’s maid, was “a light mulatto girl, much freckled.” Ona was a slave only because Virginia law dictated that her condition follow that of her mother. Her father was an English indentured servant and, had her parents’ races been reversed, Ona would have been born free. Hercules, the chef who prepared dinners for both private and official functions, was “a celebrated artiste ... as highly accomplished a proficient in the culinary art as could be found in the United States.” At thirty-five, he met the Constitutional qualifications for President. Ironies aside, both were capable of sustaining themselves as free persons. And both were highly visible to Philadelphians white and black.

The presence of slaves in the President’s House indicated conflicts that went beyond optics. Washington was warned by the Attorney General that the 1780 Act allowed slaves brought into Pennsylvania to sue for their freedom after six months residence. Although Washington maintained state law did not apply to the federal President, when his personal secretary advised “the matter may be managed very well” by sending the slaves no further than New Jersey “for but a single day,” Washington ordered that evasion of the law. He also ordered that it be done “under pretext that may deceive ... the Public.”

In addition to evasion and deceit there was also an appearance of corruption. Washington’s personal secretary was wrong; the Assembly had realized law was being exploited by “ill disposed persons” and eliminated it with the 1788 Amendment. But he was right when he assured Washington, “the Society in this city for the abolition of slavery had determined to give no advice and take no measures for liberating those Slaves which belonged to the Officers of the general Government.” In 1789, the chief counsel of the Pennsylvania Society had been appointed a United States Attorney. In July 1791, Washington appointed him a federal judge.

Washington was not the only federal official who evaded Pennsylvania slave law, but what the continued presence of slaves in the President’s House made clear was that, although still physically rectilinear, Philadelphia was now ineffably curved. What Rush declined, in January 1792, was French haute cuisine, prepared by a chef who had been trained in Paris but who was enslaved in Virginia and remained so in Pennsylvania.

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In June 1792, Rush drafted what appeared to be a paper on leprosy. To a contemporary consciousness that name brings horrid connotations. But to eighteenth-century British-trained physicians it was not the singular infection isolated by Hansen in the nineteenth century but a conglomeration of afflictions a modern physician would call “dermatitis”—

which term, in 1792, was not yet in use. In any case, Rush's usage was not clinical but rhetorical; the paper was to be presented not to the recently founded College of Physicians but to the venerable American Philosophical Society, an intellectual but not necessarily professional audience likely to include Thomas Jefferson.

Rush's motivation is more mysterious than his intention. A decade later he would tell his children that, at this time, he "relinquished public pursuits" and "led a retired life, associating chiefly with my patients and a few literary friends ... I kept up a slender intercourse with public men ... By thus keeping myself ignorant, I kept myself indifferent." Still, the Philosophical Society offered desirable fellowship; it was not politic to offend Jefferson, who had recently risen from the Society's third vice president to first.

But Rush was also rising to a status of which he had dreamed. His relationship with the black community, particularly with Allen, had evolved from charity to commonality. And Rush might have been inspired to at least insinuate truth to power by another Benjamin, a black American he never met.

His name was Benjamin Banneker. He was born in Maryland near what became known as Ellicott's Mills, in 1731. His furthest-back-person was Molly Welsh, or Walsh, an English woman transported in punishment for theft. After working off her indenture, she purchased a farm and two slaves, both of whom she freed, one of whom—Bannka, or Banneka—she took to her bed. Marriage was denied them, but they had four children. Their eldest daughter, Mary, would marry an African, enslaved in Guinea, and baptized only "Robert" in America. He took his wife's surname. Benjamin was their firstborn.

Benjamin's grandmother taught him to read and write, but he was a mathematical prodigy, capable, without tutelage, of complex calculations. Of dark complexion and medium stature, he was known for diligence and quiet manners. Wifeless, childless, possibly autistic, he kept to himself and to the farm, which his grandmother, through canny subterfuge, ensured he would inherit. He drank a bit and sometimes lay out at night, staring at the stars.

In about 1788, a young Quaker neighbor, George Ellicott, whose family businesses included surveying, lent him books on celestial mechanics. Banneker responded by accurately predicting an eclipse. In October 1789, he wrote to Ellicott expressing frustration at a conflict between two authorities, which "[s]tagnates young beginners." But he projected, "If I can overcome this difficulty I Doubt not being able to Calculate a Common Almanack." He did do the calculations but his proposed Almanack was repeatedly rejected.

Jefferson's *Notes* reflected prevailing racial assumptions even as it encouraged them. Wheatley, when she arrived in England, was an attractive young woman from urban Boston, raised from early childhood in sheltered surroundings, less a slave than a pet of a prosperous and indulgent mistress. She was championed by a Duchess. Her poems were in established form. Still, her publisher reported, "it has been repeatedly suggested ... by Persons, who have seen the Manuscript, that Numbers would be ready to suspect they were not really the Writings of PHILLIS—" Part of the advertisement was an Attestation that Wheatley "has been examined ... and is thought qualified to write them" signed by "the

most respectable Characters in Boston”—including John Hancock. Despite that, only one of her poems was published in America, and only by the grace of Paine, and only because it was an encomium to Washington.

Banneker was a plough jogger from rural Maryland, who, though free, had been confined to tillage. He had no patron until George's father, surveyor Major Andrew Ellicott, hired him to help fix the boundaries of the new federal district. At nearly sixty, he had never ventured so far from home; after three months he returned gratefully to his farm and his calculations.

But somehow his calculations came to the attention of the Philadelphia mathematician and astronomer David Rittenhouse who had succeeded Franklin as President of the American Philosophical Society, who thought them “an extraordinary performance, considering the color of the author ... I see that the calculations are ample for the purposes of an almanac.” Rittenhouse was aware of Jefferson's *Notes*, having lauded them as “second to no astronomer living ... in genius he must be the first, because he is self-taught.” Though not generally associated with social causes, Rittenhouse added to his evaluation the sentiment that “[e]very instance of genius among the negroes is worthy of attention, because their oppressors seem to lay great stress on their supposed inferior mental abilities” and forwarded the calculations of the self-taught Banneker to James Pemberton, who had succeeded Franklin as President of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.

On August 19, 1791, a letter signed “B Banneker” was sent to Thomas Jefferson. The writer identified himself as “Freely and cheerfully ... of the African race” although “not under that state of tyrannical thralldom, and inhuman captivity, to which too many of my brethren are doomed.” Instead, he asserted a species of equality; he had, he said, “abundantly tasted of the fruition of those blessings, which proceed from that free and unequalled liberty with which you are favored.” He acknowledged that he and his brethren “are a race of beings who ... have long been considered rather as brutish than human, and scarcely capable of mental endowments,” but professed knowledge that Jefferson was “far less inflexible in sentiments of this nature, than many others,” and offered, “as a present to you,” calculations for an Almanac. Sensitive to the question of authenticity, the writer added, “I choose to send it to you in manuscript ... that thereby you might not only have an earlier inspection, but that you might also view it in my own hand writing.”

In addition to this holographic evidence of his ability to comprehend the investigations of Euclid, he reminded Jefferson of

a time when you clearly saw into the injustice of a state of slavery, and ... publicly held forth this true and invaluable doctrine, which is worthy to be recorded and remembered in all succeeding ages: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ... ” But, Sir, how pitiable is it to reflect, that although you were so fully

convinced of the benevolence of the Father of Mankind, and of his equal and impartial distribution of these rights and privileges, which he hath conferred upon them, that you should at the same time counteract his mercies, in detaining by fraud and violence so numerous a part of my brethren, under groaning captivity and cruel oppression, that you should at the same time be found guilty of that most criminal act, which you professedly detested in others, with respect to yourselves.

Jefferson responded at the end of August:

Sir, I thank you sincerely for your letter of the 19th. instant and for the Almanac it contained. Nobody wishes more than I do to see such proofs as you exhibit, that nature has given to our black brethren, talents equal to those of the other colours of men, & that the appearance of a want of them is owing merely to the degraded condition of their existence both in Africa & America. I can add with truth that nobody wishes more ardently to see a good system commenced for raising the condition both of their body & mind to what it ought to be, as fast as the imbecility of their present existence, and other circumstance which cannot be neglected, will admit.

In the interim Rush's former apprentice, James McHenry, acting as Banneker's literary agent, presented to the Baltimore firm Goddard and Angell "Benjamin Banneker, a free negro" who had "calculated an almanac for the ensuing year 1792." He assured the publisher that Banneker made the calculations "without the least information, or assistance, from any person," adding, "I have been the more careful to investigate those particulars, and to ascertain their reality, as they form an interesting fact in the history of man ..." Publishing Banneker's Almanack, he added, "will do you credit, as editors, while it will afford you the opportunity to encourage talents that have thus far surmounted the most discouraging circumstances and prejudices."

Goddard and Angell did publish *Benjamin Banneker's Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia Almanack and Ephemeris, for the Year of Our Lord 1792*. As was usual practice, the calculations were augmented by "filler"—miscellaneous materials chosen by the publisher to give the product general appeal. McHenry's letter was placed as an Attestation. Copies were sold, by Mr. Joseph Crukshank, Printer, in Market Street ... Philadelphia.

Two decades later Jefferson recalled the incident. He expressed "suspicion of aid from Ellicot," opined "the long letter from Banneker ... shews him to have had a mind of very common stature indeed," and commended his correspondent for responding to accusations of hypocrisy with a "sugary answer."

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On Saturday, July 14, 1792, Benjamin Rush presented his “Observations Intended to Favour a Supposition That the Black Color (As It Is Called) of the Negroes Is Derived from the Leprosy.” In several current and easily accessed abstracts Rush is said to have “described Negroes as suffering from an affliction called Negritude, which was thought to be a mild form of leprosy. The only cure for the disorder was to become white.” Rush coined many terms; “negritude” was not one of them. He chose leprosy because it had Biblical associations. Part of Rush’s intent in this presentation was to: “destroy ... arguments in favor of enslaving the negroes, for their color has been supposed by the ignorant to mark them as objects of divine judgments”

Many arguments justifying African slavery, like those of A West Indian, were interpretations of Scripture; the most common conflated the Mark of Cain and the Curse of Ham. But those justifications were associated with transgression and judgment. In Scripture, leprosy—*tzaraath*, to Hebrew ancients—was presented not as judgment but affliction. Unlike the unnamable malaise that appeared after the fall of Jericho, leprosy appeared among the Chosen People uninvited by transgression. Diagnostic criteria appeared in the fifty-nine verses of *Leviticus* 13; one differential for leprosy was white eruptions. Quarantine was recommended, but remission was implied, with a final cure achieved through ritual cleansings and sacrifices, as specified in the first thirty-two verses of *Leviticus* 14, where they were scaled according to the patient’s ability to pay.

The less devout in Rush’s audience may have skipped “The Law of the Leper” but three of the Gospels showed Christ as both reformer and Redeemer by presenting Him as able to cure leprosy “immediately”—in less than a verse—and willing to do so at no charge. And even wanton boys had been exposed to the Sunday school story of Naaman, the Syrian general, “a great man ... and honourable ... also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper.” Advised by the prophet Elisha, Naaman “dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.” Foreshadowing the Messiah, Elisha refuses payment and learning that his servant, Gehazi, has wheedled two talents of silver from Naaman, Elisha curses Gehazi, saying: “The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.” Rush thus presented leprosy as something other than the judgment of God ... and whiteness as a sign of something other than goodness. And where Jefferson insisted the “real difference” of color was “fixed in nature,” Rush called on Biblical precedent to present color as acquired.

Where Jefferson, in *Notes* presented his own undocumented observations as authority, Rush presented case studies, and, through them, advanced the thesis that the disease which caused white skin to darken could be transmitted through physical contact—especially contacts of the sort some Southern male slave owners found ... convenient. Jefferson’s father-in-law had been one such owner. Jefferson was said to be another. And while Jefferson’s *Notes* supported white superiority and so, ultimately, white supremacy, Rush’s conclusion was:

That all the claims of superiority of the whites over the blacks, on account of their color, are founded alike in

ignorance and inhumanity. If the color of the negroes be the effect of a disease, instead of inviting us to tyrannize over them, it should entitle them to a double portion of our humanity, for disease all over the world has always been the signal for immediate and universal compassion Is the color of the negroes a disease? Then let science and humanity combine their efforts, and endeavor to discover a remedy for it.

Unfortunately Thomas Jefferson was not in the audience, having departed Philadelphia on Friday the 13th.

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In the September 1792 issue of *The American Museum*, a writer signing himself "Russel" summoned a spectre: The British East India Company, he warned, was "ready at the call of the minister, to be employed against America, or any other people daring to be free." Russel may have been an old soldier recalling the Glory Days, when Philadelphians told the Company where to put its tea, but his memory may have been directed by current events; in that same issue, another writer, in "On the Pittsburgh Resolutions," defend the citizens' rights to hold meetings to remonstrate against grievances.

That title referred to events in Western Pennsylvania. In March 1791, Congress passed the *Whiskey Act*, the excise tax requested by Hamilton. But, as Publius cautioned in *Federalist #12*, "the people will ill brook the inquisitive and peremptory spirit of excise laws" and "farmers ... will reluctantly yield but scanty supplies, in the unwelcome shape of impositions on their houses and lands." On the frontier, the Whiskey Tax had to be paid in advance of production, and in specie which—as Franklin had warned Parliament—in short supply. And it was being collected by a new federal bureaucracy of "revenue agents." In the western portions of several states the *Whiskey Act* was seen as a reincarnation of the *Stamp Act*. One of Pennsylvania's senators predicted: "War and bloodshed are the most likely consequence."

In July and August, meetings held in Western Pennsylvania called for a convention in Pittsburgh and in one case adopted a resolution to shun officers of the federal revenue service as public enemies. In September the Pittsburgh Convention sent petitions to both the Pennsylvania Assembly and the United States Congress and formed committees of correspondence in Western Pennsylvania counties. Shortly thereafter, in Washington County, a revenue agent was tarred and feathers by protesters who, following a pre-Revolutionary Pennsylvania tradition, painted their faces black. Warrants were issued; one deputy who tried to serve them was also tarred and feathered—and also horse-whipped and left to wander naked in the forest.

Hamilton agitated for military intervention. In 1792 Congress responded with a *Militia Act*, empowering the President to federalize state militia "whenever the laws of the

United States shall be opposed or the execution thereof obstructed ... by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings.” It was essentially the scenario predicted by Centinel five years before. In August, a second convention met in Pittsburgh and again sent petitions. Some Revolutionary war veterans, also raised liberty poles.

Even in Philadelphia the evolving symbolism and situation—a distant government, futile petitions, taxation of persons with little representation and little ability to pay, threats to send an army marching—was troublesome. And this time it was not Parliament but a Congress, not a monarch but a President. And We the people did not yet know that Hamilton had written to Washington:

My present clear conviction is, that it is indispensable ... to exert the full force of the Law against the Offenders, with every circumstance that can manifest the determination of the Government to enforce its execution ... Moderation enough has been shewn: 'tis time to assume a different tone.

Also in that issue of *The American Museum*: a letter from James McHenry, “respecting Benjamin Banneker, a free Negro”—a reprint of his 1792 attestation, in effect an advertisement for the 1793 edition of Banneker’s *Almanack*.

When that edition appeared it presented more than “proof of our sable brother Benjamin’s mental endowments” in an accurate ephemeris. It also presented a documentary argument. It presented Banneker’s letter to Jefferson and Jefferson’s sugary reply. It presented an excerpt from *Notes* which Jefferson had feared would anger Southerners; here, rather than disparage blacks he acknowledged “an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery” It also presented English poet Thomas Wilkinson’s “Appeal to England on Behalf of the Abused Africans,” which asked: “Are negroes savage? Britons once were so/And little knew beyond the dart and bow.” It also presented an extract from Parliamentary debates in which William Pitt, albeit prematurely, congratulated Britons “that the greatest stigma on our national character which ever yet existed, is about to be removed” It also presented an apparently irrelevant, unattributed proposal to expand the federal executive branch: “A Plan for a Peace Office.”

Benjamin Rush’s “A Plan for a Peace Office” may seem another of his “romantic schemes.” But he couched it in a form he used for serious proposals and placed it in a periodical less ephemeral than most. And he wrote it at a time when reflection, reconsideration, disappointment, perhaps even guilt, would have been appropriate. “Harrington” had assured agrarians “who groan beneath the weight of direct taxation” they would find “relief from a government whose extensive jurisdiction will enable it to extract the resources of our country by means of imposts and customs” and “citizens ... who inhabit the western counties of our states” they could “fly to a federal power for protection.” Now, his assurances seemed manipulative and, perhaps, manipulated. Now, he even questioned the Revolution, writing to a Quaker in Byberry:

The more I reflect upon the subject the more I am satisfied that under the Gospel dispensation it is wrong to shed human blood either by law or by arms. This declaration is entitled to the more weight as I did not always entertain the same opinions. So far from it, that I bore a commission in the Army of the United States during the late war.

Still, the government was protean. Congress had created the Department of War barely three years before. Washington's vague assurance to the Jews of Newport ("May the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants") had been firm'd by the First Amendment less than a year before.

A decade later Rush wrote, for the use of his children:

Late events have at times induced me to believe my hopes were visionary and my labors lost, and with them the more valuable labors of all the patriots and the blood of all the heroes of the Revolution. At other times I have consoled myself by recollecting that the seeds of all the great changes for the better in the condition of mankind, have been sowed years and centuries before they came to pass.

In 1792, Rush sowed a seed. Years and centuries later, America is in its seventeenth year of war.

Selah.

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A PLAN OF A PEACE-OFFICE FOR THE UNITED STATES.

AMONG the defects which have been pointed out in the federal constitution by its anti-federal enemies, it is much to be lamented that no person has taken notice of its total silence upon the subject of an office of the utmost importance to the welfare of the United States, that is, an *office* for promoting and preserving perpetual *peace* in our country.

It is to be hoped that no objection will be made to the establishment of such an office, while we are engaged in a war with the Indians, for as the *War-Office* of the United States was established in the *time of peace*, it is equally reasonable that a *Peace-Office* should be established in the *time of war*.

The plan of this office is as follows:

I. Let a Secretary of the Peace be appointed to preside in this office, who shall be perfectly free from all the present absurd and vulgar European prejudices upon the subject of government; let him be a genuine republican and a sincere Christian, for the principles of republicanism and Christianity are no less friendly to universal and perpetual peace, than they are to universal and equal liberty.

II. Let a power be given to this Secretary to establish and maintain free schools in every city, village and township of the United States; and let him be made responsible for the talents, principles, and morals, of all his schoolmasters. Let the youth of our country be carefully instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, and in the doctrines of a religion of some kind: the Christian religion should be preferred to all others; for it belongs to this religion exclusively to teach us not only to cultivate peace with men, but to forgive, nay more—to love our very enemies. It belongs to it further to teach us that the Supreme Being alone possesses a power to take away human life, and that we rebel against his laws, whenever we undertake to execute death in any way whatever upon any of his creatures.

III. Let every family in the United States be furnished at the public expense, by the Secretary of this office, with a copy of an American edition of the BIBLE. This measure has become the more necessary in our country, since the banishment of the bible, as a school-book, from most of the schools in the United States. Unless the price of this book be paid for by the public, there is reason to fear that in a few years it will be met with only in courts of justice or in magistrates' offices; and should the absurd mode of establishing truth by kissing this sacred book fall into disuse, it may probably, in the course of the next generation, be seen only as a curiosity on a shelf in a public museum.

IV. Let the following sentence be inscribed in letters of gold over the doors of every State and Court house in the United States.

THE SON OF MAN CAME INTO THE WORLD, NOT TO DESTROY MEN'S LIVES,
BUT TO SAVE THEM.

V. To inspire a veneration for human life, and an horror at the shedding of human blood, let all those laws be repealed which authorise juries, judges, sheriffs, or hangmen to assume the resentments of individuals and to commit murder in cold blood in any case whatever. Until this reformation in our code of penal jurisprudence takes place, it will be in vain to attempt to introduce universal and perpetual peace in our country.

VI. To subdue that passion for war, which education, added to human depravity, have made universal, a familiarity with the instruments of death, as well as all military shows, should be carefully avoided. For which reason, militia laws should every where be repealed, and military dresses and military titles should be laid aside: reviews tend to lessen the horrors of a battle by connecting them with the charms of order; militia laws generate idleness and vice, and thereby produce the wars they are said to prevent; military dresses fascinate the minds of young men, and lead them from serious and useful professions; were there no *uniforms*, there would probably be no armies; lastly, military titles feed vanity, and keep up ideas in the mind which lessen a sense of the folly and miseries of war.

VII. In the last place, let a large room, adjoining the federal hall, be appropriated for transacting the business and preserving all the records of this *office*. Over the door of this room let there be a sign, on which the figures of a LAMB, a DOVE and an OLIVE BRANCH should be painted, together with the following inscriptions in letters of gold:
PEACE ON EARTH— GOOD-WILL TO MAN. AH! WHY WILL MEN FORGET THAT
THEY ARE BRETHREN?

Within this apartment let there be a collection of ploughshares and pruning-hooks made out of swords and spears; and on each of the walls of the apartment, the following pictures as large as the life:

1. A lion eating straw with an ox, and an adder playing upon the lips of a child.
2. An Indian boiling his venison in the same pot with a citizen of Kentucky.
3. Lord Cornwallis and Tippoo Saib, under the shade of a sycamore-tree in the East Indies, drinking Madeira wine together out of the same decanter.
4. A group of French and Austrian soldiers dancing arm and arm, under a bower erected in the neighbourhood of Mons.
5. A St. Domingo planter, a man of color, and a native of Africa, legislating together in the same colonial assembly.

To complete the entertainment of this delightful apartment, let a group of young ladies, clad in white robes, assemble every day at a certain hour, in a gallery to be erected for the purpose, and sing odes, and hymns, and anthems in praise of the blessings of peace.

One of these songs should consist of the following lines.

Peace o'er the world her olive wand extends,
 And white-rob'd innocence from heaven descends;
 All crimes shall cease, and ancient frauds shall fail,
 Returning justice lifts aloft her scale.

In order more deeply to affect the minds of the citizens of the United States with the blessings of peace, by *contrasting* them with the evils of war, let the following inscriptions be painted upon the sign, which is placed over the door of the War Office.

1. An office for butchering the human species.
2. A Widow and Orphan making office.
3. A broken bone making office.
4. A Wooden leg making office.
5. An office for creating public and private vices.
6. An office for creating a public debt.
7. An office for creating speculators, stock Jobbers, and Bankrupts.
8. An office for creating famine.
9. An office for creating pestilential diseases.
10. An office for creating poverty, and the destruction of liberty, and national happiness.

In the lobby of this office let there be painted representations of all the common military instruments of death, also human skulls, broken bones, unburied and putrefying dead bodies, hospitals crowded with sick and wounded Soldiers, villages on fire, mothers in besieged towns eating the flesh of their children, ships sinking in the ocean, rivers dyed with blood, and extensive plains without a tree or fence, or any other object, but the ruins of deserted farm houses.

Above this group of woeful figures,—let the following words be inserted, in red characters to represent human blood, “NATIONAL GLORY.”

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