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Title: Letters from Charles Nisbet to William Young, 1794-95

Date: 1794-1795

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Contact:

Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, 18th January, 1794.

Altho' I am rather disappointed in not hearing from you, in Answer to the Packet I sent you by Mr. Collock, & Mr. McGauran is expected home this Evening, by whom I hope to hear from you, yet I could not suffer Mr. Duncan theBearer to depart, without enquiring after your welfare, & sending you a Letter for Europe to be forwarded by first Opportunity. I have heard with Concern, tho' I still hope it is not true, that the English Packets are no longer to come to New-York, but I hope that our Communication with England by private Ships will not be interrupted, at least for some time. The hot-headed Part of our People, I mean the Majority of them, are eager for a War with great Britain & the combined Powers, tho' they can not tell either where they are to find Men, or Money, or Ships. I see the Democratic Society of your City (I know not whether you are a Member of it) are desirous to have the Bonds of our Union with France drawn as tight as possible by which no doubt they mean, that we ought to go to War in Support of the Sans Culottes, in hopes that we by their Assistance may soon conquer all the World, & massacre all the Kings, Princes, Nobles & rich Men in Europe, except the few Kings of the Cards. I do not hear of any Conspiracy against these Monarchs, altho' they impose greater Taxes on their Subjects, & have ruined more families than all the other things put together. But they are said to have many firm friends on both Sides of the Question. I am afraid that Congress will be led, by the Clamour of the French Faction, either to declare War against Great Britain, or to do something that may provoke the English Court to declare War against us. The French Republic have gained a great Victory by cutting off the Queen's Head. I have not heard whether Congress have ordered public Rejoicings on that account but it can not be doubted that the Convention by this spirited Measure have

aided as much to their Strength, as they have done to their Reputation. I hope
you will send me up by the Bearer, the Papers that contain the Congratulations
of both Houses of Congress & of the State Legislature to Mr. Genet, upon this
Occasion. The Cause of Liberty & Equality is likely to be firmly established at Lyons,
by the Burning of the City, & the Confiscation of the Property of all the rich, and
of the Antirevolutionaries. You have not yet writ me whether Thomas Paine is —
among the eighty nine Members of the Convention, that have been imprisoned
on Suspicion of Royalism, but I believe he was in Prison long ago. It has been
written to this Place from your City that forty Gentlemen of Distinction and
fortune have arrived at New York from Scotland, having been summoned to
appear before the Court of Justiciary for signing the Glasgow Address against
the French War. I suppose that this is a Mistake. One of them is said to be
a Physician of Great Eminence, but I believe it is not Dr. Moore, I wish
to hear from you whether the fatal Yellow Fever has as yet ceased in your
City, as there have been Reports here, that about Sixteen Persons a Day were
still cut off by this Disease. I am sorry to hear that Mr. Marshall is ill, —
especially if it be true that his Disorder is a Cancer, which leaves so little hopes
of Recovery. I am afraid that your Legislature will not abolish the Slave
house, altho' I hear that Dr. William Smith is one of the Petitioners for
its Abolition. Dr. Ewing, I suppose, would not chuse to be a Subscriber to
a Petition which he thought would be unsuccessful. We have had but little
Snow here this Season, & have been looking for it in vain for many Days
past. I have Reason to bless God that I & my family are in pretty good
Health. My Wife has been attacked with an Ague, but seems to be now

better. I wish to hear whether you get an Opportunity of forwarding the Letter that I sent you by Dr. McCaffrey & Mr. Collock. Affairs in Europe appear to be still in great Confusion, altho' I think the French will not be able to send a hundred thousand Men to invade England. Perhaps the Proposal to surrender Brest & Bourdeaux on the same Terms as Toulon, is intended as a Trick to draw the English Fleet to the Westward, to favour the intended Invasion, but the English seem to be fully on their Guard in this Respect, & this I think is the Reason for recalling Lord Howe's Fleet after it had sailed. If it is true that the French lost 25000 Men in Battle, & 15000 near Day by Desertion, their Affairs must be in a bad Situation, especially as we hear that the People are forced into the Army by the Cruelty of the Convention, who have unlimited Power. I am sorry for the Death of Mr. Clarke, which I learned from Mr. Carey's Book. I know not whether any of his Sons were bred to the same Business. I inclose a few Lines to Capt. Richie, & am sincerely sorry for the Death of his Wife. Hoping to hear from you soon, & wishing you all Happiness, I am with sincere Esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

Chas. Nisbet.

Carlisle, 18th January, 1794.

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Altho' I am rather disappointed in not hearing from you, in Answer to the Packet I sent you by Mr. Pollock, & Mr. McGauran is expected home this Evening, by whom I hope to hear from you, yet I could not suffer Mr. Duncan the Bearer to depart, without enquiring after your welfare, & sending you a Letter for Europe to be forwarded by first Opportunity. I have heard with Concern, tho' I still hope it is not true, that the English Packets are no longer to come to New York, but I hope that our Communication with England by private Ships will not be interrupted, at least for some time. The hot-headed Part of our People, I mean the Majority of them, are eager for a War with Great Britain & the combined Powers, tho' they can not tell either where they are to find Men, or Money, or Ships. I see the Democratic Society of your City (I know not whether you are a Member of it) are desirous to have the Bonds of our Union with France drawn as tight as possible, by which no doubt they mean, that we ought to go to War in Support of the Sans Culotes, in hopes that we by their Assistance may soon conquer all the World, & massacre all the Kings, Queens, Nobles & rich Men in Europe, except the four Kings of the Cards. I do not hear of any Conspiracy against these Monarchs, altho' they impose greater Taxes on their Subjects, & have ruined more families than all the other Kings put together. But they are said to have many firm friends on both Sides of the Question. I am afraid that Congress will be led, by the Clamours of the French Faction, either to declare War against Great Britain, or to do something that may provoke the English Court to declare War against us. The French Republic have gained a great Victory by cutting off the Queen's Head. I have not heard whether Congress have ordered public Rejoicings on that Account but it can not be doubted that the Convention by this spirited Measure have

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Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant,

Chas. Nisbet.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, 25th March, 1794.

I received yours of Jan. 7 29th and was sorry that in my last Letter I had troubled you with mentioning the Wig that was to have been sent me last year by Martin Pirie, as I heard soon after I wrote, you that it had been brought up ten days before by David Rowan. But as he had gone on with his Waggon to Birkburgh, his Wife had forgot to send me the Wig, or to acquaint me of his Arrival, which was told me accidentally by some of her Neighbours. I got your Letter about a Week after, & suppose that it had come by Rowan, as I heard that a Letter was sent along with the Band-Box. I likewise received lately by Mr. Wall, a Parcel from Edinburgh, which I suppose came thro' your hands, or from your Neighbour Mr. Campbell, as it was sent by the Way of New York. I hope you & your family are in good Health, & quite recovered from the Remains of your awful Disease. I need not enquire for the Generality of your Citizens, as I am informed that the Playhouse is as throng as ever, & every thing among you has the Appearance of gaiety, even in the Prospect of War & Depopulation. I heard with sorrow that you had taken offence at Mr. Marshall, on account of his leaving the City during the late awful Visitation. This I own, surprises me not a little. If I had had any Influence with any Person in Philadelphia, I would have thought it my Duty to exhort them to flee out of it with all Speed, in the very beginning of the Infection, instead of having the least Suspicion that I was committing a Sin. Our blessed Lord, who certainly knew best what Conduct was most becoming for Christians in times of Danger, tells his Disciples that on the Approach of the Roman Armies to Jerusalem, which was as certainly a Divine Visitation as a contagious Disease, & in many respects less terrible, those that were in Judaea, ought to flee to the Mountains, instead of exhorting them to stay with their friends, & he exhorts those that were on the House-tops, not to come down to take any thing out of their Houses, & those that were in the fields, not to return back to take their Clothes. Matth. 24. 16. 17. 28. And altho' it should be alledged that there is an Hyperbole in the Words, & that they ought not to be strained to their literal Meaning, as no doubt it will be alledged, in an Age that abounds so much in Criticism as the present, yet nothing is more evident than that our Lord here exhorts his Disciples to save themselves by a speedy flight, in a time of public Danger. If this is not the Meaning of his Words, they can have no Meaning at all. And tho' it seems to be more disgraceful, to flee from Persecutions, than from contagious Diseases or hostile Armies, yet our Lord, expressly charges his Disciples, that when they were persecuted in one City, they ought to flee to another. And this they certainly did, in Obedience to his Commandment. Paul fled out of Lystra, where he had been stoned. Act. 14. 20. And Paul & Silas departed from Philippi, where they had been beaten & put in Prison, tho' they had been ^{afterwards} released by the Magistrates. Act. 16. 40. And those who were scattered abroad, upon the Persecution that arose about Stephen, were so far from being condemned for their flight, that we are told that the hand of the Lord was with them. Act. 11. 21. But as Extremes are natural to Mankind, & as the facing of Danger has the Appearance of fortitude, tho' often a very foolish one, we find that in the Greek Church notwithstanding the Express Injunctions of our Lord, & the uniform Practice of his Apostles, an Opinion prevailed, that it was dishonourable in a Christian Bishop, & worthy of Deposition, to forsake his Flock in the time of Persecution or Siege, so that St. Chrysostom was obliged to write a Treatise **Περί**

QUINS, in Defense of Flight. But it is needless to multiply Words on so plain a Point. I hope that when my Friend thinks more soberly on the Subject, & does not suffer himself to be led away by Prejudices or outward Appearance, he will be of Opinion that Mr. Marshall & the other Ministers that fled, acted at least as wisely, as Dr. Smith, who remained in the City. A Deal of illiberal Abuse was vented against the Presbyterian Clergy in Brown's Paper, but I never suspected that Mr. Young was capable of being moved by it, far less did I think that he could be prevailed on to join with the Infidels in reviling them. I inclose you a Letter for Scotland, but I know not whether it may in your Power to forward it, as our People seem to be so eager for War against Great Britain & the combined Powers. Our Situation appears to be very dangerous, yet I am afraid that our People will render it still more dangerous, by their extravagant Zeal for War, & the Confidence they have in the French Mob. To depend on France in its present Condition, & under its present savage Rulers, & in Confidence of its Success, to engage in a War against all the other Powers of Europe, appears to me to be very little, if any thing short of Mad-ness. Yet for any thing that I can see, this is the very thing that is intended by our wise Rulers. For altho' these are sundry Members of Congress, who see the true Interest of their Country on this Occasion, & have warned their Fellow Citizens of the Danger of War, yet the Cry of the Multitude, which must at last determine the Business, is certainly in favour of France, & against them. And their Enemies ruin their Interest by insinuating that they are under the Influence of the British Government, tho' it is far more probable that those who cry so loud for War, tho' I believe none of them will ever handle a Musket, are under the Influence of Genet & the French, & are under British Influence at the same time, as they hope to get free of their British Debts by a War. I would wish you Joy on Occasion of the Citizen Minister's having become a Citizen, unless I were apprehensive that his Remaining in this Country will be prejudicial to its Interests, as he is the Head of a large & dangerous Party, who threaten to destroy our Government on pretence of Liberty. So that I confess I would have been much better pleas'd to hear that he had been apprehended by his Successor, & sent to Paris, although he should have undergone the Ceremony of the Guillotine, in Company with Anacharsis Cloots & Thomas Paine, who are now in Prison & soon to be executed. What will now become of the Rights of Man? It were indeed much to be wish'd that all Genet's Party would follow his Example, & become American Citizens, instead of being Tools to the French, & Enemies to their Country, as they have been hitherto. But of this, I confess, there is very little hope. Your Neighbour Mr. Dunlap has already announced to the Public, that 150,000 Sans Culottes have landed in England, & as he makes no Mention of Ships, I suppose they must have come in Balloons. And as Mr. Dunlap's Faith extends thus far, I make no Doubt that all your good Citizens, especially the Democratic Society, will think it their Duty to believe it, especially as Mr. Dunlap adds that all the People joined them on their Landing, that they were in full March for London, & that the next Post would bring Advice that the King was beheaded, & the Government overthrown, to make Way for French Liberty & Equality. I wonder that your Citizens have not had a public Rejoicing on this Occasion, as they had when Citizen Genet informed them that the Duke of York was taken Prisoner, & carried to Paris in an Iron Cage, to be exhibited to the Majesty of the People. Your Papers assure us that Congress rose on this Occasion in the midst of a Debate, so eager were they to congratulate M. Genet & one another on such agreeable News. I wonder that they have not done the same on Occasion of Mr. Dunlap's Intelligence. I dare say their Credulity, I mean that of the Majority, is not less than it was, when they are intending to go to War with all Europe, in Confidence of the Success of the French. I dare say Dr. Priestley now thinks himself a wise Man, for refusing to be a Member of the French National Convention, when he sees what is likely to be the fate of his Friend Thomas Paine, who was deputed at the same time. I see that he acknowledges, in a Letter to a Friend in Georgia, that he must now avow his ill of the French Revolution, when so many of his Friends have been ruined by it. His

those Sons: who were settled in France, are now come over to America, finding that French Liberty & Equality is too meagre a Diet for English Stomachs. And the same seems to be the Opinion of your Neighbour Mr. Oswald, who altho' he declares that the French were perfectly happy in their Liberty & Equality, yet found himself too happy to be able to live among them. Some of my Acquaintances in Scotland & England who were great Admirers of the French Revolution, made the same Experiment with the like Success, as a few Months convinced them that their happiness in France was too great to be endured, so that they soon returned to Great Britain, & none more quickly than Mr. Coke the Methodist Bishop, who after going over the Channel to Normandy, found that the French were so stupid a People, that they did not understand one Word of English, & came home in Disgust. I believe that even the Members of the Democratic Society, if they had a few Weeks Enjoyment of French Liberty & Equality along with their Republican Brethren in France, would be glad to get back to America, on finding that the Happiness of French Citizens was too much for them to bear. I wish heartily that the whole of them were exported to that Country, which they celebrate so much, & that their Places here were filled by those unhappy Persons in France, whom their Countrymen are drowning by hundreds, in honour of Liberty and Equality. Mr. Madison has very faithfully acted the Part of a French Citizen, by doing his utmost to sacrifice his Country to France, & to make America a Municipality of the French Republic. I hope every body is now convinced that the National Assembly who adopted him as a French Citizen, have not been mistaken in their Man, & that he has proved himself an able & faithful Tool of the French Republic. Yet I question much whether Mr. Madison would adventure to go over to France, even on an Invitation by the Jacobin Club, or the National Convention, so little are the Public Professions of Men to be trusted, in our times. I wonder that your Citizens are not apprehensive that the English, after driving the French out of the West Indies, should come & burn their Playhouse, which would be the utter Destruction of Liberty, Independency & the Rights of Man. They talk indeed of fortifying their Ports, but they seem to have forgotten that the English took every one of their Sea-port Towns last War, with very little Trouble or Danger, after they had been as strongly fortified as they could think of. And nothing hindered the English from burning all their Towns to the Ground, except their own Will, & the Expectations they had of adding them to the British Dominions. But it is not to be expected that that will restrain them, if they make War with us as a foreign Nation. I heartily wish that the Democratic Society would think how they are to get out of the War, before they engage in it, for if they hardly got the better of England alone, when they had all the rest of Europe on their Side, how can they hope for Success when they are to engage all the Powers of Europe in conjunction with England, without any Allies, except the French, who can not defend their own Islands, much less their Allies? Wars are commonly made by Cowards, but require brave Men to carry them on. If one did not believe that the Lord reigneth, even in the Raging of the Sea & the Tumult of the People, we might well despair in such a Situation as the present. It is time for the Lord's People, instead of differing with one another, to unite in praying for this poor, insatuated & sinful Land, which seems to be destined to Destruction & Desolation, by the folly, Pride, & Madness of its People, unless he interposes to protect it in an extraordinary Manner. I ever am, with sincere Esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

Chas. Nisbet

P. S. As I know not when I may find an Opportunity of Conveyance, I will add a few thoughts from the fulness of my heart, being in very much Anxiety for the Peace of this poor Country, altho' I believe that my Neighbours reckon me an Enemy to it, merely because I would not wish to see it become a French Colony. It is curious to observe the Revolutions of human Prejudices, & how ready Men are to pass from one Extreme to the direct contrary. For these two hundred Years past, it was universally believed, not only in Great Britain & this Country, but in most Parts of Europe, that the French were Enemies to Liberty, insidious Treacherous, & dangerous to other Nations, & ambitious of Universal Monarchy, altho' their Interferences with the Affairs of other Nations were always covered with some decent Pretence. And now when the French have declared War against all other Nations, except America, which scarcely deserves the Name of a Nation as yet, & when they have exceeded the Barbarity of Goths, Vandals & Indians, by their Cruelties & Rapine in their own Countries, as well as in Germany, Poland & Savoy, & when they have resolved to destroy all the existent Governments in the World, they are celebrated & eyed up by Americans & by some degenerate Englishmen, as the Patrons of Liberty & the Friends of Mankind, while at the same time the History of the World does not contain ^{any Example of} such Despotism & Tyranny as they are every day exercising over their poor Countrymen, & over all that have fallen into their Power. Shall we say then that the People of New York, or the Americans in general, are out of their Senses? This would be too favourable & too charitable a Construction of their Conduct. It is more likely that they are insatuated by the just Judgment of God, for their Ingratitude, & for the bad Use that they have made of their Liberty. Nothing at least is more evident in the History of Mankind, than that God often makes their own Wickedness to correct them, & punishes them by the hands of those in whom they put their Trust. The French were the Instruments in the hand of Providence in setting up the United States, & I am afraid that they will likewise be the Instruments in pulling them down, on account of their Ingratitude & Contempt of God, their supreme Benefactor & Deliverer. The Jews were prone to Idolatry, & fond of imitating the Manners of the Heathens. God sold them into the hands of those whom they imitated, & at last scattered them among the Heathens. We have been fond of imitating the Manners of the French, particularly their Atheism, Infidelity & Contempt of Religion. God seems now to be making Use of our sinful Attachment to these Barbarians, to dash us in Pieces against the combined Powers of Europe. For our People must not imagine that they will have to ^{do} with the English alone, tho' they by themselves are far too strong for us, but they may be assured that the other Allied Powers will make a common Cause of it, & will think it their Interest to suppress those who wish to support the Dregs & Excesses of the French Nation, & to set up them as the Tyrants of Europe & all the World. And they must not imagine that the English will proceed against them as they did formerly, by sending Armies to penetrate into the Country, which they may have the Opportunity of engaging, or wearing out by hopeless Pursuits. They have more Reason to expect that their Sea-port Towns will be burnt, & their frontiers wasted by Impetuous Fleets of England, Spain & Holland, from Canada, & that their Communication with all the World will be cut off by the Fleets of England, Spain & Holland, who can easily block up their Harbours, & seize every Vessel that ventures out to Sea, either on this Side the Atlantic, or in Europe, where they will not have any friendly Port to run to, except those of the French where they can get no thing but Liberty, Equality, Assignats & Guillotines, which are now the only Manufactures of that Country. If God had not in Vengeance deprived the greatest Number of our People of their Senses, do you think that they would not be sensible that Nature & Necessity makes them dependant on England for their Clothing, & that without English Manufactures they would soon be reduced to the Condition of naked Savages? as it is well known that there is not as much Wool & Industry in America, as would furnish every one of its Citizens with a Cap of Liberty, leaving all the rest of their Bodies bare to the Impression of the Elements. So that we would be much worse provided than the Sans Culottes or Tatters de millions of France. For if you would look on the proud Democrats & Roarers for War, you would see that there was not a Thread on their backs that was not spun in England,

& if you were to enquire farther, you would probably find that all their Debts were unpaid for, to the Merchants of England, yet these are the Men who would persuade us that England is dependent on us, and that we need nothing from abroad except Snuff-boxes, Ribbons, Frogs & wooden Shoes, which we may be furnished with from France, & get great Quantities of Atheism, Liberty & Equality in to the Bargain. — I know not what Providence intends to do with the People of this Country, but if it were intended that we should be ruined, no other Symptoms of this could be expected, than those which appear at present. Pray are there any with you that seem to be sensible of our Danger, or properly affected by it? I can hear of none here, & see no Symptoms of Rationality except in the Speeches of some Members of Congress, who are branded & proscribed by the Multitude, as Men under the Influence of Great Britain. I see that the President has communicated a Letter to Congress, by which it appears that the French have been guilty of plundering & taking our Vessels as well as the English, & that equal Oppression is exercised in their Admiralty Courts, but it seems that our People are perfectly contented to be plundered, providing that they are plundered by the Friends of Liberty & Equality, which is strange enough. At the same time if the English Fleet should pay a Visit to our Harbours, to pass the Hurricane Months, it is probable that most of our Swaggers & Roarers for War, would turn Quakers on that Occasion, notwithstanding the Noise that they make at present. I observe that the President is much abused in Bache's Paper for his Proclamation in favour of Neutrality, & that Mr. Madison & M. Genet have ruined his Influence among the People. The Democratical Societies are now likely to have the sole Influence, & the Members of Congress are now at Leisure to attend the Playhouse for the Benefit of their Souls, as all their worldly Concerns are likely to be taken out of their hands by the Democratical Societies, who call themselves the People. The Introduction of clapping into the Galleries of Congress, has it seems been discouraged in the first Instance, but as it is a French Custom, it must come in sooner or later, to put our People on an Equality with their Republican Brethren in France, and I hear that it has been already proposed in some of the Meetings of the Merchants, that the People should act by themselves, & revenge their own Injuries, independent of the Government. — And altho' this too was discouraged at first, yet if it be publickly recommended by the Democratical Society, who have already adopted the Principle, it may be heard with more favour on another Occasion. I would be much obliged to you if you would write me your best Intelligence with Regard to the Probability of Peace or War. I can not now expect any more Letters from Scotland, & if you find no Conveyance for the Letter that is sent herewith, you may return it, or keep it till I call for it. At the same time it is very uncertain whether it may be safe for me, or in my Power, to visit your City during the Vacation in May next. You know my Inclinations, but at any Rate it would be a great Favour, if you could find time to write me by any Opportunity you can find, as soon as convenient. E. N.

Carlisle, 25th March, 1794.

Dear Sir,

I received yours of Jan.y 28th, and was sorry that in my Last Letter I had troubled you with mentioning the Wig that was to have been sent me last Year by Martin Pirie, as I heard soon after I wrote, you that it had been brought up ten days before by David Rowan, but as he had gone on with his Waggon to Pittsburgh, his Wife had forgot to send me the Wig, or to acquaint me of his Arrival, which was told me accidentally by some of her Neighbours. I got your Letter about a Week after, & suppose that it had come by Rowan, as I heard that a Letter was sent along with the Bandbox. I likewise received lately by Mr. Wall, a Parcel from Edinburgh, which I suppose came thro' your hands, or from your Neighbour Mr. Campbell, as it was sent by the Way of New York. I hope you & your family are in good Health, & quite recovered from the Remains of your awful Disease. I need not enquire for the Generality of your Citizens, as I am informed that the Playhouse is as throng as ever, & everything among you has the Appearance of Gaiety, even in the Prospect of War & Desolation. I heard with Sorrow that you had taken Offence at Mr. Marshal, on Account of his leaving the City during the late awful Visitation. This I own, surprises me not a little. If I had had any Influence with any Person in Philadelphia, I would have thought it my Duty to exhort them to flee out of it with all Speed, in the very beginning of the Infection, instead of having the least Suspicion that I was committing a Sin. Our blessed Lord, who certainly knew best what Conduct was most becoming for Christians in times of Danger, tells his Disciples that on the Approach of the Roman Armies to Jerusalem, which was as certainly a Divine Visitation as a contagious Disease, & in many Respects less terrible, those that were in Judea, ought to flee to the Mountains, instead of exhorting them to stay with their friends, & he exhorts those that were on the House-top, not to come down to take any thing out of their Houses, & those that were in the fields, not to return back to take their Clothes, Matth. 24.16.17.18. And altho' it should be alledged that there is an Hyperbole in the Words, & that they ought not to be strained to their literal Meaning, as no doubt it will be alledged, in an Age that abounds so much in Criticisms as the present, yet nothing is more evident than that our Lord here exhorts his Disciples to save themselves by a speedy flight, in a time of public Danger. If this is not the Meaning of his Words, they can have no Meaning at all. And tho' it seems to be more disgraceful, to flee from Persecution, than from contagious Diseases or hostile Armies, yet our Lord, expressly charges his Disciples, that when they were persecuted in one City, they ought to flee to another. And this they certainly did, in Obedience to his Commandment. Paul fled out of Lystra, where he had been stoned, Acts 14. 20. And Paul & Silas departed from Philippi, where they had been beaten & put in Prison, tho' they had been afterwards released by the Magistrates, Acts 16. 40. Add those who were scattered abroad, upon the Persecution that arose about Stephen, were so far from being condemned for their flights that we are told that the hand of the Lord was with them, Acts 11. 21. But as Extremes are natural to Mankind, & as the facing of Danger has the Appearance of fortitude, tho' often a very foolish one, we find that in the Greek Church notwithstanding the Express Injunctions of our Lord, & the uniform Practice of his Apostles, an Opinion prevailed, that it was dishonourable in a Christian Bishop, & worthy of Deposition, to forsake his Flock in the time of Persecution or Plague, so that St. Chrysostom was obliged to write a Treatise Πᾶσι

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φρνης, in Defence of Flight. But it is needless to multiply Words on so plain a Point, I hope that when my Friend thinks more soberly on the Subject, & does not suffer himself to be led away by Prejudices or outward Appearance, he will be of Opinion that Mr. Marshal & the other Ministers that fled, acted at least as wisely, as Dr. Smith, who remained in the City. A Deal of illiberal Abuse was vented against the Presbyterian Clergy in Brown's Paper, but I never suspected that Mr. Young was capable of being moved by it, far less did I think that he could be prevailed on to join with the Infidels in writing them. I inclose you a Letter for Scotland, but I know not whether it may in your Power to forward it, as our People seem to be so eager for War against Great Britain & the combined Powers. Our Situation appears to be very dangerous, yet I am afraid that our People will render it still more dangerous, by their extravagant Zeal for War, & the Confidence they have in the French Mob. To depend on France in its present Condition, & under its present savage Rulers, & in Confidence of its Success, to engage in a War against all the other Powers of Europe, appears to me to be very little, if any thing short of Madness. Yet for any thing that I can see, this is the very thing that is intended by our wise Rulers. For altho' these are sundry Members of Congress, who see the true Interest of their Country on this Occasion, & have warned their Fellow Citizens of the Danger of War, yet the Cry of the Multitude, which must at last determine the Business, is certainly in favour of France, & against them. And their Enemies ruin their Interest by insinuating that they are under the Influence of the British Government, tho' it is far more probable that those who cry so loud for War, tho' I believe none of them will ever handle a Musket, are under the Influence of Genet & the French, & are under British Influence at the same time, as they hope to get free of their British Debts by a War. I would wish you Joy on Occasion of the Citizen Minister's having become a Citizen, unless I were apprehensive that his Remaining in this Country will be prejudicial to its Interests, as he is the Head of a large & dangerous Party, who threaten to destroy our Government on pretence of Liberty. So that I confess I would have been much better pleased to hear that he had been apprehended by his Successor, & sent to Paris, although he should have undergone the Ceremony of the Guillotine, in Company with Anachartis Cloots & Thomas Paine, who are now in Prison & soon to be executed. What will now become of the Rights of Man? It were indeed much to be wished that all Genet's Party would follow his Example, & become American Citizens, instead of being Tools to the French, & Enemies to their Country, as they have been hitherto. But of this, I confess, there is very little hope. Your Neighbour Mr. Dunlap has already announced to the Public, that 150,000 Sans Culotes have landed in England, & as he makes no Mention of Ships, I suppose they must have come in Balloons. And as Mr. Dunlap's Faith extends thus far, I make no Doubt that all your good Citizens, especially the Democratic Society, will think it their Duty to believe it, especially as Mr. Dunlap adds that all the People joined them on their Landing, that they were in full March for London, & that the next Post would bring Advice that the King was beheaded, & the Government overturned, to make Way for French Liberty & Equality. I wonder that your Citizens have not had a public Rejoicing on this Occasion, as they had when Citizen Genet informed them that the Duke of York was taken Prisoner & carried to Paris in an Iron Cage, to be exhibited to the Majesty of the People. Your Papers assure us that Congress rose on this Occasion in the midst of a Debate, so eager were they to congratulate M. Genet & one another on such agreeable News. I wonder that they have not done the same on Occasion of Mr. Dunlap's Intelligence. I dare say their Credulity, I mean that of the Majority, is not less than it was, when they are intending to go to War with all Europe, in Confidence of the Success of the French. I dare say Dr. Priestley now thinks himself a wise Man,

for refusing to be a Member of the French National Convention, when he sees what is likely to be the fate of his Friend Thomas Paine, who was elected at the same time. I see that he acknowledges, in a Letter to a Friend in Georgia, that he must now augur ill of the French Revolution, when so many of his Friends have been ruined by it. His

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three Sons, who were settled in France, are now come over to America, finding that French Liberty & Equality is too meagre a Diet for English Stomachs. And the same seems to be the Opinion of your Neighbour Dr. Oswald, who altho' he declares that the French were perfectly happy in their Liberty & Equality, yet found himself too happy to be able to live among them. Some of my Acquaintances in Scotland & England who were great Admirers of the French Revolution, made the same Experiment with the like Success, as a few Months convinced them that their happiness in France was too great to be endured, so that they soon returned to Great Britain, & none more quickly than Mr. Coke the Methodist Bishop, who after going over the Channel to Normandy, found that the French were so stupid a People, that they did not understand one Word of English, & came home in Disgust. I believe that even the Members of the Democratic Society, if they had a few Weeks Enjoyment of French Liberty & Equality along with their Republican Brethren in France, would be glad to get back to America, on finding that the happiness of French Citizens was too much for them to bear. I wish heartily that the whole of them were exported to that Country, which they celebrate so much, & that their Places here were filled by those unhappy Persons in France, whom their Countrymen are drowning by hundreds, in honour of Liberty and Equality. Mr. Madison has very faithfully acted the Part of a French Citizen, by doing his utmost to sacrifice his Country to France, & to make America a Municipality of the French Republic. I hope every body is now convinced that the National Assembly who adopted him as a French Citizen, have not been mistaken in their Man, & that he has proved himself an able & faithful Tool of the French Republic. Yet I question much whether Mr. Madison would adventure to go over to France, even on an Invitation by the Jacobin Club, or the National Convention. So little are the Public Professions of Men to be trusted, in our times. I wonder that your Citizens are not apprehensive that the English, after driving the French out of the West Indies, should come & burn their Playhouse, which would be the utter Destruction of Liberty, Independency & the Rights of Man. They talk indeed of fortifying their Ports, but they seem to have forgotten that the English took every one of their Sea-port Towns last War, with very little trouble or Danger, after they had been as strongly fortified as they could think of. And nothing hindered the English from burning all their Towns to the Grounds except their own Will, & the Expectations they had of adding them to the British Dominions. But it is not to be expected that that this will restrain them, if they make War with us as a foreign Nation. I heartily wish that the Democratic Society would think how they are to get out of the War, before they engage in it, for if they hardly got the better of England alone, when they had all the rest of Europe on their Side, how can they hope for Success when they are to engage all the Powers of Europe in Conjunction with England, without any Allies, except the French, who can not defend their own islands, much less their Allies? Wars are commonly made by Cowards, but require brave Men to carry them on. If one did not believe that the Lord reigneth, even in the Raging of the Sea & the Tumult of the People, we might well despair in such a Situation as the present. It is time for the Lord's People, instead of differing with one another, to unite in praying for this poor, infatuated & sinful Land, which seems to be destined to Destruction & Desolation,

by the folly, Pride, & Madness of its People, unless he interposes to protect it in an extraordinary Manner. I ever am, with sincere Esteem,

Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant,

Chas. Nisbet.

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P. S. As I know not when I may find an Opportunity of Conveyance, I will add a few thoughts from the fulness of my heart, being in very much Anxiety for the Peace of this poor Country, altho' I believe that my Neighbours reckon me an Enemy to it, merely because I would not wish to see it become a French Colony. It is curious to observe the Revolutions of human Prejudices, & how ready Men are to pass from one Extreme to the direct contrary. For these two hundred Years past, it was universally believed, not only in Great Britain & this Country, but in most Parts of Europe, that the French were Enemies to Liberty, insidious, treacherous, & dangerous to other Nations, & ambitious of Universal Monarchy, altho' their Interferences with the Affairs of other Nations were always covered with some decent Pretence. And now when the French have declared War against all other Nations, except America, which scarcely deserves the Name of a Nation as yet, & when they have exceeded the Barbarity of Goths, Vandals & Indians, by their Cruelties & Rapine in their own Country, as well as in Germany, Flanders & Savoy, when they have resolved to destroy all the existent Governments in the World, they are celebrated & cried up by Americans & by some degenerate Englishmen, as the Patrons of Liberty & the Friends of Mankind, while at the same time the History of the World does not contain any Example of Despotism & Tyranny as they are every day exercising over their poor Countrymen, & over all that have fallen into their Power. Shall we say then that the People of New York, or the Americans in general, are out of their Senses? This would be too favourable & too charitable a Construction of their Conduct. It is more likely that they are infatuated by the just Judgment of God, for their Ingratitude, & for the bad Use that they have made of their Liberty. Nothing at least is more evident in the History of Mankind, than that God often makes their own Wickedness to correct them, & punishes them by the hands of those in whom they put their Trust. The French were the Instruments in the hand of Providence in setting up the United States, & I am afraid that they will likewise be the Instruments in pulling them down, on Account of their Ingratitude & Contempt of God, their supreme Benefactor & Deliverer. The Jews were prone to Idolatry, & fond of imitating the Manners of the heathens. God sold them into the hands of those whom they imitated, & at last scattered them among the Heathen. We have been fond of imitating the Manners of the French, particularly their Atheism, Infidelity & Contempt of Religion. God seems now to be making Use of our sinful Attachment to these Barbarians, to dash us in Pieces against the combined Powers of Europe. For our People must not imagine that they will have to do with the English alone, tho' they by themselves are far too strong for us, but they may be assured that the other Allied Powers will make a Common Cause of it, & will think it their Interest to Suppress those who wish to support the Dregs & Excrements of the French Nation, & to set up them as the Tyrants of Europe & all the World. And they must not imagine that the English will proceed against them as they did formerly, by sending Armies to penetrate into the Country, which they may have the Opportunity of engaging, or wearying out by hopeless

Pursuits. They have more Reason to expect that their Sea-port Towns will be burnt, & their frontiers wasted by Irruptions from Canada, & that their Communication with all the World will be out off by the Fleets of England, Spain & Holland, who can easily block up their Harbours, & seize every Vessel that ventures out to Sea, either on this Side the Atlantic, or in Europe, where they will not have any friendly Port to run to, except those of the French where they can get nothing but Liberty, Equality, Assignats & Guillotines, which are now the only Manufactures of that Country. If God had not in Vengeance deprived the greatest Number of our People of their Senses, do you think that they would not be sensible that Nature & Necessity makes them dependant on England for their Clothing, & that without English Manufactures they would soon be reduced to the Condition of naked Savages? as it is well known that there is not as much Wool Industry in America, as would furnish every one of its Citizens with a Cap of Liberty, leaving all the rest of their Bodies bare to the Impression of the Elements. So that we would be much worse provided than the Sans Culotes or Tatter-de-millions of France. For if you would look on the proud Democrates & Roarers for War, you would see that there was not a Thread on their backs that was not spun in England,

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& if you were to enquire farther, you would probably find that all their Cloaths were unpaid for, to the Merchants of England, yet these are the Men who would persuade us that England is dependent on us, and that we need nothing from abroad except Snuff-boxes, Ribbons, Frogs & wooden Shoes, which we may be furnished with from France, & get great Quantities of Atheism, Liberty & Equality in to the Bargain. I know not what Providence intends to do with the People of this Country, but if it were intended that we should be ruined, no other Symptoms of this could be expected, than those which appear at present. Pray are there any with you that seem to be sensible of our Danger, or properly affected by it? I can hear of none here, & see no Symptoms of Rationality except in the Speeches of some Members of Congress, who are branded & proscribed by the Multitude, as Men under the Influence of Great Britain. I see that the President has communicated a Letter to Congress, by which it appears that the French have been guilty of plundering & taking our Vessels as well as the English, & that equal Oppression is exercised in their Admiralty Courts, but it seems that our People are perfectly contented to be plundered, provided that they are plundered by the Friends of Liberty & Equality, which is strange enough. At the same time if the English Fleet should pay a Visit to our Harbours, to pass the Hurricane Months, it is probable that most of our Swaggerers & Roarers for War, would turn Quakers on that Occasion, notwithstanding the Noise that they make at the present. I observe that the President is much abused in Bache's Paper for his Proclamation in favour of Neutrality, & that Mr. Madison & M. Genet have ruined his Influence among the People. The Democratical Societies are now likely to have the sole Influence, & the Members of Congress are now at Leisure to attend the Playhouse for the Benefit of their Souls, as all their worldly Concerns are likely to be taken out of their hands by the Democratical Societies, who call themselves the People. The Introduction of clapping into the Galleries of Congress, has it seems been discouraged in the first instance, but as it is a French Custom, it must come in sooner or later, to put our People on an Equality with their Republican Brethren in France. And I hear that it has been already proposed in some of the Meetings of the Merchants, that the People should act by themselves, & revenge their own Injuries, independent of the Government. And altho' this too was discouraged at first, yet if it be publickly recommended by the Democratical Society, who

have already adopted the Principle, it may be heard with more favour on another Occasion. I would be much obliged to you if you would write me your best Intelligence with Regard to the Probability of Peace or War. I can not now expect any more Letters from Scotland, & if you find no Conveyance for the Letter that is sent herewith, you may return it, or keep it till I call for it. At the same time it is very uncertain whether it may be safe for me, or in my Power, to visit your City during the Vacation in May next. You know my Inclinations, but at any Rate it would be a great Favour, if you could find time to write me by any Opportunity you can find, as soon as convenient.

C. N.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, April 23^d 1794.

I have just now read over your *Prophetic Conjectures*, &c. Some things in them are striking, such as that which is attributed to Mr. Love, altho' you do not tell us whether it is extracted from his own Book, or from Mr. Toplady's History, others are obscure & indefinite, but every Eye must be turned to the great Confusions & Desolations that are now going on in the World. I am sorry to see that America is courting a Share of those Calamities which seem to be fast coming on the World, & I fear that her Share will not be a small one. The breaking up all Correspondence with Great Britain appears to me to be the fore-runner of a War with all Europe, and what may be expected from this, it is needless to say. Mr. Jay will only go to London to be laugh'd at, as the Resolves of Congress which he must carry with him, leave nothing in his Power, except to declare War. Congress seem now to have told the English, that they must endeavour to take the Remainder of our Ships, if they ever expect Payment of the Millions that we owe them, & I make no Doubt that they will take the Hint & proceed accordingly. The Algerines despise our Negotiations, & the French & Spaniards capture our Vessels. And our acknowledging ourselves to be Allies of France has given too good a Handle to the combined Powers to treat us as Enemies. For by the acknowledged Law of Nations, the Ally of an Enemy is an Enemy, whence it is usual in all Declarations of War to add the Allies of those Powers against whom it was declared. The ambiguous Conduct of our Government in pretending Neutrality, while they considered that they were the Allies of one of the Parties at War, has been the Cause of that hostile Conduct of the combined Powers, at which we now pretend to be so much surpris'd, — But it was the utmost folly in us to imagine that the combined Powers would allow us to carry on the French Trade from their Islands, which was permitted to none except their own Citizens, in time of Peace, after France had declared War against them. We are now caught in our own Net, as the combined Powers must easily see through our Designs, & be convinced that we had actually taken a Side, under the Mask of a pretended Neutrality. And the general Spirit of the Country, as well as the Proposals & Speeches in Congress, have made this but too manifest. We must now stand to our foolish Choice, as the combined Powers will make it a common Cause with the English. The Wisdom of our Rulers has now shut all the Ports of Europe against our Vessels, except those of France, where they are as liable to be taken as elsewhere. It is pity that they can think of nothing except increasing the Losses to

Disasters of their Countrymen. In the last War we had all Europe on our Side, except England, & could derive Supplies from many Quarters. Now we may expect to have all Europe against us, & must depend only on the Protection of French Atheists & Assassins, who are not able to protect their own West India Settlements. Foreign Goods, which we can not subsist without, must now rise to an enormous Price, & our own Produce must consume in our hands. One hundred thousand Men may be said to have received Sentence of Death by the late Resolutions of Congress, & all our Seaport Towns may be soon laid in Ashes, in Spite of France & the Democratic Society, for I do not think that any one of them, nor of the Members of Congress who have been so loud for War, will ever put their Hands to a Musket for the Defence of their Country. Wars, which are fatal to brave Men, are commonly made by Cowards & Babblers. If an English Fleet come on our Coasts this Summer, as is reported, we will see what a figure the Majesty of the People will make on that Occasion, & what Defence they are capable of making. All our Sea-ports except Boston & Baltimore, were taken successively by the English during last War, when they were as strongly fortified as we could think of, & they might have burnt every one of them to the Ground, if they had pleased, & had they not expected to keep Possession of them. But we can not expect that they will be restrained by this Consideration when they make War against us as a Foreign Power & an Ally of France. But perhaps our People imagine that they will be frightened by the Resolutions of the Democratic Society. If they do so, they will be mistaken. It is mournful to observe that a new Country which was beginning to thrive & to rise into Importance, will soon see its Improvement retarded for Ages, if its Independence likewise is not lost, by the Folly & Wickedness of its own Citizens. I dread the Ruin of our Federal Government, before it come to have any Energy, as the Object of the Democratic Societies is evidently to destroy the Authority of Congress, & to render it subject to the Mob, like the National Convention of France. We are threatened with an intestine, as well as with a foreign War. What of our Trade was not ruined by the English, we have ruined ourselves, by taking a sure Method to render all the combined Powers our Enemies. We are gravely advised in our Newspapers to encourage home Manufactures, altho' we have neither Hands nor Materials for that Purpose, and before the 80,000 Militia are raised, for fighting the Battles of France in America, the Wages of Labourers & Tradesmen must rise to an enormous Height. Emigrations from Ireland have proved a

considerable Recruit to our Population, but War must stop the Source of Emigration, both from Ireland & Germany. Your Papers inform us that we have now got a fresh Burden of French Emigrants, viz. Citizen Rochambeau & his Garrison from Martinico, altho the Fugitives from St. Domingo are already a heavy Burden, as they consist of People who have been accustomed to live in luxury without Industry. None of them that I hear of have accepted of a Passage to France, which was offered them by the Ambassador. The Wrath of God against the present Generation, seems to be very great, & the Causes of it are but too visible. Pride & fulness of Bread, which was the Sin of Sodom, is likewise ours. No Man repents him of his Iniquity, or says, What have I done? I hear that your City is now as thoughtless & wicked, as before its late awful Visitation, & I hear of no Reformation in the Country, which commonly borrows its Manners from the City. — I hope that there are now no Remains of the Infection among you, but what does that signify, when there is so much of the Infection of Sin? We are rioting & bullying, when we are on the very Eve of War & Desolation. — Divine Ordinances are despised, the Sabbath is little regarded, & the French Atheists who have formally abolished it, are magnified every where among us. The Scriptures are not read, or only read for the Purpose of Jestling & Objection. The Influence of Religion on moral Conduct is denied or depreciated, & all Religions are reckoned alike useless to Society. I have some thoughts of seeing you in the middle of this Month, if God please, & if the State of my own Health & that of my family permit, but I would wish to hear first that your City is in a healthy State. My Daughter was safely delivered of a second Daughter here on the 6th inst. & continues in a good ^{we} Way of Recovery. The Weather here has been cold & dry for some time past, but ^{we} had some Rain two Days ago. Our People are very eager for War, & have no doubt of being able to compel the Combined Powers to submit to Madison's Proposals, but I believe that they will not willingly pay a Sixpence of Taxes to support the War. Indeed they have little to give, if their Debts were paid, but paying Debts is now out of Fashion. I am with Esteem,

P. S.

Dear Sir,

As I must now think no more of foreign Letters, Your very humble Servant
be so good as put the two inclosed, into
your Post Office.

C. H.

Chas. Nisbet.

Carlisle, April 23d 1794.

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English Fleet come on our Coasts this Summer, as is reported, we will see what a figure the Majesty of the People will make on that Occasion, & what Defence they are capable of making. All our Sea-ports except Boston & Baltimore, weretaken successively by the English during last War, when they were as strongly fortified as we could think of, & they might have burnt every one of them to the Ground, if they had pleased, & had they not expected to keep possession of them. But we can not expect that they will be restrained by this Consideration when they make War against us as a Foreign Power & an Ally of France. But perhaps our People imagine that they will be frightened by the Resolutions of the Democratic Society. If they do so, they will be mistaken. It is mournful to observe that a new Country which was beginning to thrive & to rise into Importance, will soon see its Improvement retarded for Ages, if its Independence likewise is not lost, by the Folly & Wickedness of its own Citizens. I dread the Ruin of our Federal Government, before it come to have any Energy, as the Object of the Democratic Societies is evidently to destroy the Authority of Congress, & to render it subject to the Mob, like the National Convention of France. We are threatened with an intessine, as well as with a foreign War. What of our Trade was not ruined by the English, we have ruined ourselves, by taking a sure Method to render all the combined Powers our Enemies. We are gravely advised in our Newspapers to encourage home Manufactures, altho' we have neither Hands nor Materials for that Purpose, and before the 80,000 Militia are raised, for fighting the Battles of France in America, the Wages of Labourers & Tradesmen must rise to an enormous Height. Emigrations from Ireland have proved a

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considerable Recruit to our Population, but War must stop the Source of Emigration, both from Ireland & Germany. Your Papers Inform us that we have now got a fresh Burden of French Emigrants, viz. Citizen Rochambeau & his Garrison from Martinico, altho the Fugitives from St. Domingo are already a heavy Burden, as they consist of People who have been accustomed to live in Luxury without Industry. None of them that I hear of have accepted of a Passage to France, which was offered them by the Ambassador. The Wrath of God against the present Generation, seems to be very great, & the Causes of it are but too visible. Pride & fulness of Bread, which was the Sin of Sodom, is likewise ours. No Man repents him of his Iniquity, or says, What have I done? I hear that your City is now as thoughtless & wicked, as before its late awful Visitation, & I hear of no Reformation in the Country, which commonly borrows it Manners from the City. I hope that there are now no Remains of the Infection among you, but what does that signify, when there is so much of the Infection of Sin? We are rioting & bullying, when we are on the Very Eve of War & Desolation. Divine Ordinances are despised, the Sabbath is little regarded, & the French Atheists who have formally abolished it, are magnified every where among us. The Scriptures are not read, or only read for the Purpose of Jesting & Objection. The Influence of Religion on moral Conduct is denied or depreiated, & all Religions are reckoned alike useless to Society. I have some thoughts of seeing you in the middle of this Month, if God pleases, & if the State of my own Health & that of my family permit, but I would wish to hear first that your City is in a healthy State. My Daughter was safely delivered of a second Daughter here on the 6th cur & continues in a good Way of Recovery. The Weather here has been cold & dry for some time past, but we had some Rain two Days ago. Our People are very eager for War, & have no doubt of being able to compel the Combined Powers to submit to Madison's Proposals, but I believe that they will not willingly pay a Sixpence of Taxes to support

the War. Indeed they have little to give, if their Debts were paid, but paying Debts is now out of Fashion. I am with Esteem,

Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant

Chas. Nisbet.

P. S. As I must now think no more of foreign Letters, be so good as put the two inclosed, into your Post Office.

C. N.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, 29th July, 1794.

I am always giving you Trouble, when I have an Opportunity, At present I give you the Trouble of four Letters for Scotland, which I hope you may yet have the Opportunity of forwarding by a late Conveyance. As I see that you are one of the Persons who take in Subscriptions for the American Gazetteer, I commission you to put down my Name on the List, or to order a Copy more for yourself, than you intended. I hope that Government will be ready to yield their Places to the New Revolutionary & provisional Government which is now set up in the Western Counties, of which you must have heard something before this time. I was going to say that I hoped that Government would take proper Measures for preventing the Impetation of the Yellow fever, when hearing suddenly that a new Revolutionary Government was set up in the Western Counties, this gave a quite different Turn to my Thoughts. The Majesty of the Sovereign People has now arisen in a Mass, in the Counties of Washington, Allegany, Westmoreland & Bedford, & being animated with the purest Principles of Liberty, lately imported from France by the Democratical Society, they have resolved to resist Congress & the Excise Act, & to destroy all its Works by fire Rapine & Massacre, & other constitutional Methods common in Republics, having begun their Campaign with burning the House, Barn & Fences of General Neville, since which time they have prevented the Publication of the Pittsburg Gazette, in order to show their Zeal for the Liberty of the Press, & the Revolutionary Convention next appointed a Committee of public Safety, for robbing the Post at Greensburgh which was executed accordingly. These enlightened Citizens, who are too knowing to be led any longer by Monarchical & Aristocratical Prejudices, have discovered by the Help of their Leaders, that it is mere Slavery, & unworthy of the Majesty of the Sovereign People, to be subject to the Laws made by their own Representatives,

who are only the servants of the People, having elected a Revolutionary Convention & being now in Possession of the Letters of sundry Enemies of Liberty, by the patriotic Measure of robbing the Post, will have an Opportunity when these Letters are opened by the Committee of public Safety, & laid before the Revolutionary Convention, of directing the Vengeance of the People against the Enemies of Liberty, who will thus be convicted by their own Letters, & condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal, & executed as soon as a Guillotine can be got ready for the Purpose, and their Effects will be either destroyed, or confiscated to the Revolutionary Treasury.

The Convention have offered the Honours of the Sitting, to sundry in the neighbouring Counties of Virginia, & it is expected that the same Honours will be offered to sundry of the Counties of this State, who will readily accept of them. The Convention had two Designs in View, by sealing up the Posts at Pittsburgh, & robbing the Post, both of which were highly patriotic, Revolutionary & Republican; first to prevent any Account of their Proceedings from reaching the Aristocrats to the Eastward, & secondly because they knew that their Proceedings in the Defence of their Liberty, i.e. their Whiskey, will be so very sublime, that no Eloquence or Description whatever could be capable of doing them Justice. These early Measures of the Convention & their Committee of public Safety, afford abundant Proofs of that consummate Wisdom, with which their Affairs have been conducted, & encourage Expectation of the most brilliant Successes to their Armies, which are supposed to be already in Motion. We expect every Day to hear that all the Provisions, Arms, Ammunition & Militia of this County are put in Requisition, for the Use of the Revolutionary Army, & we know not how soon they may march to Philadelphia, in order to take Possession of the Government in the Name of the Sovereign People. I suppose that your Citizens will make no Resistance

as it is allowed that all Power is in the People, & they are only coming to claim it, after having suffered it too long to be exercised by their Servants. Your Democratic Society will no doubt take Care to apprehend all Aristocrats & suspected Persons & to commit them to Prison, in order to be tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal, which, I suppose, during the Continuance of the Provisional Government, will consist of the Members of the Democratic Society. Citizen Pichegru, or the Person who commands the Grand Revolutionary Army of the East, we do not yet know his Name, will lodge no Doubt in the House lately occupied by the President, as the Convention will not allow him to return to your City, unless it is to resign, for I suppose it is not intended that the Government should any longer be Federal, but one & indivisible. It may perhaps occasion some Confusion in our News Papers, that the French begin their Year on the 3^d of September, whereas we must begin our on the 14th July, the Date of the Revolution, unless the Convention shall think proper to begin it at the time of their arrival at Philadelphia. It is a Loss to you that Mr. Bache is a Member of the Democratical Society, as otherwise you might have had a Chance of being Printer to the Convention, & they can not with Decency avoid offering Dr. Priestley the Office of Chaplain, if such Office shall be thought proper to be continued, in an Age so enlightened as the present. I am, with Esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

Chas. Mitchell.

Carlisle, 29th July, 1794.

Dear Sir,

I am always giving you Trouble, when I have an Opportunity. At present I give you the Trouble of four Letters for Scotland, which I hope you may yet have the Opportunity of forwarding by a safe Conveyance. As I see that you are one of the Persons who take in Subscriptions for the American Gazetteer, I commission you to put down my Name on the List, or to order a Copy more for yourself, than you intended. I hope that Government will be ready to yield their Places to the New Revolutionary & provisional Government which is now set up in the Western Counties, of which you must have heard something before this time. I was going to say that I hoped that Government would take proper Measures for preventing the Importation of the Yellow fever, when hearing suddenly that a new Revolutionary Government was set up in the Western Counties, this gave a quite different Turn to my Thoughts. The Majesty of the Sovereign People has now arisen in a Mass, in the Counties of Washington, Allegany, Westmoreland & Bedford, & being animated with the purest Principles of Liberty, lately imported from France by the Democratical Society, they have resolved to resist Congress & the Excise Act, & to destroy all its Abettors by fire Rapine & Massacre, & other constitutional Methods common in Republics, having begun their Campaign with burning the House, Barn & Fences of General Neville, since which time they have prevented the Publication of the Pittsburgh Gazette, in order to show their Zeal for the Liberty of the Press, & the Revolutionary Convention next appointed a Committee of public Safety, for robbing the Post at Greensburgh which was executed accordingly. These enlightened Citizens, who are too knowing to be led any longer by Monarchical & Aristocratical Prejudices, have discovered by the Help of their Leaders, that it is mere Slavery, & unworthy of the Majesty of the Sovereign People, to be subject to the Laws made by their own Representatives,

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Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant,

Chas. Nisbet.

Dear Sir,

Carlisle, 14th Nov. 1794.

I was favoured with your last in due time, but sundry Disappointments & Delays in preparing my Son for his Journey, have hitherto hitherto prevented his setting out, & we are still uncertain whether the Stage will come up from Harrisburgh to morrow, as it is not to come this length during the Winter. We have had a heavy fall of Snow here all this Day, which makes us feel much for the Army. My Son will take a Trial with you for a Quarter, tho' I hope he will make no Difficulty of continuing. It will be good for him to be employed, & he is able enough to work hard on Occasion, & ought not to be excused from it. I hope you will take Care to give him sufficient Employment, which will do him great Service. Idleness is most tormenting, as well as dangerous to Youth, & a Succession of Employments, with moderate Intervals of Rest & Refreshment, is the Destination of Nature. I hope he will avoid evil Company, but constant Employment is the best Antidote against both evil Company & evil Thoughts. When he has Leisure he ought to employ it in reading good Books, which he will have continually in his Eye. I have told him, that if I were at Liberty to chuse my Situation, I would envy him his Place, as to please one reasonable Man who is capable of instructing him, is much easier than to please a whimsical & unreasonable Corporation, who are neither capable of instructing, nor of being instructed, which I must endeavour every Day, without the least hopes of being able to succeed. I am still exposed to private Calumny & Persecution, & chiefly by those who ought to be my Patrons & Defenders. I have some hopes however, that the Formant that must soon arise in our Legislatures, if it is not already begun, may give them Employment, & perhaps divert them for a while, from giving me Uneasiness. I confess I have little hope of the Success of Mr. May's Negotiations, & I am sure that the Issue of them will not be agreeable to the Inclinations of the People of this Country. No Doubt a War with Great Britain will be proposed, but two Questions ought first to be determined, neither of which I am persuaded will ever fall under the Deliberation of Congress; first whether has America been injured by Great Britain? 2^dly whether we are able to procure Indemnification by War? Not the first surely, as Congress have determined it already; nor yet the Second, as we have such a Confidence in our own Strength, & in the Success of the French, that a Deliberation on this Question would be reckoned absurd. I fear therefore that a War will be decreed in a Moment, immediately on hearing of Mr. May's Disappointment, in the same Manner as the French Convention decreed to conquer all the World, & subject all Nations to their Republic. But I am afraid that there will be some Debate & Difficulty, with Respect to Ways & Means. It is evident that the People will not consent to pay any more Taxes, & perhaps there will be a great Struggle to abolish the Excise Act. We see that the Sovereign People of the West have been able to put the Government to a most enormous Expence, without any Hurt to themselves, and they may do the same thing over again as often as they please. We run a great Risk of being thrown into the same Confusions that have so long desolated France, as the same wild & insidious Doctrines that gave Rise to these, are current among us, & daily increasing thro' the Influence of the Democratic Societies. I have seen Paine's Age of Reason. It is a most stupid, ignorant & absurd Performance, but exactly suited to the Corruptions of human Nature. I hear already, that some who have professed themselves Presbyterians hitherto, have declared their Assent to every Word of it, & adopted it as their Creed. I suppose that Priestley's Answer will be a very weak one, & yield up more than half of the Points in Question. But none of the Answers will

be read by those who have most Need of them. I hope this cold frosty Weather has exterminated the Remains of the yellow fever in your City. The Party that were so zealous for War last Session, will perhaps have begun their Bantering, tho' from what has happened I am still more of Opinion, that a Revolutionary War at home is their principal Object, for they are not foolish enough to believe that we will be able to conquer Great Britain & her West India Islands, with the four Frigates that are to be built. But they know that a War is most convenient for overturning a Government that has not a single Man or a single Shilling to carry it on, & that has to do with a Sovereign People who will not suffer any more Taxes to be imposed on them. But this will never occur to our wise Men till it is too late, as I am afraid they will declare War before they count the Cost, or consider how it is to be supported. I am with Esteem,

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Your very humble Servant

Cha. Nisbet.

Carlisle, 14th Novr. 1794.

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Dear Sir,
Your very humble Servant

Chas. Nisbet.

Carlisle, 13th February, 1795.

Dear Sir,

I was favoured with yours of the 3^d cur.^l by somebody, as I can not learn who brought it, & am much obliged to you for the Sermon & Intelligence you sent me. My Toothach was gone some time ago, but had it continued, the Bone to gnaw, would have been a sovereign Medicine, I mean to me, for I think it has given a violent Toothach to many People here, who have been gnawing at it, as they seem to be very uneasy, capricious & peevish since its Publication, as is commonly the Case with those who have got the Tooth-ach. A new Weekly Paper called the Telegraphic, is now begun here, so that you ought not to be surpris'd if you should soon hear of Liberty-Poles & Insurrections in this County, as our worthy Countryman Mr Peterkin is to have the chief Direction of it. Your City will soon be enlightened, or rather the Light that we receive from your Democratic Society, will be strongly reflected from this Place, with such Additions as may be expected from the Author of "the Government of nature delineated." We are to have a Thanksgiving Day next Week, but I am afraid it will be ill kept here as most People are so far from thinking that they have any Mercies to be thankful for, ^{that they} fearfully think that they have a God to thank, & imagine that they are enslaved, & all their Rights taken from them, because they are not all Magistrates, Judges & Members of Congress. They likewise think that our Liberties are betrayed by Mr. Jay's Treaty with Great Britain, whereby they are deprived of an Opportunity

assisting their Allies in enriching themselves with the Spoils of Great Britain. I suppose that the Mads have begun to compose their Speeches for the New Congress, & that some of them have already gone thro' two or three Editions. There seems to be no Prospect of Peace in Europe, & I will always be apprehensive of a Civil War here, till Peace is restored there. Our People are in hopes of hearing soon, that their Allies the Dutch are compleatly subdued & plundered by the French. And who would not be Allies to so grateful a People? Indeed they seem to be as thankful to the Dutch, as they were to the late King of France, who raised them from nothing. American Gratitude seems to consist, not in being thankful to our Benefactors, but to the Murderers & Destroyers of our Benefactors. Is not this a most enlightened Age? If the Dutch are enslaved by the Sans Culottes, may it not be probable, that before the Western Posts are given up, the Citizens of Holland may be rejoicing at the Successes of the French in America? If our People had Sense, they would be much more afraid of the Successes of a Mob of cruel & merciless Atheists, than of the Crusade of Kings, about which they have prayed & cursed so much of late. The Hymn to the Guillotine has been published in the first Number of the Telegrapher, as a Specimen of the Piety & Humanity of the Authors, & has no doubt been most devoutly sung in all true Republican families here, according to the pious Intention of Mr. Barlow the Reformer of Watts's Psalms, whose other Performances are sung in so many Congregations already. I am told that Mr. Lata in his Treatise, recommends to Ministers to manufacture Psalms for the Use of their Congregations. I think Mr. Barlow has set them

an example which it will be hard for them to imitate, & impossible to exceed. It can now no longer be called in Question, that the Moderns exceed the Antients in Poetry as well as in Philosophy & Religion, when we learn our Philosophy from a Quail-bird, & our Religion from a Hangman. From the Beginning it was not so, but our Age is an Age of Improvement. One thing, I think, ought to reconcile our Democrates to the Treaty with Great-Britain, viz. that it comprehends Botany Bay, where there are many true Friends of Liberty & Equality, whom all true Democrates ought always to revere. If Mr. Barlow could have known on the 4th of July that Robespierre was to be executed for a Tyrant, for having belioved a God & a Providence, he would have kept out the first Word of his Hymn, which is not now used in France, or substituted the Word Liberty or Sovereign People, in its Place. But alas! while we study to be in fashion, we know not what Changes the fashions are undergoing at the time. Mr. Barlow has been as unfortunate as his fellow-Labourer Mr. Paine, who dedicated the first Part of his Rights of Man to the Marquis de La Fayette, who was shortly after excommunicated by the Sovereign People, & obliged to fly from Liberty to a Prison, with all his Rights in his Pocket. We are told that he has escaped, but he may soon be caught again. & he would not be safe, even in America, from the Repentment of the Sans Culotes & by a late Act of Congress, he must renounce his Nobility, before he can acquire the Rights of a Citizen. I ever am, with Esteem,

Dear Sir, your very humble Servant,

Cha. Nisbet.

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