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Title: Letters from Charles Nisbet to William Young, 1792-93

Date: 1792-1793

Location: MC 2001.5, B1, F5-6

Contact:

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Dear Sir,

Carlisle, June 9th 1792.

Returning home from a short Excursion on the 4th inst I found yours of the 30th ult. with Darton & Harvey's Catalogue. I do not remember to have ever desired you to commission Fox-Lady's History of Calomel, nor indeed so much as to have heard of that Work, so that you must be under some Mistake in this Article. I have more than once desired you to order Cameron's New Version of the Psalms, published in 1745, but received no Answer. I suppose you have mistaken some other Person's Order for mine, or ~~forgot~~ the Name of the Book. You do not mention the Price of Dr. Louth's Translation of Isaiah, nor of Dr. Horne's Exposition of the Psalms. I have heard a good Character of both these Works, but never saw either of them. I suppose that if you could venture to reprint Dr. Horne's Work here, it might have a Tendency to excite those of our Clergy that can read, to study a Part of Holy Scripture that is much neglected & ill understood among us, by Means of Dr. Watts's Preface & Paraphrase. I know no body here except Mr. Tate, who buys any Books. You know that we are all so wise here already, that we do not think that we need any Instruction. Mr. Payne's second Part of the Rights of Man is now publishing here, & will do good among the Negroes in Virginia, who begin to read it with Approbation, & according to his Advice, to add the Practice to the Theory. We are in Danger of seeing a most ridiculous kind of War in the Southern States, betwixt the white Friends of Liberty, & the black Defenders of the Rights of Man. It is surprising that People who hold the same Principles, can not agree together, but I am afraid that the Friends of Liberty will not suffer any one to partake of it, except themselves, a Weakness which they have in common with those People who are ^{vulgarly} called Tyrants. I have not seen the second part of Mr. Payne's Rights of Man, & consequently am not sure whether it includes the Right of poisoning & stabbing, but from the very free Use which the Friends of Liberty in France have been making of these Rights, on the Person of the Emperor & ^{the} King of Sweden, it seems most probable that they are included. Besides as it is generally allowed that Man has a Right of doing any thing that he pleases, or, in other Words, of acting according to his Conscience, nothing of this kind can be supposed to be excluded. I did not intend to do you any Injury, in supposing that you might be the Author of *Elyphaz Liberalissimus*, but am rather better pleased to learn that it was written by Dr. Greene, because an American Minister writing against Indifferentism, & silencing a Preacher of liberal Sentiments, under the very Nose of the Congress, is a fact of a very curious & extraordinary kind, & fit to happen in an Age in which M. Voltaire and M. Rousseau have been canonised for Saints, & the French Nation have become the Supporters of Liberty in Europe & America, & of Slavery in the West Indies. Amittit

many Changes & Strange Events, may not one hope that some Revolution might be brought about in favour of the Redeemer's Kingdom? I wish to believe that it may begin in our Age, but I have a great Inclination to Dependency. This very Day, seven Years ago, I first set my foot on this Continent, & I can not think that it is any better since I have been in it, if it is not worse in some Respects. The Gospel is not more valued, nor better understood, than it was then, & Morality is still as rare as ever. Men are as false, selfish, hollow & insincere, as I found them at my first landing, & Religious Ordinances as carelessly & seldom attended. I often ask my self, What dost thou here? But I can scarcely discover that I have done any good, except breeding a few young Men, to preach the Doctrine of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ, & the Necessity of Holiness in order to Salvation, in this Infidel Country. We live in the Day of small things, & you see that I am obliged to have Recourse to small things, before I can persuade myself that I have been doing any good for these seven Years past. A Spirit of Madness & Riot seems to have taken Possession of this place lately. The Soldiers here have been several times fighting with Negroes, and almost every Day with one another. Sundry People have been wounded, one Bovard, an Irish Reedmaker has this Day almost murdered a Woman who lived with him as his House-keeper. Yesterday a drunken Rascal sallied out with an Ax & a Hammer, to knock down every Body he could meet with. He wounded sundry Persons, among whom were two Students, & he is now in Gaol. But he will soon get out again, as Evil Doers here have no Punishment to dread. Last Week a Woman, was convicted of having endeavoured to poison her own Mother, by sending her a Orest of half a Pound of Tea, mingled with Arsenic. The Tea was supped by some who came up with the Bearer on the Road, & knew that this Woman had lived in Enmity with her Mother, & had taken the very Bed from under her. She was condemned by the Court to one Month's Imprisonment, & to pay a fine of thirty Pounds, & even this Punishment, it was hoped, would be remitted. Such are the blessed Effects of liberality of Sentiment, & acting according to one's Conscience! It can not be doubted that this Woman was a person of very liberal Sentiments, nor that she acted in this Matter according to her Conscience, as I was informed by an Eyewitness that she appeared in the Court with all the Secenity of Innocence, & listened to her Indictment & the Pleadings against her, with as much Indifference as if it had been a Piece of com.

more Conversation. How happy must we be, in a Country where they have so little to fear.
I discover sundry good Books in the Catalogue which you sent me, & wish that I was able to purchase
them. I think that you, who are a rich Man & in Trade, might order many of the Puritan Treatises
for Sale or Republication, that you may do some Good in your time. I am afraid that this Sort of Books
will soon be very scarce in England, as so many of them have been already destroyed by the Trunk-masters
& Tobaccoists. The New England People used to buy up those Books formerly, but they have now got more
liberal Sentiments. I wish that the same may not be the Case with many other People in this Country.
When will you find Leisure to publish Subscription Papers for printing the Abridgement of Dr. Preston's
Works? I look it for a gentle Refusal, when you proposed that I should write a Preface to it. To encour-
age you to buy Books for your self, I desire you to commission for me N^o. 25. Baxter's Life & Times,
by Sylvester, Vol. 6th. N^o. 101. Mr. Samuel Hieron's Sermons, little torn, Vol. 3rd. N^o. 1031. Dr. Williams
Alexander's, History of Women, new in Boards, 9^s. ^{406^s Copies for the Civitas} These amount to twenty Shillings English in all
which I shall take on the terms you mention. — Our Assembly spent the Time of my Vacation, little
to my Entertainment. I must now return to my Labours, & not without many Difficulties. We find
out so many Students at our late Commencement, that we are much at a loss for Records. Our Trust-
ees gave a great many Degrees by Mandamus, to whom they chose, but conceal'd this Circumstance
in the Account they gave in the Papers, to throw the whole Infamy of the Thing on the Masters. —
One of the Ministers whom they made a Doctor of Divinity, almost stopp'd short in his Sermon, but the
Trustees by being in their concealment. One of our Masters has resign'd, & we are in Doubt whether the
Persons whom the Trustees have elected to supply his Place for the time will be able
to keep the Boys in Order. They have likewise order'd an Application to the Legisla-
ture for altering their Charter, no doubt to enlarge their own Power, & to take a
way thro' of the Masters. The Cup of Slavery is a bitter one, but I must drink it.
They never design to talk with me, of Business. How miserable is it to be subject to the
meanest of Men! The Insolence of Office is more discernible here than in Great Britain.
Could you venture to correct this in Mr. Dunlop's Paper by a Note, that the Degrees mentioned, ex-
cept those confer'd on the Students who were dismissed, were confer'd by a Mandamus of the Trustees?
But perhaps it is now too late. They talk of building a College, to waste the Money which they get
from the State, but they are no more able to do this, than to build the Federal City. I trouble you
with two Letters for Scotland, which I beg you will forward by the first Ship. You have never
informed me whether Mr. Dobson got any Account from New York, of the Box I sent, di-
rected to Lord Buchan, near two Years ago, to the Care of Mr. John Sagan at Gro-
nook, who never received it. I am, Dear Sir,

Your very humble Servant
Chas. Nisbet.

Carlisle, June 9th 1792.

Dear Sir,

Returning home from a short Excursion on the 4th inst I found yours of the 30th ult. with Darlton & Harvey's Catalogue. I do not remember to have ever desired you to commission Toplady's History of Calvinism, nor indeed so much as to have heard of that Work, so that you must be under some Mistake in this Article. I have more than once desired you to order Cameron's New Version of the Psalms, published in 1785, but received no Answer. I suppose you have mistaken some other Person's Order for mine, or forgot the Name of the Book. You do not mention the Price of Dr. Lowth's Translation of Isaiah, nor of Dr. Horn's Exposition of the Psalms. I have heard good Character of both these Works, but never saw either of them. I suppose that if you could venture to reprint Dr. Horne's Work here, it might have a Tendency to excite those of our Clergy that can read, to study a Part of Holy Scripture that is much neglected & ill understood among us, by Means of Dr. Watt's Preface & Paraphrase. I know no body here except Mr. Tate, who buys any Books. You know that we are all so wise here already, that we do not think that we need any Instruction. Mr. Payne's second Part of the Rights of Man is now publishing here, & will do good among the Negroes in Virginia, who begin to read it with Approbation, & according to his Advice, to add the Practice to the Theory. We are in Danger of seeing a most ridiculous kind of War in the Southern States, betwixt the white Friends of Liberty, & the black Defenders of the Rights of Man. It is surprising that People who hold the same Principles, can not agree together, but I am afraid that the Friends of Liberty will not suffer any one to partake of it except themselves, a Weakness which they have in common with those People who are ^ vulgarly called Tyrants. I have not seen the Second part of Mr. Payne's Rights of Man & consequently am not sure whether it includes the Right of poisoning and stabbing, but from the very free Use which the Friends of Liberty in France have been making of these Rights, on the Person of the Emperor & the King of Sweden, it seems most probable that they are included. Besides as it is generally allowed that Man has a Right of doing any thing that he pleases, or, in other Words, of acting according to his Conscience, nothing of this Kind can be supposed to be excluded. I did not intend to do you any Injury, in supposing that you might be the Author of Eliphaz Liberatissimus, but am rather better pleased to learn that it was written by Dr. Greene, because an American Minister writing against Indifferentism, & silencing a Preacher of liberal Sentiments, under the very Nose of the Congress, is a fact of a very curious & extraordinary kind, & fit to happen in an Age in which M. Voltaire and M. Rousseau have been canonised for Saints, & the French Nation have become the Supporters of Liberty in Europe & America, & of Slavery in the West Indies. Amidst so

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dost thou here? But I can scarcely discover that I have done any good, except breeding a few young men, to preach the Doctrine of Justification by the Righteousness of Christ, & the Necessity of Holiness in order to Salvation, in this Infidel Country. We live in the Day of small things, & you see I am obliged to have Recourse to small things, before I can persuade myself that I have been doing any Good for these seven Years past. A spirit of Madness & Riot seems to have taken Possession of this place lately. The soldiers here have been several times fighting with Negroes, and almost every Day with one another. Sundry People have been wounded, one Bovard, an Irish Reedmaker has this Day almost murdered a Woman who lived with him as his Housekeeper. Yesterday a drunken Nailer sallied out with an Ax & a Hammer to knock down every Body he could meet with. He wounded sundry Persons, among whom were two Students, & he is now in Gaol. But he will soon get out again, as Evil Doers here have no Punishment to dread. Last Week a Woman ^ at Lancaster was convicted of having endeavoured to poison her own Mother, by sending her a Present of half a Pound of Tea, mingled with Arsenic. The Tea was suspected by some who came up with the Bearer on the Road, & knew that this Woman had lived in Enmity with her Mother, & had taken the very Bed from under her. She was condemned by the Court to one Month's Imprisonment, & to pay a fine of thirty Pounds, & even this Punishment, it was hoped, would be remitted. Such are the blessed Effects of Liberality of Sentiment, & acting according to one's Conscience! It can not be doubted that this Woman was a person of very liberal Sentiments, nor that she acted in this Matter according to her Conscience, as I was informed by an Eyewitness that She appeared in the Court with all the Serenity of Innocence, & listened to her Indictment & the Pleadings against her, with as much Indifference as if it had been a Piece of common

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elected to supply his Place for the time will be able to keep the Boys in Order. They have likewise ordered an Application to the Legislature for altering their Charter, no doubt to enlarge their own Powers, & to take away those of the Masters. The Cup of Slavery is a bitter one, but I must drink it. They never deign to talk with me of Business. How miserable is it to be subject to the meanest of Men! The Insolence of Office is more discernible here than in Great Britain. Could you venture to cancel this in Mr. Dunlap's Paper by a Note, that the Degrees mentioned, except those conferred on the Students who were dismissed, were conferred by a Mandamus of the Trustees? But perhaps it is now too late. They talk of building a College, to waste the Money which they got from the State, but they are no more able to do this, than to build the Federal City. I trouble you with two Letters for Scotland, which I beg you will forward by the first Ship. You have never informed me whether Mr. Dobson got any Account from New York, of the Box I sent, directed to Lord Buchan, near two Years ago, to the Care of Mr. John Pagan at Greenock, who never received it. I am,

Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant

Chas. Nisbet.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, 6th Nov. 1792.

I was favoured with yours of Oct. 28th by Mr. Wilson, & write you this by his Nephew, who is on his Way to Charleston, South Carolina, to another Uncle whom he has in that City. I am not surpris'd at the Contradictions you mention in the News Papers. We had the like in Great Britain, during the American War. France & England are now in a divided State, & every Party reports rather what they wish to believe, than what they know to be such. I am glad however that your Brother does not bring Notice of any more Disputes in Scotland, than those that have been so much magnified in our News Papers. Many indeed seem to be going Liberty-mad, & imagine that a popular Government would remove all their Grievances: but the Influence of France, & even of this Country, ought to convince them that there is a great Difference betwixt People's having the making of their own Laws, & having them well made & executed, but the Heat of their Zeal for Liberty will not suffer them to consider things with any Degree of Coolness. They complain of high Taxes, & very justly, yet they praise those Ministers most, who did most to raise them. They complain of corrupt Elections, & unequal Representation, but they do not consider that no Reform whatever, except of their own Lives & Characters, will do any Service to them, & that those Members of the House of Commons who have been most in the Interests of the People were many of them such as brought their Seats, or were self-elected. They never think that a greater Number of fools or Knaves would vote for as bad Members as a smaller Number of People of the same Character would do, & if they were in America they would see that our very equal Representation is as much complain'd of as their very unequal one, & that the Reasons why we do not pay high Taxes here are chiefly these two, first because we are not able to pay them, & secondly, tho' we were able, the Government has not Strength to collect them, after they are imposed. They would see that a small Excise laid on Spirits is more than all the Authority of our Government can raise, & that this Duty is a partial one,

being paid only by a small Number of People in all the States, & has been presented
as a public Nuisance by the Grand Jury of Charlestown. The President's Proclamations
have come no farther than York, & I do not hear that any Body regards them, or
dares to oblige them publicly in this County & Westward. My Friend Mr. Turnbull is
concerned in a Distillery at Pittsbrough, but dare not make any Use of it, as if on the
one hand he should pay the Duty, no body would buy his Goods, & he would be certain
of having his Distillery & his House burnt over his Head, by the free Citizens of Al-
legany & Washington Counties, in spite of all the Power of the fifteen States, and
on the other hand, if he should distil, & not pay the Duty, his Goods would be liable
to be seized by Order of Government & himself liable in heavy Fines. Such is the
Protection that a free Government gives to Property, & to cordially are the People
subject to Laws made by their own Representatives! I have seen Essays in the Pitts-
brough Paper, pretending to prove that the Citizens of the United States are as great
Slaves as the Negroes in the West Indies, if they submit to the Excise Act. But the Occa-
sional reason are imposed on by the dying Accounts given of this Country by
Paine & Barlow, the first of whom in calculating the Expences of our Government,
omits the whole Charge of the Government of the fifteen States, & the last says impu-
dently that no People in the World are more desot than the Americans, though not
so much as the Face of Religion is to be seen in most Parts of the Country & little Ap-
pearance of Seriousness among the few that are still connected with Religious Societies.
Such are the dies by which many of the poor People of Great Britain are tempted to
lay their Country in Blood & Ruin, after the Example of France. I have seen the
famous Publication of Mr. Black against Mr. Anderson, but I think it cannot
mislead any Person that is sound in Mind, who has ever read Mr. Anderson's Treatise.
I heard that Mr. Annum was to write on the same Subject. I think he ought to

do it now, & to expose the Unfairness & Scurrility of Black: Publications, were it only in
Order to do Justice to Mr. Anderson, whom, I am told, he has much injured, for I never
read his Rustling Elder. I am obliged to Mr Sale for informing you of my Intentions
to subscribe for Dr. Home's Commentary on the Psalms, but as I am no Body here,
I am ill calculated for a first Name. You would do better to apply to the Secretary
of State, or of the Treasury. I think that Brown's Dictionary of the Bible is very
suited for Republication, & might do good, if you are a better Man, & it
would sell. I am glad that your School Bible has sold well, & intend when I am more
in Cash than at present, to order three Copies of the fine Paper, if they are of a pocket
size, to give to my Children, but of this I will acquaint you in due time. I am sorry
to be so long in your Debt, but like other desperate Debtors, am en-
deavouring to get farther into it, as I desire you would send me ten
or twelve Quires more of the Foolscap Paper, such as you sent last,
but I wish you would order it to be cut on the Edge as I use it for
my Letters to Europe. Mr. Turnbull will be down next Month, & I
my new & old Scores with you at once. I have great Store of the do-
maining, as I use it only for my American Correspondents, which are
have likewise Abundance of the thin German or American Paper of
which on that Account I employ for some Particular Friends in Europe, you will
receive inclosed three Letters for Europe, one for Virginia, & one for Philadelphia.
You ought not to be surpris'd that I am anxious for the Delivery of my Letters,
as my Messengers mostly never return, to give me any Account of them. Remem-
ber me kindly to Mr. Marshall, & with him say in my Name of Mrs. Witherspoon's
safe Delivery of a Son which I only heard just now. I am, with Esteem,

Dear Sir, your very humble Servant
Chas: Nisbet.

Carlisle, 6th Novr. 1792.

Dear Sir,

I was favoured with yours of Octr. 28th by Mr. Wilson, & write you this by his nephew, who is on his Way to Charlestown, South Carolina, to another Uncle whom he has in that City. I am not surprised at the Contradictions you mention in the News Papers. We had the like in Great Britain, during the American War. France & England are now in a divided State, & every Party reports rather what they wish to be true, than what they know to be such. I am glad however that your Brother does not bring Notice of any more Disturbances in Scotland, than those that have been so much magnified in our News Papers. Many indeed seem to be going Liberty-mad, & imagine that a popular Government would remove all their Grievances, but the Instance of France, & even of this Country, ought to convince them that there is a great Difference betwixt People's having the making of their own Laws, & having them well made & executed, but the Heat of their Zeal for Liberty will not suffer them to consider things with any Degree of Coolness. They complain of high Taxes, & very justly, yet they praise those Ministers most, who did most to raise them. They complain of corrupt Elections, & unequal Representation, but they do not consider that no Reform whatever, except of their own Lives & Characters, could be of any Service to them, & that those Members of the House of Commons who have been most in the Interests of the People were many of them such as bought their Seals, or were self-elected. They never think that a greater Number of fools or Knaves would vote for as bad Members as a smaller Number of People of the same Character would do, & if they were in America they would see that our very equal Representation is as much complained of as their unequal one, & that the Reasons why we do not pay high Taxes here are chiefly these two, first because we are not able to pay them, & secondly, tho' we were able the Government has not Strength to collect them, after they are imposed. They would see that a small Excise laid on Spirits is more than all the Authority of our Government can raise, & that this Duty is a partial one,

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much as the Face of Religion is to be seen in most Parts of the Country & little Appearance of Seriousness among the few that are still connected with Religious Societies. Such are the Lies by which many of the poor People of Great Britain are tempted to lay their Country in Blood & Ruin, after the Example of France. I have seen the scurrilous Publications of Mr. Black against Mr. Anderson, but I think it cannot mislead any Person that is sound in Mind, who has ever read Mr. Anderson's Treatise. I heard that Mr. Annan was to write on the same subject. I think he ought to

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Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant

Chas. Nisbet.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, 22^d March, 1793.

I was favoured with yours of the 18th cur.^t this Afternoon by Mr. Sample. Probably I had received your last where I wrote mine, but can not be positive, as I do not remember what I wrote you. I give you many thanks for your valuable Presents, of Dr. Reid's Essays, & Mr. Scott's Force of Truth. I am glad to understand by Mr. Sample, that the Essays fell well, as this Country has much Need of them, but I am afraid that too few will take the Trouble of perusing a large Book, which requires deep thinking & serious Attention, especially as it exposes the Weakness, folly & Absurdity of the Infidel Philosophers, the admired Leaders of the Multitude the great Defenders of Liberty of Conscience & the Rights of Man, who are supposed to have given so much light to the present Age, that they are become almost blind. The Death of the King of France is a new Triumph of Liberty & Equality, supported by Philosophy. It is pity that Congress are not sitting otherwise you might have had a most pompous Rejoicing on the occasion, & the Pictures of the King and Queen of France, that are or formerly were in the Senate Chamber, might have been executed publickly in the Prison Yard, & burnt with the same Circumstances of Ignominy as the Originals. But at any Rate on the next St. Voltaire's Day (you ought to know what time of the Year that is) your People will celebrate this glorious Victory of the People of France, & testify your Admiration of their Virtues, by getting as drunk as possible, & sacrificing a few Hundreds of Aristocrats, in Honour of Liberty & Equality. It is a Shame to a City so enlightened as yours, that you have not yet got a Lantern, for the Use of your Aristocracy. Do you know that this Instrument was the Cause of all that glorious Light that has now shone upon France, & which all America & the World worshippeth? It seems none of your Bakers are so great Patriots as those of Paris, as I do not hear that any of them have offered to hang gratis any Aristocrat that the People shall bring to him. The French who live among you, will be much surpris'd to see that you are so far back in Reformation. I have not yet ~~seen~~ ~~yet~~ seen the Essay on Equality, by an Officer (I hope it is not the President) of the United States, but that dangerous Subject is now in a fair Way of being agitated among us, & what may be the Consequences, is impossible to say. I tremble to think of the Bloodshed that may be expected this Summer, and how many secure, thoughtless & daring Sinners will probably be sent to their long home, by fire & Sword. We ought to expect that God who rules the World, in spite of the Rights of Man, will avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant, & make Men see whether they will or not, that verily there is a God, who judgeth in the Earth. He who of old made the Midianites & Amalekites destroy one another, may send a Spirit of Discord among the Worshipers of Voltaire and Rousseau, & turn the Sword of every one of them against his fellow. And if the People of

Great Britain & Ireland are not deprived of their Liberties, they may learn from the Example of the French, what are the blessed fruits of Liberty & Equality. The Irish Mob seem to be mad enough already, as they have declared that they will have no King, but as their Courage is so small, as their Noise is great, I hope all their Undertakings will end in Smoke. Means have been used to stir up Insurrections in Scotland, but as our Mob are not so ignorant as the Irish Roman Catholics, I hope that they will not be prevailed on to adopt Paine's System, tho' some of them have adopted Briffley's. The Vigilance of the British Government in calling out the Militia, & proclaiming War against the Savages of France, may serve at least to employ their own People, & to draw off some restless Spirits, who are ready for Insurrection. They have certainly good Reason to be on their Guard against French Refugees & Emigrants, & those Societies in England, who correspond with the Jacobin Club at Paris. And as nothing is now more visible than that it is the Design of the French Mob, to overturn all the existent Governments of Europe, & to form an Alliance with the Mob in every Country for that Purpose, that none may remain to punish them for their Crimes, all the Powers of Europe must consider these Savages as Enemies of Mankind in general, & make the Extirpation of them a common Cause & even the Turks & Russians may be expected to join this Confederacy. Our New Philosophers to whom all the Governments of Europe have been guilty of giving too much Encouragement, have been telling the World for a long time, that Religion is useless to Society, that Rulers ought to despise the Quotations of Divines, to show an Indifference to all Opinions, & to encourage that Philosophy which sets Men free from Religious Prejudices, & enables them to assert their Rights of believing & living as they please. Now probably God is about to show the World, what Sort of Government that is, that the Philosophers have been crying up, & how much it is calculated to promote the Happiness of Mankind. Whether the French will be permitted to destroy Rome, & overturn all the States of Italy, time will show. But it appears already, that they intend to omit none of them, as the little Republic of Geneva has not escaped them which has stood so long amidst contending Powers. It is said that Gen. Montesquieu was accused by his Army, as a Traitor to the Rights of Man, because he did not allow them to plunder that unfortunate City, but as it is said that he is arrived in London, I suspect that his Disgrace with the People is merely political, & that he has been sent by the Convention to command the Mob of London, as soon as Dr. Briffley, another French Citizen, can get them together. The War of the Anabaptists in

Munster, is the likeliest thing to the present French Mob, of any thing that we find in History, & tho' they began with Equality, they soon fell under Arbitrary Government. Now as Thomas Paine is present by at Paris, the Mob need not want a John of Leyden to head them, unless Mons. Peltion insists on being the Monarch himself. Religionists have often been charged with Enthusiasm by Insidial Philosophers & Politicians, but it may be referred to any Person of sober Judgment, whether the Professor of any Religion, ever testified as much Enthusiasm, as has already appeared in the Atheistical Worshipers of Voltaire & Rousseau. If Mr. Paine does not obtain the Monarchy, he must be content to be the Whipporodding of the new John of Leyden, & to hang up every one whom Mons. Peltion marks out for Destruction. - I have heard of Mr. Thompson's Design, & shall endeavour to see him, if I am spared to visit your City in May. But I am an Admirer of the Old Bible, and consequently can not encourage any new ones. Dr. Robert Melnes, Professor of Poetry in the University of Cambridge, Old England, is at present engaged in an Undertaking, with Regard to the Text of the Septuagint, of the same Nature as that of the late Dr. Kennicott, with Respect to the Hebrew Originals, & Subscriptions are raised in England some time ago, for comparing all the Manuscripts that are to be found in any of the Libraries of Europe. I mean such as the Goths & Vandals of France have not already destroyed, & while such a Work is in Expectation, I think it would not be proper to think of publishing any Translation of the Septuagint. Besides its Chronology would encourage the Insidels, many of whom do not know any thing of the Difference betwixt the Hebrew Chronology & that of the Septuagint & Samaritan Pentateuch. A Capt. Lane of Vermont boasts, in your Papers of having found Frogs in Digging a Well at the Depth of forty feet, which he affirms must have been there long before the Days of Adam. But this Philosopher did not consider that the Frogs might have fallen into the Well after it was dug, & that the height from which they had fallen, & the bad air in the Well, might be the Cause of their appearing to be dead, till they were revived by the Water. These Pre-adamitical Frogs ought to have been sent as a Present to the French National Convention, who would have fed on them with the greater Relish, that in their Opinion they afforded a Testimony against the Truth of Revelation. I am, with sincere Esteem,

Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant
Chas^r Nisbet.

Carlisle, 22d March, 1793.

Dear Sir,

I was favoured with yours of the 18th cur. this Afternoon by Mr. Semple. Probably I had received your last when I wrote mine, but can not be positive, as I do not remember what I wrote you. I give you many thanks for your valuable Presents, of Dr. Reid's Essays, & Mr. Scott's Force of truth. I am glad to understand by Mr. Semple, that the Essays sell well, as this Country has much Need of them, but I am afraid that too few will take the Trouble of perusing a large Book, which requires deep thinking & serious Attention, especially as it exposes the Wickedness, folly & Absurdity of the Infidel Philosophers, the admired Leaders of the Multitude, the great Defenders of Liberty of Conscience & the Rights of Man, who are supposed to have given so much light to the present Age, that they are become almost blind. The Death of the King of France is a new Triumph of Liberty & Equality, supported by Philosophy. It is Pity, that Congress are not sitting otherwise you might have had a most pompous Rejoicing on the Occasion, & the Pictures of the King and Queen of France, that are or formerly were in the Senate Chamber, might have been executed publickly in the Prison Yard, & buried with the same Circumstances of Ignominy as the Originals. But at any Rate on the next St. Voltaire's Day (you ought to know what time of the Year that is) your People will celebrate this glorious Victory of the People of France, & testify your Admiration of their Virtues, by getting as drunk as possible, & sacrificing a few Hundreds of Aristocrates, in honour of Liberty & Equality. It is a shame to a City so enlightened as yours, that you have not yet got a Lanterne, for the Use of your Aristocracy. Do you know that this Instrument was the Cause of all that glorious Light that has now shone upon France, & which all America & the World worshipping? It seems none of your Bakers are so great Patriots as those of Paris, as I do not hear that any of them have offered to hang gratis any Aristocrat that the People shall bring to him. The French who live among you, will be much surprised to see that you are so far back in Reformation. I have not yet ~~have not yet~~ seen the Essay on Equality, by an Officer (I hope it is not the President) of the United States, but that dangerous Subject is now in a fair Way of being agitated among us, & what may be the Consequences, is impossible to say. I tremble to think of the Bloodshed that may be expected this Summer, and how many secure, thoughtless & daring Sinners will probably be sent to their long home, by fire & Sword. We ought to expect that God who rules the World, in spite of the Rights of Man, will avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant, & make Men see whether they will or not, that verily there is a God, who judgeth in the Earth. He who of old made the Midianites & Amalchites destroy one another, may send a Spirit of Discord among the Worshippers of Voltaire and Rousseau, & turn the Sword of every one of them against his fellow. And if the People of

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Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant

Chas. Nisbet.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, 1st June, 1793.

Having arrived here in safety on Monday last, I found that Morne on the Psalms had not been sent up during my absence, & as you did not tell me to what Waggoner you had delivered it, I know not where to enquire for it. It would be better to take Receipts for all Parcels that you send up, & then it would be known at least who is to blame when they are not delivered, as the Faith of Waggoners, like that of Nations, is often very slippery, & little to be relied on. I expect the Corpus Christi & Micron's Sermons, with the Box, & Bandbox of my Daughter's things, by last Waggon if they are not already sent off. We have had constant Rains here these four days past, but this Day we have a Prospect of clear Weather. Mr Sample set off this Morning for Pittsburgh having stopp'd one Day to wait for Company. A Subscription is going on here for the Support of the French, & People are eager to contribute, in order to show their Contempt for the President's Proclamation. But I believe their Liberality will either be embezzled among themselves, or go no further than the Citizen Minister in your City, who can distribute it among the Numbers of Frenchmen among you, or more wisely keep it to himself. I forgot to enquire whether you had sent off my letters by Mr Sample or before he set out. His Brother says that he is disposed to be a Minister, but did not mention whether he meant to return to this Country. Give my Compliments to Mr Marshall, & tell him that I delivered his letter to a Neighbour & Intimate of Mr Irwin. I long to hear of the Success of Dr. Witherpoon's Operation, & at what Time the Pope is expected in Philadelphia. Our People here are flattering themselves with a Report that has been received, that the Turks have espoused the Cause of the French Republic, which perhaps on Account of its great Probability, they hope may prove true. The fear of the Indians begins to increase, & all the Treaties of our wise Government have ended in Delusion, & Loss of Lives & Property. When our Govern-

ment will begin to think rationally of the Defence of the Frontier, & of the Country
in general, is hard to say. I pray God that we may not be involved in a War with
England, by the Intrigues of the Citizen Minister & his Adherents. If any Back-
wardness is shown in restoring the Vessels taken by the Charlestown Privateers, &
the Ship that was taken in the Bay of Delaware, your City may soon run the
Risk of a Bombardment. And if the Attention of our Government is divided be-
twixt the Defence of the Frontier & that of the Sea Coast, I am afraid that
all the Wisdom of the People would be much at a loss how to proceed. As I
hear that some English Privateers & Ships of War are on the Coast, I am in
hopes that the Communication with Great Britain will not be interrupted.
Four Letters from Scotland arrived during my Absence, but brought no material
News. I got over sundry Pamphlets & two Sermons on the French Revolution,
which are very well written. One of the Pamphlets & both the Sermons, were
published in Scotland. If the War with France does not last long, or is not
carried on to any great Length by Great Britain, it is to be hoped that
its internal Tranquillity will be the sooner restored, as the Reformers and
Friends of the People, who depended on the Assistance of France will be apt
to be more quiet, when they see their Power reduced, & as the French Fleet
is not formidable there will be little Reason to dread any Invasion in
Ireland, of which the British Ministry were most apprehensive. And the
Rebellion with which they were threatened from that Kingdom, will be
the less formidable, on the same Account. I had an Account from Scotland
of a Lady who dream'd that she was dead & had gone to Hell, & on ob-

seeing that Satan in Person opened the Door to her in Person, she expressed
her Surprise that none of his Servants had been employed in that Office, but
received for Answer that he had not one Servant left about his House, as they had
all gone to France four Years ago. If this Dream could be relied on, it would seem
that Liberty & Equality are very much to the Tattle of a certain Order of fallen-
Spirits, as well as to their Friends & Adherents in this World.

I hope you will write me where I am to apply for *Worme* on
the *Statues*, & send up my other things if not sent off already
by the first Opportunity. I am

Dear Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

Carlisle, 1st June, 1793

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Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant,

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Carlisle, 3^d July, 1793.

Dear Sir,

I have no Practice in writing Styling Letters, but I take it for granted that they ought to be written in a Style similar to that of Bills of Exchange. By this my third of Styling therefore. I give you to understand that that my Parcels that were left in your Custody, with another that I hear came to your hands after I left you, have not yet come to hand. I supposed that you received my first Styling Letter by Major Montgomery, & my second by David Williams Waggoner. If my Parcels are not yet on the Road, I hope you will now at last enquire at the Black Bear, & send them by the first ^{Waggon} that you can find. I am conscious that I would do as much for you, if I had it in my Power. I got a strange Piece of Intelligence lately. Some body who had a mind to laugh, or some Person whose Designs I cannot penetrate, has sent a Purple Silk Coat, directed to me, to Mrs. Nicolas's at the Conisloga Waggon, Market Street. Major Montgomery saw it, & would have brought it up in his Saddle Bags, but he was afraid of spoiling it. He told me that General Irvine, who knew as little of the History of this Coat as he himself did, would contrive to bring it with him in the Stage which arrives at Saturday next Week. This Matter occasions much Speculation. If any body in your Place who intended a Joke, has made me a Present of a Silk Coat, I think they would have sent a Taylor to take my Measure, as you know that Mademoiselle Clairon the famous Actress did to Monsieur Marmontel, when he first went to Paris, & was ill provided of Cloaths. But as no such thing took Place while I was with you, I know not what to make of the Matter. I cannot imagine that the Citizen Minister, who probably had stole some Cloaths out of the Wardrobe of Louis the 16th, would have taken it in his head to make me a Present of any of them, unless you had given him Advice to that Purpose. And if the Matter is taken in

a serious Point of View, I am no less at a loss to guess at the Giver of this extraordinary Present, unless perhaps your Acquaintance the Pope of Rome has thought proper to promote me to the Purple by creating me a Cardinal, on hearing of my Intention to wait on him in Company with our Friend Mr. Marshall. But if this is the Case, he would have sent the red Hat along with it, with an Order to Bishop Carroll to invest me with it in the Name of his Holiness, with the usual Ceremonies, in Trinity Church, fourth Street. Now as I hear nothing of the Hat, I am suspicious that either Bishop Carroll or Mr. Marshall, who doubtless must have been remembered as well as myself in the late Promotion of Cardinals, has kept back the Hat, for what Reason I cannot say. - I would be much obliged to you if you would inform me whether Mr. Marshall wears a red Hat when he goes to his Meeting, & if he does, to ask him why he has not sent mine, according to his Orders from Rome. You may likewise ask him why he sent the Purple Coat to the Conestoga Waggon, rather than to your Care, but I suppose that he thought you would be careless & would not forward it to me, judging of your Conduct by your Neglect of the other Parcels. I send you this by Judge Adair of Washington County, with Orders to pass Sentence against you in Case you should have neglected my Parcels. I hope you will excuse me for applying to the Law, after having waited so long in vain. - I give you the Trouble of another Letter to Scotland, which I hope you will forward by first Opportunity. I sent you in my last by Williams, an Invoice of all the Letters contained in the Parcel, which I hope you have forwarded according to their respective Directions. I have never yet heard of

Bishop Horne on the Psalms. Do you keep no account of the Names of the People to whom you deliver Parcels? We are to have a kind of rejoicing here to morrow, being the Anniversary of the Independence of America, but the friends of Liberty & Equality are to have a much greater one on the 14th, being the Anniversary of the French Revolution, which they prefer to ours. I wish that no Mischief may happen on that Occasion. Our People are divided & at Enmity with each other, for what Reason I know not. I hope you will take care to send me all my Parcels, including Bishop Horne, if you have not sent them already. & inform me where I shall call for them. Please inform Mr. John Poor, that I never have got any Money for him, & that the Students which he expected from North Carolina have never arrived here. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

Chas. Nisbet

Recd.

was

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Dear Sir,

I have no Practice in Writing flyting Letters, but I take it for granted that they ought to be written in a Style similar to that of Bills of Exchange. By this my third of flyting therefore, I give you to understand that my Parcels that were left in your Custody, with another that I hear came to your hands after I left you, have not yet come to hand. I supposed that you received my first flyting Letter by Major Montgomery, & my second by David Williams Waggoner. If my Parcels are not yet on the Road, I hope you will now at last enquire at the Black Bear, & send them by the first Waggon that you can find. I am conscious that I would do as much for you, if I had it in my Power. I got a strange Piece of Intelligence lately. Some body who had a mind to laugh, or some Person whose Designs I cannot penetrate, has sent a Purple Silk Coat, directed to me, to Mrs. Nicolas's at the Conestoga Waggon, Market Street. Major Montgomery saw it, & would have brought it up in his Saddle Bags, but he was afraid of spoiling it, he told me that General Irvine, who knew as little of the History of this Coat as he himself did, would contrive to bring it with him in the Stage which arrives on Saturday next Week. This Matter occasions much Speculation. If any body in your Place who intended a Joke, has made me a Present of a Silk Coat, I think they would have sent a Taylor to take my Measure, as you know that Mademoiselle Clairon the famous Actress did to Monsieur Marmontel, when he first went to Paris, & was ill provided of Cloaths. But as no such thing took Place while I was with you, I know not what to make of the Matter. I cannot imagine that the Citizen Minister, who probably had stole some Cloaths out of the Wardrobe of Louis the 16th would have taken it in his head to make me a Present of any of them, unless you had given him Advice to that Purpose. And if the Matter is taken in

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Letters contained in the Parcel, which I hope you have forwarded according to their respective Directions. I have never yet heard of

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Bishop Horne on the Psalms. Do you keep no Account of the Names of the People to whom you deliver Parcels? We are to have a kind of rejoicing here to morrow, being the Anniversary of the Independence of America, but the friends of Liberty & Equality are to have a much greater one on the 14th, being the Anniversary of the French Revolution, which they prefer to ours. I wish that no Mischief may happen on that Occasion. Our People are divided & at Enmity with each other, for what Reason I know not. I hope you will take Care to send me all my Parcels, including Bishop Horne, if you have not sent them already, & inform me where I shall call for them. Please inform Mr. John Poor, that I never have got any Money for him, & that the Students which he expected from North Carolina have never arrived here. I am,

Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant,

Chas. Nisbet.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, July 10th, 1793.

I have now at last received my Box & Parcel of Books, by Mr. Welber's Waggon, but hear nothing of my Wig, nor of Bishop Horne. I hope you have got so much Instruction in the Art of Styling, from my three last Letters, that you may now be a proper Person to be employed in Styling our other People. I beg leave therefore to trouble you with a Couple of Styling Commissions, first to the Waggoner who miscarried Bishop Horne, whom you must know, but I do not know; & next to Martin Pirie Hair dresser in 4th Street who promised to send my Wig, for which I paid him, but has not yet sent it. I heard that another Parcel for me had arrived from Scotland, but know not whether the Report is true or not. You ought to tell Mr. Marshall that your People have got a Dr. McGill among them, as well as the Established Church of Scotland. I mean Mr. Graham of Bowerston. I have read over his Inveective against Civil Establishments & think that it is the most loose, impudent & senseless thing that I have read of a long time. In most parts of it he talks like an Infidel. And tho' he condemns Religious Establishments as tending to give the Clergy a worldly Spirit, yet his great Complaint against them is that he & those of his Communion have not an Opportunity of being corrupted in like Manner by civil Concerns & Secular Dignities, as if the Privileges that Christ purchased for his People were chiefly those of choosing Members of the Legislature, & enjoying lucrative Offices in the State. If the Associate Synod does not immediately separate him from their Communion,

I think they will be as guilty of renouncing their Confession, as the Scotch
General Assembly. Mr. Graham seems to be an Independent & may pro-
bably have brought over his Congregation, if not some of his Brethren, to
his own Sentiments. I heard that Mr. Somerville died lately in Rock-
bridge County, Virginia, of an apoplectic Fit. Some say that it was in the
Oulpsit. He was a Person of great Simplicity & godly Sincerity. I hope his
Brother will continue his Kindness to his Wife & Family. Great Sickness
has prevailed here for some time past, especially remittent Fevers & Fluxes.
I have Reason to be thankful that I & my family have hitherto escaped,
tho' we are not without our fears. I hear nothing of the French War,
but you will have Information of all that passes in Europe by your Intimacy
with the Citizen Minister & his Friend Mr. Dunlap. The Hopes of Success
here in Great Britain & Ireland are now at an End, so that your News-writers
must be obliged to entertain you with feigned Accounts of Bankruptcies in Lon-
on & Prophecies of a National Bankruptcy. I believe that those who trade with
America, are of all the People in England, in the greatest Danger of Bankruptcy
except those who have engaged in French Speculations, which are the chief Cause
of most of the Bankruptcies that have really happened. The Friends of France ex-
pect that they will be able to establish their Republic, if they can hold out for the
present Campaign, but I rather think that it will be a lengthy Affair, & that more
Revolutions, Massacres & New Constitutions may still be expected. We hear nothing
as yet of the Treaty with the Indians, & it is said that the giving up all the
Country betwixt the Ohio & the Lakes may be insisted on as a preliminary

Article, which will prevent all Negotiations in future. It is probable that one Way or other we may soon be engaged in a War with Great Britain, which would put an End to our Independency & boasted Constitution, while our People are devoutly expecting that Great Britain will be ruined by the War with France. I hear that the Impost Duty is already fallen considerably, so that our People are not likely to be great Gainers by the Misfortunes of England, however much their Malice is gratified by the Expectation of its Ruin. If they saw their true Interest, they would find that they are still as much if not more interested in the Prosperity of Great Britain, than before their Independence. But they see only what their Leaders bid them, & are none-Blind to every thing else. If all Power were in the People, I think it ought to be accompanied with all Wisdom, which certainly is not the Case, as their Leaders by pretending to borrow Wisdom from them, easily prevail on them to adopt their Notions, & to put even that power in their hands, of which the People themselves are so vain. But so it has been from the Beginning. I ever am,

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Your very humble Servant

Cha.^s Nisbet.

Carlisle, July 10th, 1793.

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Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant

Chas. Nisbet.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, 7th August, 1793.

I received yours of July 29th last Saturday by Judge Addison & had got Bishop Horne some Weeks ago. Mr. Webber had received a Copy above the Number that he had ordered, but as it had no Direction upon it, he could not tell for whom it was intended, till Mr. Tate happening to see it, suggested that it might be for me, on which Mr. Webber delivered it. I hope it tells well with you. Many Ministers need it, to prevent them from blaspheming & talking nonsense when they speak of the Psalms or of the Old Testament. I hope it may be useful for diffusing some light among our People, many of whom seem to adore the Psalms of David, perhaps because he was a King, but one would scarcely think they knew or believed that he was inspired by the Holy Spirit. — My Son informed me that he had taken Arrangements for sending up my Wig, together with a Parcel of his own. I am glad to hear that all is quiet & thriving in Scotland, & hope soon to hear that the Effect of all the Bankruptcies at London is vanished, as quickly as the Disturbances that were so much boasted of in Ireland. The French Convention seem to be projecting a New Massacre in honour of Liberty and Equality, as they pretend to have discovered a New Conspiracy. The Condition of Mankind in that Country must be shocking, as we hear of nothing but Murder & fighting in every Corner of it. The Passion for ruling & cutting Throats seems to have swallowed up every other Passion. What Savages are Mankind, when left to themselves? If these are all the Blessings of Liberty & Equality, it would have been good for Mankind that they had never been heard of in the World. The Aristocrats that have been driven from Cape François will be a heavy Burden on this Country. Your enlightened Citizens who have received them as Sufferers in the Cause of Liberty & Equality, have done more Honour to their Humanity than to their Understanding. But I know not what Excuse they can make to the Citizen Minister, for receiving the vanquished Enemies of his Republic as friends, in Opposition to the Treaty. I am afraid that these Frenchmen may head some Insurrection in this Country, being idle, poor and accustomed to live on the Labour of their Slaves. Your Citizens may soon lament, that they had not staid at St. Domingo, to be massacred by the Order of the National

Convention, in honour of Liberty & Equality, as many of their better have been before them. I am sorry to hear that the Spanish Minister has been recalled, on account of the Favour and Prejudice that has been shown to the Citizen Minister. I consider this as a Declaration of War on the Part of Spain, against this Country, & fear that the other Allied Powers who are at War with France, may follow the Example of the Spaniards. I am afraid that in that Case, neither the Citizen Minister nor the Democratic Society would be able to protect us, as we have no Army, & our Militia are good for nothing but to fight with each other. I fear much that our Partiality to the French Alliance is likely to cost us very dear, as it may render all the other Powers of Europe our Enemies. I do not understand how any of your Citizens could have been accused of breaking the Neutrality in favour of England, as I have never heard of any English Ship of War or Privateer entering your River. By the taking of so many of our Ships, Trade must suffer much, & the Want of the Impost must occasion a large Deficit in the Revenue. Our People boasted at the Beginning that their Flag would be universally respected, & that they would make rich by the carrying Trade, while other Powers were at War, but their Boastings are come to very little Accompt, as they are not able to defend what they carry. The Miseries of a long War seem to be threatening Europe, & we are too much dependent on it, not to feel its Effects. The Prohibition of all Correspondence by the French Convention, seems to indicate that they are in a terrible Situation at home, notwithstanding all their Vapouring in the News Papers. But as the Allied Powers seem only intent on defending their own Country, & acting as little on the offensive as possible, it may be a long time before this Confusion is brought to an End. But as long as Great Britain remains in Possession of the Sea, its Interests & Trade can not be materially affected, as the French have no Fleet worth mentioning, & the English can easily match them for Privateers. It appears that the English & Spanish Fleets are meditating some Attack on the South of France, probably Toulon or Marseilles, especially if it is true that the Commissioners of the National Convention have been driven from the latter City, & their Authority abolished. Some thing or other is to be wished for, that may give us a Prospect of Peace. The internal Divisions of France may probably produce the first overtures of this kind, but I give no Credit to the Reports

that England is already negotiating a Peace with the French Rulers, which would be fatal to it in its present Situation, when the Country is so full of Frenchmen, as such Numbers would immediately come over as might endanger its Safety much more than all that the French can do in War. I would always wish to hear that some one Corner of the World were in quack, — amidst the present general Combustion, & as America has much more Dependence on Great Britain than on any other Country, notwithstanding all our boasting to the contrary, we have certainly the greatest Interest in its Prosperity. France never was able, & is now less able than ever, to furnish us with those Articles — that we have from England, nor can their Merchants afford to give long Credit, such as our Circumstances require, altho' they had the Goods which we want. I am shocked to read in your Papers so many senseless & illiberal Insults on the English Nation, & so many malicious Wishes for its Destruction. Our senseless Politicians do not know that the Destruction of England would involve their own, so ignorant are they of the Interests of their Country, of which they boast so much. Some well disposed People have been endeavouring to persuade themselves, that something of Advantage to real Religion may arise out of the present Confusions, but I confess that I see nothing that favours that Opinion. The Increase of Infidelity & Contempt of Religion seems to me to be the worst Sign in the World, of its Revival. That great Judgments & Strokes are hanging over the World is quite apparent, but any Good that may arise out of them, seems to be far out of our Sight at present. It is true, that Man's Extremity is God's Opportunity & that Christ has often sent his Church a clear Day after a very dark Night. But things do not seem as yet to be come to Extremity, and as we are in not in a Situation to be Objects of God's Mercy, we have Reason to apprehend the Manifestations of his Justice. I am afraid that few of us are praying, except for our own Ends, & that the dismal State of Religion is not much the Subject of Lamentation. We live in an expiring Century & a decaying World, & our Piety seems to be worn out by Length of Years. We are so indifferent about the Truth, that I am afraid some would think it a Sin to pray for its Success. We have a great many Religions, but little Religion. We are zealous for the Liberties of other Churches, but we seem to care very little for our own. We must undergo a great Alteration before there can be any probable Hopes of our Reformation. I enclose four Letters, two for Scotland, & two for this Country. I ever am,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble Servant

Chas. Nisbet.

First President of Dickinson College.

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