D/JQA/36 April 1829 Timothy Giblin

Meridian Hill. Washington. Latitude 38:55:38. Longitude West from Greenwich 76:56:59.

Wednesday 1. April 1829.

V:15.

My Diary will henceforth be a record of thoughts rather than of facts— This day was a day of Showers—and in the Evening there was a long, Heavy Storm of Thunder, Lightening Rain and Hail— Mr Persico was here all the morning, and took a final sitting for the mould of my Bust in clay— I walked an hour before dinner—and passed the remainder of the day and Evening with my family, or in my study reading and writing. I was suffering with a rhumatic head-ache, which dulled my faculties, and prevented me from finishing my Letter to Governor Barbour; and also from making much progress in my Reply to the Appeal of the Boston confederates— I read two or three Chapters of Pelham, among which that containing the Character of Christopher Clutterbuck, the twin brother as the author acknowledges of Dominie Sampson; but he has given Christopher a Shrew and Slattern for a wife, and has degraded the Classical Studies, by representing them as destructive of health and of life, and as leading to no more useful result, than a voluminous Dissertation upon the Greek participle; with a self-conceit of the writer, as if it placed him on a level with Newton. Now that the tendency of Classical Studies, may be to absorb too large a portion of the mind, in the contemplation of language, may be true—but it is not necessary— The most important and laborious duty of a Protestant divine is the composition of Sermons; the weekly Instruction in Religion and Morality, of which he is the dispenser to his flock— To qualify him for the performance of this duty, Classical learning is no useless lumber— It is no unprofitable study to him; that which enables him to read the Scriptures in their original Languages—which acquaints him with the writings of the fathers—which makes him familiar with the Philosophers, the Poets, the Historians, the Orators of Greece and Rome— If the teacher of Religion, can use the knowledge of the language in which Christ spoke, and his apostles wrote to no better purpose than to compose a Dissertation upon the Greek participle; if the teacher of morals, can draw no available funds, from the language of Pythagoras and Plato: if the Christian Orator can draw no shaft from the quivers of Aristotle and Quinctilian, or of Demosthenes and Cicero; the fault is surely not in his studies— If his Lamp affords no light, it is not for lack of Oil, but because he hides it under a bushel.— I began also to read the eleventh Philippic of Cicero.

2. V:15. Thursday.

Cloudy Day. From three to five I rode my horse the ten mile square; by the College, the Race ground, S. H. Smith’s, the Capitol Hill and the Pennsylvania Avenue— This is my favourite ride; so that I now scarcely ever take any other— The reasons for which are, that is just of the suitable length for a two hours ride— That I return, not by the same road that I go out— That the road itself is good—and that it gives an extensive prospect, opening at different places in various aspects— And then there is the natural propensity of treading over the same ground that one has trodden before— I observe this day almost the first appearances of vegetation— Spots of verdure, colouring upon the ground— But my mood was not pensive— At home, I continued writing upon my reply to the Appeal— Finished a Letter to Governor Barbour— Read Sections 6–10. of the eleventh Philippic; and a very few Chapters of Pelham— The notes are changed to Tragic— The Chapter giving the account of the murder of Sir John Tyrrell, is written with great powers of description both of the Scenes of nature, and of the dark passions of the Soul. Walter Scott is the founder of this School of writing, and the author of Pelham, is an imitator not inferior to his original— There is more of nature {{pagebreak}}in the characters, more of variety in the dialogue; less of pedantry in the discourses and more frequent transitions in the narrative than in Scott— There is also more invention, the basis of Scott’s novels being historical; and this being altogether fictitious— All writing for the Public should have some moral purpose— This indeed is the intended purpose of most if not of all of the novels of the present age— There is a refinement of delicacy in them which renders them more suitable for youth, but which takes from their merit as pictures of manners— Pelham goes to Paris—but he paints only Duchesses, and Gamblers—Salons and Boudoirs. In England it is the same— High Life in London, and Palaces in the Country. Almack’s, or Newmarket— Notwithstanding this, he gives great interest to the Story, and abounds with wit, though he has very little humour— Abigail S. Adams went again to spend a week or ten days at Judge Cranch’s.

3. V:30. Friday.

From three to five I rode my ten miles round; and the rest of the day was absorbed chiefly upon my reply to the appeal. I received a Letter from B. Romaine of New-York with 12 Copies of a pamphlet upon this same controversy, and a Letter from O. W. Treadwell at Baltimore, enclosing one from his female Correspondent; not yet signing her name, but he says he shall be at Gadsby's to morrow, and offers to deliver her communication to me in person— I finished reading the eleventh Philippic— Dolabella in concert with Mark Antony, had murdered treacherously, Trebonius at Smyrna, and made himself Master of the Province of Asia, which had been assigned by the Senate to Trebonius— The Senate had thereupon declared Dolabella, to be a public Enemy; and the question now was to whom the command should be given to prosecute the War against him— He advises giving it by decree to Cassius, who with Brutus had levied an Army in Greece and Asia without authority and this was accordingly done— The Anarchy which followed upon the Death of Julius Caesar, seems wonderful. The Conspirators do not appear to have made any arrangements for any subsequent movement— They seem to have thought there was nothing more for them to do. Nothing but to kill Caesar— Here we have Mark Antony, Lepidus, Octavius Caesar, Brutus Cassius, Trebonius, Dolabella and others all levying armies without regular authority. In this case the whole weight of the Oration is to dissuade the Senate from assigning the War against Dolabella to the Consuls— There is much oratory in the praise of Brutus and of Cassius— The fine Sentiments in this Oration are Section. 3. It is the duty of a wise man to premeditate every thing that can happen to him; to bear it with fortitude— There is more of wisdom in providing against the event: but not less of Spirit to bear it bravely if it happens— 4. For as much as the power of the soul exceeds that of the body insomuch the pains of the mind are severer than those of the body. 6. Whence you may judge that my differences are not with men, but with the Cause. 7. Dolabella himself is daring, rash, addicted to the gladiatorian form of Death. 11. In this great Revolution and perturbation of things, it is necessary, rather to yield to the times than to principles— Dolabella had been the husband of Cicero’s daughter Tullia. While I was riding this day I undertook to make a paraphrase of La Fontaine’s Fable of the Plague among the Beasts— I found it fell naturally into a ten lined Stanza; of which two were fashioned during my ride. Neither Tale nor Fable is usually written in that form the tendency of which is to too great stiffness for their light and airy composition— Read two Chapters only of Pelham

{{pagebreak}}4. V:15. Saturday

Van Buren— Martin

Hamilton— James A.

Warrington Lewis

Mrs Warrington

Raymond Daniel.

Treadwell Oliver O

Mr Van Buren, the new Secretary of State, paid me a morning visit with Mr Hamilton— Of the new Administration he is the only person who has shewn me this mark of common civility— General Jackson had received from me attentions of more than a common character—besides obligations of a much higher order, which at the time when they were rendered he had expressly acknowledged, and declared he would remember. All the members of his Administration have been with me upon terms of friendly acquaintance, and have repeatedly shared the hospitalities of my house— I never was indebted for a cup of cold water to any one of them; nor have I ever given to any one of them the slightest cause of Offence— They have all gradually withdrawn from all social intercourse with me—from the old impulse “odisse quem laeseris.” They hate the man they have wrong’d— Ingham is among the basest of my Slanderers— Branch and Berrien have been among the meanest of my persecutors in the Senate— Among them all there is not a man capable of a generous or liberal Sentiment towards an Adversary, excepting Eaton, and he is a man of indecently licentious life— They have made themselves my adversaries, solely for their own advancement, and have forfeited the characters of gentlemen, to indulge the bitterness of their self-stirred gall. Van Buren, by far the ablest man of them all, but wasting most of his ability upon more personal intrigues, retains the forms of civility; and pursues enemity as if he thought it might be one day his interest to seek friendship— His principles are all subordinate to his ambition, and he will always be of that doctrine upon which he shall see his way clear to rise— Our conversation was about the weather and the climate, and upon the negotiation with the Porte, which from a late paragraph in an English newspaper, I fear is broken off. Commodore and Mrs Warrington were here, and Mr Raymond of Baltimore, a writer upon Political Economy, and upon Politics— Ingenious but eccentric and extravagant— I rode my ten miles round, and while on my horse compos’d three Stanzas of my Fable. I had composed one at home this morning. On returning home I found Mr Treadwell at the house. and he delivered to me three Letters from Miss Whittlesey of Middletown, in Connecticut, the correspondent from whom I had received former Communications— I read half the twelfth Philippic of Cicero—and answered a Letter from J. Gosman Secretary of the Philoclean Society at Rutgers College, New Brunswick New-Jersey, accepting an appointment as an honorary member of that Society. The address to me of 3. March from Steubenville Ohio, was this day republished with my answer, in the National Journal. T. J. Hellen dined with us.

5. V:15. Sunday.

The morning was foul, and I rode to the Presbyterian Church, where I heard Mr Campbell preach from John 3.18.— “He that believeth not is condemned already”— This is a part of a verse which separated from its context bears a different sense from what it has, taken with the context— Mr Campbell considers unbelief as the great sin of the impenitent—and he thinks great numbers are unbelievers without being aware of it themselves— His Discourse which I think was not more than twenty minutes long consisted of an enumeration of all the causes of unbelief; and he particularly noticed the great delusion almost universal, of Sinners that they cannot controul their own belief— The doctrine is not congenial to my belief, and when I hear a very earnest oration, to show that which I do not believe, there is something irksome to hear it— I do suppose that thinking men cannot controul their belief; nor can I think them under a very heavy responsibility for a belief which I cannot command my {{pagebreak}}judgment to be satisfied. After the Service Mr Campbell gave notice of an Agreement by which the second Presbyterian Church, and that in F. Street under Dr Laurie, are to be united, and to form one Church— Dr Laurie to preach only on Sunday afternoons and Mr Campbell to perform all the others Services. Mr Campbell gave notice also that he was going this week a Journey, to be absent about a Month during which his pulpit would be supplied— I saw the President at Church—the first time I had seen him since the 4th. of March 1825— Coming out of the Church I met Mr Slade, who told me that the rumours of five dismissions from the Department of State of which he was one, were not yet made as had been reported— I walked home— I finished reading the twelfth Philippic of Cicero— It was upon a proposal that he himself should be sent upon a deputation with Publius Servilius to Mark Antony— The Argument is first against sending any deputation—secondly and specially against *his* being sent— Yet he finally concludes by saying that he will go, if he can with safety to his life— Much of the argument against his going is drawn from the personal danger to his life; and the picture that he draws of the danger of his situation even at Rome is terrific— He repeats however his lofty Sentiments of Liberty; and declares that his caution to preserve his own life, is only for the service that he may still render to his Country— I finished also the fable of the Plague in the Forest, an imitation of La Fontaine’s Animaux Malades de la Peste, of which I wrote this day five Stanzas.

6. V:15. Monday—

Persico Luigi

Fendall Philip R

Cushing Caleb.

Butler John

Hay. George

Hay Charles

Mr Persico came and cast the mould of the bust— He told me that he would come again in two or three days— Mr Fendall came out and I gave him five sheets of my Reply to the Appeal— I had a long conversation with him upon his projected history of my Administration; and upon my political Life— He has asked me repeatedly to furnish him some Notes for a preliminary political view of parties from the formation of our confederacy, which I have promised to give him; but which I have not yet had time to prepare— But he said he thought of making that the last Chapter, which he should write, which I told him I thought would be his best plan. He has not yet been dismissed from the Department of State, but expects it from day to day— He remarked upon the singularity of my fortune and history that I was perhaps the only man who had risen to the highest Office in the Union, by a course of action, independent of all parties— Mr Cushing of Newbury-Port was here—informed that he was going to Europe, intending a tour of two years in France and England; and asked me to give him Letters of introduction. This is a request always unpleasant to refuse, and seldom agreeable to comply with for persons who are totals Strangers— Mr Cushing is somewhat known as a public man; and was a tutor at Cambridge when my two elder Sons, were Students there— I have no other acquaintance with him— While I was President I declined giving Letters of Introduction to individuals; to which I made few exceptions— The Solicitations for them, are now coming upon me again, and I expect will prove very troublesome— I promised one however to Mr Cushing— Mr John Butler, grandson of the late Pierce Butler brought me a Letter from judge Hopkinson, and one to Mrs Adams to Miss Mease— He too is going to Europe with his family and judge Hopkinson asks Letters of introduction from me for him. He will call {{pagebreak}}here again— I walk’d to the Rockville Turnpike-road, and thence round the Square, returning by the Race-ground and the College. An hour and a quarter’s walk. I attempted to compose part of a Fable; but failed— There certainly are times and Seasons for composition more favourable than others— My fable of the Plague in the Forest came almost of itself; and this day what I did is fit only to burn— On returning home I found judge Hay, and his Son Charles—who has been dismissed from his Office as Chief Clerk of the Navy Department, at which they are both indignant— The judge says that he visited the President twice; and spoke to him of his anxiety for his Son— The General told him he must not believe rumours and reports— They were without foundation— No person would be removed from office, unless he had abused it for electioneering purposes. The judge said he told this afterwards the same day to a gentleman who snap’d his finger and thumb three times and said the Generals promises were worth that— Judge Hay and Persico, both spoke to me of my Letter to the New-Jersey Rahway Committee which is published both in the National Intelligencer, and Journal of this Morning— The judge said he would call and see me again and mentioned that, at the advice of Mr Rives, Mr Monroe was now intensely occupied upon a history of his own Times— That he had been employed some time on a Dissertation upon Government which nobody would read— He said that both Mr and Mrs Monroe, were very unwell; but that Mr Monroe spent too much of his time in writing. Also that he was much concerned about these removals from Office—for T. Swann—T. Ringgold, and S. L. Gouverneur— I read in the Evening 6 Sections of Cicero’s 13th. Philippic.

7. V:15. Tuesday.

Rush. Richard

Butler John

Mr Rush called upon me this morning, and gave me a small collection of Pamphlets chiefly of his own writing. Among them a collection of his Annual Reports on the finances An Article published in the Intelligencer upon the death of George Canning, and a character of John Randolph— He said he had now determined to go to England; to attempt making a loan for the three Corporations of the District, and expected to leave this City, to embark about the 16th. of this Month; but he seems apprehensive that the expectation of his Constituents here will be to obtain the loan at lower terms than 6 per Cent, which he thinks impossible and so do I. He mentioned also the publication of my answer to the New-Jersey Rahway Committee, and the remarks upon it which he had heard yesterday— He promised to call upon me again before his departure— I read this morning the seven numbers, signed One of the Convention, published in the National Intelligencer of January and February 1820. and also the eight numbers in answer to them signed Massachusetts, and written by Mr Bailey; both the series furnish ample materials for remark and commentary; and there are facts stated in Mr Bailey’s papers to which it will be necessary for me to refer. I think it was Boileau who boasted that he had taught Molière the art of rhyming with difficulty— All composition for the public should be laborious. Ajoutez quelquefois et souvent effacez— I can add much to the force of my reply, from ideas collected by the perusal of these papers. But in the manner in which I am treating the subject I fall into numerous repetitions— In argument, perhaps such repetitions are useful and even necessary. In history or biography they should be carefully avoided. Mr Bailey has clearly marked the three periods of the New England efforts to convene a Representative Assembly; and the occasions of the failures in the two first instances.— There is an abundance of vulnerable matter in the numbers of One of the Convention— The pains taken to obtain the consent of all the members of the Convention to his publications. The deposit with Gales and Seaton, of a certified copy of the Journal of the Convention, the incipient complaints of abandonment by the writers party and that others as bad as he, had been forgiven; meaning Rufus King.— Insinuations that he Otis had been over-persuaded to go to the Convention; and admissions that he had discovered {{pagebreak}}since, that these Conventions are very dangerous things, are all worthy of Note— The manifestations of public dissatisfaction at the appearance of those papers is very strong, and he finally desisted from the completion of the task he had undertaken, awed by the symptoms of impatience that they had excited— I rode before dinner the ten Miles-round; and composed a short fable imitated from La Fontaine’s Medecins Tant-pis and Tant-Mieux, a complete failure— All the wit of the original consists in the names of the two Doctors, which are not translatable— There is scarcely a single fable of La Fontaine, but has some exquisite expression so buried in the idiom of the French language that it cannot be rendered in any other— Mr Butler was here but I did not see him— I read six Sections of the 13th. Philippic

8. V:15. Wednesday.

Savage—

Whitaker

Mr. Whitaker was a Journeyman at Gales and Seaton’s printing office— By the loss of the printing for Congress which they have sustained, in these political vicissitudes, he has been thrown out of employment, and wants the assistance of a loan of 200 dollars payable in one and two years to make payment for a lot which he has purchased upon credit; and a house which he has been building upon it. Mr Savage is the Consul of the United States at Guatemala, lately returned from that Country, and recovering from a severe attack of fever and Ague— He is a native of Barnstable Massachusetts, and was a Citizen of Kentucky when appointed some years since to his Consulate— He paid me a morning visit, and is going to see his father at Barnstable— My wife wrote to our Son George, inviting him to come here, and accompany us home to Quincy— I took my ride at an earlier hour of the day than usual—from 2 to 4. and I wrote a Letter to Mr Oliver Wolcott. I continue writing also upon my Reply to the Appeal—and have been so scandalously abused and misrepresented, by so many men of influence and Power in this Country, that I find it impossible to pursue my own justification without the application of the Scourge to them— My attempt this day on La Fontaine’s Oak, and Willow failed, as had yesterday the Coach and the fly. La Fontaine varies continually the measure of his verse. There is only one of his Fables in Stanza’s— The Cock and the Pearl— Almost all are in lines of different length— Phaedrus is all in Pentameter— The narrative of Fables should approach as much as possible the Style of familiar Conversation; for which irregular verse is best adapted. La Fontaine mingles with this some splendid versification, and even lines of Sublime poetry and this is the perfection of Fable writing— The English fabulists Gay and Moore, wrote all their fables in one measure—couplets of eight syllables— These are not well suited to the high flights of poetical expression, nor to the familiarity of dialogue for comic humour. There are a few Fables of Peter Pindar, in the exact Style of La Fontaine, and I think them among the best in the Language.

9. V:15. Thursday.

Whitaker

Mr Whitaker was here again this morning, with two Notes and a Mortgage, drawn by Mr Hall; but which was deficient as Security to me. I mentioned to him an addition to it which would be necessary, and he took it away for amendment. There were two heavy thunder showers, with hail, one in the morning and the Evening; but between the two I took a ride of an hour and a half upon my horse; reaching home only five minutes before the violent thunder-gust came on. While riding I continued my essay upon La Fontaine’s Oak and Willow— Still a failure— Received and answered a Letter from Thomas Robbins, about writing a History of America— Received also a Letter from Charles Hammond of Cincinnati Ohio— Finished reading the 13th. and began the 14th. Philippic. {{pagebreak}}This is next to the second, perhaps the most remarkable of them all— The debate was upon a decree of the Senate, proposed, approving certain Acts of Sextus Pompeius the Son; and upon Letters from Lepidus recommending Peace with Mark Antony. The Argument of Cicero is, that peace with Antony is impossible— It begins with a beautiful encomium upon Peace, and expressions of abhorrence to civil War. But contends that Peace must be consistent with Liberty, and that the guilt of War is chargeable upon those who would reduce their Country to Servitude. He names Sylla, Marius, Cinna, and alludes without naming him to Julius Caesar— Half the Oration is devoted to an examination of a Letter from Antony to Hirtius and to Octavius Caesar, the whole of which Cicero reads and comments upon Sentence by Sentence— The Letter is well written, and shews the unfortunate position of all the parties who then supported the Cause of Liberty— The purpose which Antony declares is to punish the murderers of Julius Caesar— Hirtius was one of Caesar’s most devoted subordinate commanders. Octavius was his adopted Son— Decimus Brutus besieged by Antony in Mutina, was one of Julius Caesar’s assassins— Trebonius, put to death by Dolabella at Smyrna, was another, and Dolabella, decreed by the Senate to be a public enemy had been the Son in Law of Cicero. Thus Cicero was obliged to turn his invective against his own Son in Law; to justify the murder of Julius Caesar, and yet to load with praises and Honours Octavius Caesar, and the Consuls Hirtius and Pansa; while Antony to them appeared in the attitude of Avenger of the Death of their father and friend— His Letter which Hirtius had sent to Cicero sets off all these circumstances in a very striking manner, and is of itself sufficient to shew that the affair scarcely could terminate otherwise than it did; by the Triumvirate— Antony glories in the murder of Trebonius by Dolabella—offers Peace, if the troops of Decimus Brutus will surrender him up to be executed, and speaks with the most bitter and sneering rancour of Cicero— He reviles me, says the Orator as if his former reproaches had succeeded—but I will deliver him with the brand of foul and just reproache stamped upon him is the everlasting memory of mankind. There are several fine Sentiments expressed with great beauty, and a contrasted enumeration of individuals opposed to Antony, and of his partizans, in keen and indignant Irony. It is next to the second, the longest of the Philippics.

10. V. Friday.

Whitaker John T.

Connell— John.

Mr Whitaker came this Morning with his amended mortgage, which was executed, with his two Notes— Mr John Connell of Philadelphia was here. He has come upon the business of the Claims upon the Danish Government; in the prosecution of which he expects to embark shortly for Copenhagen— He mentioned that he had not seen Mr Van Buren, who had prepared Instructions to Mr Wheaton the Chargé d’Affaires in Denmark; but Connell thought them not sufficiently particular, and he shewed me a paper which he had written containing the particulars of the Instructions which he wished might be given. Their principal object was to exclude the cases which had been insured, and paid for in England— He goes upon his return to Philadelphia to-morrow— I returned to him his Son’s Album, which he had left with me last January. I rode my ten miles round before dinner, with a slight sprinkling of rain on my return— I finished much to my dissatisfaction the fable of the Oak and the Willow— Yet it might be amended to be readable. I also finished reading the fourteenth and last of the Philippics. It was delivered upon the accounts being first received at Rome of the Battle at Mutina, in which Antony had been defeated by the Consul’s Hirtius and Pansa, and by Octavius Caesar. The question was of the honours and rewards to be bestowed upon them and their troops— Cicero proposes honorary rewards to the three Generals, and that each of them should be styled *imperator*— That the surviving Soldiers should receive the rewards promised them, and that they should be extended to the Parents and brothers of those who had been slain— He speaks with great feeling of the {{pagebreak}}consternation which had prevailed at Rome some days before, when there had been rumours of defeat at Mutina; and of the great joy with which the real success of the Consuls and of Octavius Caesar, had been received— He describes the joy which the defeat of Antony had occasioned, and defends himself against having suffered the fasces to be carried before him the day before when almost the whole population of Rome had escorted him to and from the Senate.— This was the last of his Orations; for very shortly afterwards the treacherous triumvirate of Antony, Octavius Caesar, and Lepidus was formed, and Cicero was barbarously murdered— These fourteen Orations, were all composed, within about a year after the death of Julius Caesar— They exhibit the expiring agonies of Roman Liberty. And they carry with them a melancholy interest when read with a recollection of the Catastrophe which ensued. There are two ideas which form the basis of argument in the whole series— First that Servitude is worse than Death, and secondly that Liberty was a peculiar property of the Roman People— That other Nations could endure Servitude but that the Roman people could not— But the civil Wars of Sylla, Marius and Cinna, and the career of Julius Caesar had destroyed that character of the Romans. They were prepared for servitude, and nothing could save them from it— There is an ominous presentiment running through all these Orations, that the Life of the Orator is staked upon them—and is scarcely pursued in any thing else but to perpetuate this error— Plutarch says that Cicero purposely polished these Orations more [thany] others that he had ever delivered before; but there is too much sameness in them both of form and Subject— But the noble sentiments contained in them will preserve them forever.

11. V. Saturday.

Persico Luigi

Gerry Lieutenant

Tudor Mrs

Stewart Mrs

Lear Mrs

Thornton Mrs  
Fendall Philip R.

Mr Persico was here, and I sat to him for a miniature portrait in Crayons, but we were so much interrupted by visitors, that he was not able to finish it— Lieutenant Gerry called, and said he should return in a day or two to Philadelphia, where he is stationed at the Navy-Yard. He came here in behalf of his brother, Surveyor of the Port of Boston, whose place is much coveted by several persons, and particularly by Russell Jarvis— He told me some of Jarvis’s movements to make him believe that he had not solicited the place, and the information from, other quarters that he had— He mentioned also that Major Melville was removed from the Office of Naval Officer at Boston, and that General Boyd was appointed in his place— Mr Henshaw is also the Collector, in the place of H. A. S. Dearborn— There was some Shew of charges made against Mr Gerry, by the Candidates for supplanting him; but they were cleared up by explanations from him, and the President upon whom Lieutenant Gerry called, assured him that his brother should not be removed— Mrs Tudor and her daughter Mrs Stewart were here— They propose to reside in Washington, and Mrs Tudor has engaged a house newly built by Johnson Hellen. Mrs Tudor left with me a Letter from her Son, William, written at Sea and at Valparaiso, in Jany and Feby 1828. It gives her a very interesting account of his receiving at Lima, the Commission I had sent him as Chargé d’Affaires at Rio de Janeiro— And also some striking notices of La Mar the President and Luna Pizarro a member of Congress of Peru— And it speaks with great severity of Bolivar— Tudor’s Mission to Brazil has been a very honourable one to himself; creditable to the Administration which appointed him and highly useful to the Country. He has obtained a Settlement of many of the complaints of commercial depredations and has {{pagebreak}}concluded a Commercial Treaty, so advantageous that it has been ratified by the present President, by and with the advice and consent of the present Senate. Tudor unadvisedly asked and urged last Summer permission to return to the United States, which I gave him and which I am afraid he will now not be allowed to retract. His health has been much affected by living in tropical climates, and he was not aware how difficult it would be after getting out of the public service to get in again— – His mother and Sister appear much concerned now at the prospect of his return and hope it will not be permitted— Mrs Lear and Mrs Thornton were visitors to the Ladies and Mrs W. S. Smith was with them— Mr Fendall brought back the sheets of my Reply to the Appeal, which he took when last here, and made some judicious remarks on certain passages— I mentioned several pamphlets which I wished to consult, and which he will endeavour to procure for me. He told me that Henry Lee was already commissioned as Consul at Algiers in the place of Shaler who wished to go to the Havanna— He says that since Mr Van Buren has taken charge of the Department of State James A. Hamilton continues to attend there and do business as he did before Van Buren came. He thinks the plan is, at the next Session of Congress to obtain a Law, for an Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, for which Hamilton is reserved— He says Carter Lee told him that President Jackson said to Harry Lee that he regretted Congress was not in Session, for that if they were, he would recommend to them to pass an Act, for hanging up at the yard arm of our public ships any pirates whom they might take at Sea, without bringing them in for trial— He spoke of Force’s distressed situation; his types being taken in Execution and advertised for Sale— Dr Watkins has been unsuccessfully endeavouring to obtain at Baltimore, the means of continuing the Journal— I rode before dinner the eight Miles Post-Office round; and I made an addition to the Fable of the Oak and the Willow, not liking the moral of it, as it is in La Fontaine— It commends the pliancy of the willow, as preferable to the Sturdy resistance of the Oak— This is not sound Doctrine— The Oak is after all the respectable Tree; and I have added a Stanza to say so.

12. V:15. Sunday— George 28.— Palm-Sunday.

Cranch. William

Frye. Nathanl. jr

I rode to the Presbyterian Church, where I heard Mr Post, from 2. Corinthians 5.14. [“]For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15. And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” Mr Post gave notice after the service, for a meeting of the Pew-holders at four O’Clock to-morrow afternoon to receive the report of their Committee upon the proposed Union of this Church with that of Dr Laurie in F. Street; and some other notices— I called at Mr Van Buren’s lodgings, and left Cards for him and Mr Hamilton, who is gone to Baltimore with his family. Mr Van Buren was out—as was Mr Rush, at whose house I also called, and then walked home— Judge Cranch soon afterwards called upon me, and shewed me a Letter he had written to Mr Rush, enquiring if he could take the judges Son, John, with him to England, in such manner as to pay the whole or part of his expenses. John has a genius for painting, and wishes to go to England for improvement—he is now with Mr Harding at Baltimore. Judge Cranch asked me if I thought there would be any impropriety in his reading this application to Mr Rush— I saw none; though I did not expect it would be successful. Mr Frye called and spent a couple of hours after dinner. I received Letters from Dr Condict; enclosing an Oration delivered by him at Morristown New Jersey, the 4th. of July last—from Joseph Blunt; and from W. Plumer, and I wrote to C. Hammond. I read also the 14th. Book of the Epistles of Cicero to Atticus— Those which immediately followed after the Ides of March when Caesar was killed— I have neither Dictionary, nor translation, nor Index Latinitatis at hand; and I find the Epistles much more difficult to read than the Orations. There is a continual admixture of Greek words—sometimes whole phrases— There are numerous allusions to Letters from Atticus which are not given. Many idiomatic and proverbial phrases, which require a thorough familiarity with the language— An elliptic style leaving out half the words {{pagebreak}}which would be necessary to make the sentences grammatical. Studied obscurity by the use of figurative words understood only by his correspondent— Sudden transitions from public to private affairs and vice versa, and fragments of thoughts just hinted at for the memory or imagination of his correspondent to complete, all require a Commentary which I have not, and which for reading the orations is seldom needed— There are 22 Letters written between the Ides (15th.) of March and the first of June—shewing the fluctuation of his feelings, his doubts, and alternate hopes and fears, in observing the conduct of Antony, Dolabella, Hirtius, Pansa, and Brutus— The 13th. encloses copies of a Letter from Antony to him and his Answer. Antony requests his consent to the restitution of the Estate of Publius Clodius, for the sake of his Son [Sextus], a tender minded youth; and pretends that it was so decreed in the Acts of Julius Caesar; but protests he will not do it without Cicero’s consent— The Letter is full of deference and complacency—and Cicero answers with equal courtesy and professed affection— But in the Letter to Atticus enclosing these copies, he speaks with execration of Antony and of his Acts, and says they sometimes make him wish Caesar back again— He adds as a reason for the facility of his compliances, that Antony having determined upon it in his own mind, would have done it, in spite of any opposition that he could have made— This is duplicity beyond the mark. This I presume is the Letter which Antony read to the Senate the day before Cicero pronounced the second Philippic—and upon the production of which he replies in the fourth Section of that Oration with such exquisite force and beauty— The 17th. encloses a copy of a Letter equally affectionate and complimentary to Dolabella— Throughout the Book he hints at the danger of his appearing in Rome, and of the certainty of destruction to Brutus and Cassius if they should shew themselves there. The whole book is deeply interesting. I made a ridiculous imitation of La Fontaines Cock and Pearl.

13. V: Monday.

Cannon. of Richmond

Graham. George

Mr Cannon, a stranger, called upon me this morning, and told me that he belonged to Richmond, Virginia—that he was transiently here at Washington, and came merely from curiosity to see a man, about whom so much was said both by friends and enemies. I had some conversation with him, upon topics of a general nature, and upon the projected Convention in Virginia, for the amendment of their State Constitution. Mr Madison, Chief Justice Marshall, and Mr Monroe, have consented to serve as members of it— Mr Cannon said nothing to me from which I could judge what his own opinions were upon any political subject. Mr Graham the Commissioner of the General Land-Office was here. He had written to me on Saturday, and sent me the papers relating to the engagement last Summer of Mr Joseph M. White the Delegate from Florida as Assistant Counsel, and Compiler of Public Documents, for the trials upon Land-Claims in Florida— There is some question upon the extent of his engagement, and how far he is bound to argue cases, before the Courts in Florida, in Aid of the Attornies of the United States there, and before the Supreme Court in aid of the Attorney-General here— His engagement was upon a Letter from himself dated at Saratoga Springs the 14th. August last, to Mr Graham, of which he White, furnished me with a copy on the 16th. and the acceptance of the terms of which I authorised in a Letter to Mr Graham of the 18th— Mr Graham thought the engagement more extensive than Mr White now admits it to have been—and Mr Graham appeals to my opinion I had examined all the papers this morning, and told Mr Graham that the extent of the engagement must be measured by the terms of Mr White’s Letter, for they were accepted. That I had understood the engagement as more extensive than he was said now to admit, but not so much so as Mr Graham insisted for— He was engaged to argue some causes, {{pagebreak}}and I had supposed they would embrace most if not all of those which would be brought up from Florida— One of his express engagements was to argue all causes against which the Commission of which he was a member had reported as fraudulent— Mr Graham said the Law did not allow any of the cases excluded as fraudulent to come before the Courts— I said then Mr White’s engagement was hardly fair, but I did not so understand it— There might be cases before the Courts, the parties to which were different from those reported against by the Commissioners, but whose titles might be contested on the same principles— I considered Mr White engaged not to be Counsel for any claim, excepting those of Forbes and Arredondo. To aid the District Attorney, and the Attorney General with his Advise, and to furnish them with all Documents in his possession to sustain the right of the United States; but if he was required to *argue* cases other than those specified in his Letter, he would have a right to claim additional compensation— Mr Graham told me that the Supreme Court at their late Session had decided against claims founded upon the grants to the Duke of Alagon, and Count Puñon Rostro; but that the Chief Justice had intimated that he and one other of the judges were of opinion, that the grant to Vargas, being of land in West-Florida, and excluded by name in the king of Spain’s explanatory ratification of the Treaty, other grants similarly situated if any there were, might thereby be confirmed— I told him, and shewed him by reference to the Treaty in the Volume of the Laws, that the grant to Vargas, was dated after the 24th. of January 1818. and therefore by the 8th. Article of the Treaty absolutely null and void—which he said he was surprized the judges had overlooked— I told him of the fourberie that the Spanish Minister Onis, attempted to pass upon me in this transaction, using the agency of Mr Hyde de Neuville, to deceive me, without letting him know his object, and the equivocal declaration which de Neuville extorted from him after his trick was discovered— Also the mistake I made in taking the date of the King of Spains Order to the Governor of Cuba, for that of the dates of the grants to Alagon and Puñon Rostro— I rode my ten miles round before dinner and mused upon La Fontaine’s fable of the Vultures and the Pigeons— And I read the 15th Book of Cicero’s Epistles to Atticus— Grievously needing a translation or Commentary— The interlarding of Greek is very annoying, but is explained by the Index Graeco-Latinus in the Clavis— The Geography is aided by the Index Geographicus, but wants antient maps— The word omitted in most of the Sentences is the verb, a practice admissible only in Letters of the most intimate familiarity— In the 12th. Letter he first speaks of Octavius Caesar, whom he had seen— Says he was intelligent, lively, and disposed towards the Heroes (the murderers of Julius Caesar, as they would wish[)]—but what reliance was to be placed upon his years, his name, his inheritance, and education, was for great advisement. Aye and these were the portents of what was to come— Cicero foresaw, but he could not foreclose. He speaks in the 13th. of his Books of Offices, and in the 27th. of a Book upon Glory. The Letters continue to the beginning of Quintilis; but have no dates either of time or place. Abigail S. Adams came home from her visit of ten days.

14. V:30— Tuesday.

Baird of N.C.

Gales Joseph jr

Mr Gales called this morning and introduced Major Baird, of North Carolina, one of our friends he said who had a curiosity to see me— We conversed upon subjects of no present importance— Of the propensity that some of our distinguished military men, particularly General Gaines, General Scott, and Commodore Porter have to fancy themselves the greatest writers of the Age.— The day was fine though still cool; and I rode my ten Miles ride, in which I finished my imitation of La Fontaine’s fable of the Vulture’s and the pigeons; which I did in couplets of eight Syllables; the measure of Gay and Moore— This is the easiest measure for such imitation, and I think I could paraphrase all La Fontaine in the same manner— Would I could employ my hours of idleness and relaxation to some more useful purpose— But in these versifications I never can satisfy myself— I read 14 Letters of the 16th. book of Cicero’s Epistles to Atticus, the greater part of which was unintelligible to me for want of a Commentary. His half-sentences with the verb omitted are provokingly obscure. He uses this Style, in none of his formal Letters to other persons. {{pagebreak}}Every word of them is intelligible— These Letters through great light upon the Philippics. Those of this book contain the minute account of Cicero’s attempt to go into Greece the Summer after the death of Julius Caesar, with the intention of returning to Rome on the ensuing first of January when it was expected the new Consuls were to enter upon their Offices— But after embarking, and being twice driven back by adverse winds he concluded to return to Rome— The first and fourth Letters mention the horror which Brutus felt at the change of the name of the Month of Quintilis into July—which name Brutus positively refused to acknowledge— It is remarkable that the name of July should have prevailed to this day— In the sixth Letter he sends him his Treatise upon Glory— He had sent him before a Prooemium or preface, but it happened to be the same which he had sent before with the third Book of Academics—he now sends him another— In the 7th Letter he says Nemo doctus umquam (multa autem de hoc genere scripta sunt) mutationem consilii, in constantiam dixit esse— In two of the Letters he speaks of his Books of Offices, and remarks that that name also was new. And he asks Atticus to approve it or to give him another—

15. V:30. Wednesday—

Persico— Luigi.

Mr Persico came, and finished a miniature Portrait of me in Crayon [dust?] which he has drawn as a present, to my son John— I walked an hour and a half before dinner— The Rockville Turnpike or five Mile Square— I composed an imitation of La Fontaine’s Fable of the two Cocks: 7.13. Another failure— I still prefer the Stanza, to the short couplet for the form of the Tale— I can embrace most of La Fontaine’s ideas by varying the phraseology; but his humour is inimitable by me— There is scarcely one of his fables, but has some stroke of this exquisite humour, but his morality is very loose, and sometimes very bad— He is always satirical upon women: often upon monks—upon Lawyers, Physicians, Courtiers and Princes—all which may be excused; but his continual scoffing upon marriage is pernicious— His Tales are excessively licentious and in the last years of his life he was so afflicted with remorse for having written them, that he performed penance for them by wearing a Cilice or Hair Cloth— This fable of the Cocks has two or three strokes of keen Satire upon women— I read also the remaining Letters of the 16th. Book of Cicero’s Letters to Atticus which come down only to the time when Cicero returned to Rome, before he pronounced any of the Philippics. I read also the Correspondence between him and Brutus afterwards, down till after the second Battle at Mutina, when both the Consuls Hirtius and Pansa were killed. Brutus complains with great severity, both to Cicero and to Atticus of Cicero’s compliances to and flattery of the boy Octavius Caesar. The apology of Cicero is that the restoration of the Republic depended exclusively and entirely upon the course which Octavius would take; Cicero encloses to Brutus copies of two of his Philippics, to which he tells him he has given that name— There is no Letter to or from Cicero giving an account of the assassination of Caesar. In the last Letter of the 13th. book to Atticus, he mentioned his having entertained Caesar at supper on the third day of the Saturnalia, about two Months before the Ides of March— The first Letters of the next Book were written sometime after Caesar’s Death—but how long after does not appear. In the third he says he thinks Antony is paying more attention to his banqueting than to the breeding of mischief— At the close of his sixteenth book are Letters to Plancus and to Capito, and to Cupiennius, explaining all the passages in preceding Letters relating to Buthrotum— In the 16th Book, and 15th. Letter He says that Hippocrates forbids the giving of Medecine to persons off themselves, in desperate disease—

{{pagebreak}}16. V:15. Thursday.

Huntt. Henry.

Fendall. Philip R.

Lee. Richard H.

Dr Huntt came out this morning, and vaccinated my Son’s infant daughter. He sat and talked with me perhaps an hour with me, upon the only subject which now furnishes materials for conversation at Washington; which is the removals and new appointments to office— They are effected a few at a time, and in such manner as to keep up a constant agitation and alarm among the Office-holders— Multitudes of applicants are kept in suspense, and now and then one goes off gratified. The appointments almost without exception are conferred upon the vilest purveyors of Slander during the late electioneering campaign, and an excessive disproportion of places are given to Editors of the foulest presses— Very few reputable appointments have been made and those confined to persons who were indispensably necessary to the office, such as Asbury Dickins to the place of Chief Clerk in the Treasury Department— Huntt says that C. P. Van Ness of Vermont is to be appointed Minister to the Netherlands, and C. Hughes is to be recalled— The weather is warm, and I rode the ten mile round composing a Fable in imitation of La Fontaine’s Crow playing the Eagle— The last line of this fable, contains one itself, like a crab in an oyster— This fable I put into irregular verse— I snatch about half the ideas of La Fontaine; mingle them up with about an equal number of my own, and through them into careless feeble verse— I received a Letter from Charles and began one in answer to him but could not finish it. I return to the 14th. 15th. and 16th. Books of Cicero’s Epistles to Atticus— In the 11th. of the 16th Book he speaks of his Treatise de Officiis, says that he had finished it as far as the work of Panaetius had gone; which was two of the three Books, Panaetius, not having given the third— That had been completed by Posidonius: which Supplement Cicero says he has not; but has sent for it; and also for an abstract of the chapters— The word Officia was questionable, and then used by him in a new Sense— In the 8th. and 9th. Letters of the same Book he gives account of Letters from Octavius, promising to be governed by him— Inviting him to a secret conference with him at or near Capua—manifesting a determination to make war upon Antony— Cicero distruts him—asks Advice of Atticus what to do? Calls for Brutus who says he is losing excellent time—and declares he never was in so great a doubt what to do— Mrs Adams dined at Mr Frye’s—

17. V: Good Friday—

Semple Dr

Clarke Satterlee

Thomas James

Baring Thomas

Southard Samuel L

Coxe. Richard S.

Dr. Semple called here this morning to enquire about a clock which he said Mrs Porter had written to request that he would take charge of. It was among the effects of Commodore Porter, sometime since sold here at auction, and purchased by John Randolph of Roanoke; who left it here in a wooden box, under the Porch— I told Dr. Semple, that Mrs Adams had sent to Mr R. Smith who leases the House to request that the Clock might be taken away; and that I should be glad if he would take it: but he had thought that it still belonged to Commodore Porter, and was for Sale. Major Satterlee Clark was here at the same time with Dr Semple— He left with me a Newspaper of Solomon Southwick’s Journal, containing a long Article, which Clark said was written by himself against Mr Van Buren— Clarke boasted that he had saved the Post-master at Utica from being turned out of Office, by going to the President and informing him that he was the best Postmaster in the United States— He says also that the Anti-masonic party will put down Mr Van Buren in New-York, and that Mr Young, or Albert H. Tracy will be the next Governor of that State— Clark is a mere madcap— Coll. Thomas followed him, and told me numerous anecdotes of small and low intrigues for office, under the new Administration— He says that R. Cutts went to the President and enquired what had been the cause of his removal from office as second Comptroller, and was told there were charges against him— That Cutts said he should have had a trial— That the President said he had had a trial— That the charges had been submitted to judge M’lean— That Cutts then went to the Postmaster General, who told {{pagebreak}}him he knew nothing of it, and that Cutts finally found the judge M’lean to whom his fate had been committed was an obscure person who has been judge of some county court in the State of New-York. Another fact he had from W. Duane, who as well as his Son W. J. Duane has been here for a place. The old man got nothing because his days of effective editorial Slander are past— The Son wanted the place of District Attorney at Philadelphia, and had numerous recommendations for it— General Jackson told him that his recommendations were good, but that there were offers which he thought better. Old Duane said he thought that was rude. Mr Thomas Baring nephew of Alexander and who had brought me a Letter from him paid me a morning visit— Took my ten mile ride, and got only half through the fable of the frogs asking for a king— The verse did not run well— Mr Southard and Mr Coxe came out after dinner, and spent an hour of the Evening with me. Mr Southard has very much recovered, but is yet looking feeble and much emaciated; he is now returning to New-Jersey, where he has received the Appointment of Attorney General of the State— I finished my Letter to Charles.

18. V:15. Saturday.

Vaughan Charles

Mr Vaughan the British Minister, paid us a morning visit, and brought out a lithographic print, of which he has received several copies from Mr C. Hughes our Charge d’Affaires in the Netherlands— It was the picture of a dog, executed by Mr Hughes’s Son, a lad of ten years old, who has a great turn for painting and drawing. This copy of the print was addressed by Mr Hughes to Mrs Adams. The print itself was dedicated to Grandpapa (S. Smith) pour ses Etrennés. 1. Jany 1829. I rode before dinner, by Kalorama out on the road to Adlum’s as far as Charles Nourse’s and then return’d through Georgetown, and by the President’s house— A ride of two hour’s. I finished the fable of the Frogs praying for a king; and began that of the Fox and the Goat. This occupation is too easy; and my fables are too ill executed— I must attempt some thing more difficult, and finish it better; or return to doing nothing while I ride and walk. I finished reading the first, and read the second of Cicero’s Epistles of Cicero to his brother Quintus, then commanding as Propraetor in the province of Asia— He had been there already two years; and was continued much against his own inclination, and that of his brother a third year. The first Letter is long, kind and affectionate; and advisory, with regard to his conduct and Deportment in performing the functions of his magistracy— An admirable Treatise, full of principles applicable to every person vested with authority; even at this day— The most exalted and the most benevolent morality pervades every line of this Letter, which is a model of instruction given with the affection of a brother and the tenderness of a Parent— I would I had learnt it by heart thirty years ago— Quintus it appears had a harsh temper, and was subject to violent sallies of anger. He had hurt his reputation much by this in the two first years of his Government, though less in the second than the first. His brother exhorts him with the most persuasive eloquence to controul his temper altogether; though from the second Letter it seems he was not successful— I took out also the Volume of Valerius Maximus to look into it— I wrote to Caleb Cushing and enclosed to him a Letter of Introduction to John A. Smith— And I began a Letter in answer to one from Lewis Condict— The Spring is coming on very late. The Rosebushes are just putting out their leaves: the Poplars their Catkins; and the Peach trees are {{pagebreak}}in blossom. Abigail S. Adams left us again, for another visit to Mrs Elliot. The newspapers announce this morning the appointment of Louis M’Lane of Delaware, as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister-Plenipotentiary to Great-Britain in the place of James Barbour removed— This is the most painful incident to me which has occurred since the change of the Administration; and it proves the utter heartlessness of Van-Buren— He, and M’Lane and Governor Barbour were all partizans of Crawford in 1825. M’Lane voted for him in the house, and thereby gave him the State of Delaware— M’Lane is utterly incompetent to the Mission to London; and if he does not disgrace the Country, will effect nothing for her interest. His only merit is the sale of himself and his Crawford Stock to Jackson— But he will give him and Van-Buren trouble— No Administration can make bad appointments abroad with impunity—

19. V:15. Easter— Anniversary of Lexington Battle.

Warm day. Trees all blossoming or putting out their leaves. I walked to the Presbyterian Church, and heard a Stranger preach from John 1.29. “Behold the lamb of God; which taketh away the sin of the world.” It is painful to me to hear a Calvinist preach upon this text; and to witness the solemn and fervent sincerity with which they pour out absurdity and nonsense— The mind of man delights in Truth in the abstract, and is perpetually seeking falsehood in the concrete— Warned of the imperfection of my own reason, I distrust its conclusions as I do those of others, and when I consider what man is, whence he comes and where he goes physically, I wonder only at the degree in which he does possess the power of linking together cause and effect— That he should form the conception of God, of eternity, of a future State, of mind, independent of matter; and I cannot account for the Passion which I most intensely feel, for continued existence hereafter— The preacher told us to-day that it was all owing to curiosity, which he said was innate in man—and he illustrated it by reminding his hearers how anxious they were to see General La Fayette, when he was in this Country. He further said that if there was a great Military Commander who had saved his Country in War (General Jackson was present) or if there was a Great Man in another line, who had rendered services as a Statesman, (God forgive me for my thoughts when he said this) there was a universal curiosity to see them—but how he got from this to his text I scarcely remember—he did however get there— After the Service I called upon Mr Rush, and found Mr. C. F. Mercer with him— Mr Rush has postponed his departure for England, in consequence of the dangerous illness of Mrs Rush, who is recovering and out of danger— He expects to go about the last of this week— I congratulated Mr Mercer upon his re-election to Congress, and mourned sincerely at the removal of Governor Barbour and the appointment of Louis M’Lane as Minister to Great-Britain in his place— I walked home, and after finishing very ill La Fontaine’s fable of the Fox and the Goat, I thought I would try my hand upon Horace— I took the Ode to Aristius Fuscus Book 1. Ode 22. but found Horace quite otherwise unmanageable than La Fontaine— I did nevertheless make out an Ode in three eight lined Stanzas and comprising in the main the ideas of the first eight and last eight lines of Horace’s Ode. I left out the wolf and Lalage, which constitute to be sure the body of that most delicious poem—and I gave it a more grave and solemn close; mixing up with it an idea, from the 16th. Ode of the 2d. Book to Grosphus, and one from the 3d. Ode of the 3d. Book— The great fault of my Ode is that the first half of the third Stanza is feeble, and not in keeping with the last. In the evening I finished my Letter to Doctor Condict, and read a few pages of Valerius Maximus, an author with whom I have never before been conversant. His Latin is not easy, and his Style not very clear— His book is a collection of memorable sayings and doings: a compilation of Anecdotes illustrative of certain principles of Religion and Morals, divided into nine Books, and classified under particular Titles— Tis a Common-place Book.

{{pagebreak}}20. V. Easter— Monday.

Rush. Richard

Rush James

Mr Rush came out with his Son James; and took leave of me; before his departure for England— He is to go, before the close of the week— The weather was sultry and damp and terminated with a heavy gust and shower in the Evening— First day this Season without a fire— Mrs Adams continues unwell— Abigail S. Adams returned home from her visit to Mrs Elliot. I took my ten miles ride before dinner, and composed the fable of the Hunters and the Bear, in irregular verse 51 lines— Tis easier than prose— But it is like copying a spelling-book— I Received a Letter from my Son George to his mother; which I immediately answered, inviting him to come on here, and return with us. I received also a Letter from Mr Clay, enclosing one from D. L. Child to him, and his answer, open, which he requests me to forward to Child— Both Letters are remarkable— Child is Editor of a Newspaper in Boston called the Massachusetts Journal, poor, dependent and ravenous—once republican, patronized by General Dearborn, and now bought over by Otis, and at the same time Sycophantising to Mr Clay— He has just talent enough to make himself a busy and bustling partizan, and just Quixotism enough to get his own party into all sorts of trouble. Mr Clay’s answer is guarded, and cautious— In his Letter to me he intimates his intention to decline an election to Congress— I read only two or three pages of Valerius Maximus. In the Chapter upon Auspices, he says that Cicero being at the villa Cajetana, a Crow in his presence plucked off the iron hour hand of a Clock, and immediately flew up to him, seized with his bill the border of his Robe, and held it, till a Slave came and told Cicero that the Soldiers were come to murder him.

21. V: Tuesday.

Lagono Francisco

Sewall— Dr

Wheelwright. Mr

Cranch— William

Pierce of Middleborough

Mrs Frye and Mrs Smith.

Frye— Nathaniel jr.

Francisco Lagono, was a Spanish Priest, expelled from Mexico, by the recent Laws, banishing Spaniards from that Country. He is in great distress, and had a recommendatory certificate from Mr Matthews, and many others— He speaks French fluently with the Spanish accent, and gave me a melancholy and affecting picture of the Country from which he comes; as well as of his own condition contrasted with that which he enjoyed at his curacy on the shores of the pacific— Dr Sewall came with Mr Wheelwright, a man from Massachusetts, now settled in Virginia but who told me he heard me deliver my valedictory Lecture at Cambridge in 1809. Dr Sewall invited me to attend, any of his Lectures at the College on Mondays Wednesdays and Fridays, at 6 O’Clock in the Evening. Judge Cranch was here, and read me a number of Letters and Papers, relating to the debts of the Unitarian Church Society, and to their efforts to obtain contributions to pay them from Massachusetts— Letters to and from Mr Brooks of Hingham; and to Dr Channing of Boston— The judge expressed regret that I had left the Church; and I told him it was only because I was about to leave the City, and that if I should return here next Fall, I should take the pew again.— It is very doubtful whether they will be able to retain Mr Bigelow; because they cannot pay him the Salary of 1000 dollars a year, and the interest of their debt, which is 6000 dollars. I think the Society must fall through. Mr Pierce is Postmaster of Middleborough in Plymouth County Massachusetts; and said he came here concerning some Mail-Contract— Came here to see me, for curiosity sake, and knows not whether he is to be removed from Office or not. {{pagebreak}}I rode to the Navy-Yard, and made a total failure of La Fontaine’s fable of the Hare and the Tortoise— Mr Frye called and spent an hour with me this Evening; in deep agitation at a discovery just made, that Dr Watkins late fourth Auditor has been peculating upon the public money to the amount of nine or ten thousand dollars at least— Balances remitted by the Navy Agents to be deposited in the Treasury, and which Watkins has applied to his own use— Frye was told it by Fillebrown and Maury; both Clerks in the Navy Department— Watkins is gone off, and Frye expects will be arrested at New-York. I was more shocked at hearing this than I could be at the loss of ten Elections— Frye says furthermore that Goldsborough Chief of the Navy Commissioners, told him that they, and all the Navy, were extremely dissatisfied with Mr Southard’s Administration of the Navy Department, and especially mortified, at an intimation in a late Report, that few of the Navy Officers, are profound astronomers.

22. V: Wednesday.

Brent. Daniel

Brent. his nephew.

Mr Brent from the Department of State called here for the Contract of Coll. Trumbull with the Department for his four pictures, which I had borrowed on the 3d. of March, to make that with Persico. It was returned to him, and I gave him also the despatches from Mr Middleton which I had brought out with me to read; but which I have left unread— I cannot take sufficient interest in them— Mr Brent says that Mr Gallatin and Mr Preble are both here— That Mr Hamilton still attends at the Department of State, opens the Letters addressed to the Secretary and reads them: writes scarcely any thing— Mr Van Buren the same, and the duties of the chief Clerk, are very much increased— Dr Huntt was here, and vaccinated my Son’s child the second time; the first not having taken. I rode my ten miles round, and composed a fable of the Rats holding Council, to hang the bell about the Cat’s neck—with two Stanza’s of Horace’s Ode to Licinius— In the Evening I wrote to Mr Clay, and to Mr Oliver Wolcott, and to Mr Badger of Boston, declining to purchase Lands which he proposes to sell me— In the New-York American which came this Evening, contains Letters from several members of Congress from Connecticut to judge Gould, a Son in Law of Uriah Tracy who were in Congress with him in 1804. and 5. and who deny their knowledge or belief that Mr Tracy ever had knowledge of the project of a Northern confederacy at that time. One of them is James Hillhouse, who well knew of the project at the time, and whom I have heard say that it would never be well with us till we should have undergone a little surgical operation— There is no Letter from S. W. Dana— Judge Gould says he did not recollect that Dana was a member of Congress at that time, till it was too late— I do not know that Dana was acquainted with the project, although my recent Letters from his female relative give some reason to suspect it— The motives for suppressing the facts now are so strong, that sturdy denial, is like a plea of not guilty in a Court of Law— Mr Wolcott’s Answer to my Letter, is not so explicit as I expected it would be— It leaves the matter uncertain whether he knew of the project or not— It leaves even ground for supposing that he favoured it himself, and yet the warmth with which he repels the suspicion from Hamilton seems hardly compatible with a possibility that he should have been himself otherwise disposed— Altogether his Letter shews that he is not willing to tell all that he does know; and wishes to vindicate the characters of the fathers, of the actors in the controversies of the day as far as he can with truth and Justice. He does not answer the most important question that I proposed to him; of his own Letter to Mr Cabot, containing the views of General Hamilton, against the disunion project.

23. V. Thursday.

Lynch. Dominick

Rogers— Lloyd N.

Mr Lynch and Mr. Rogers paid me a morning visit— Mr Lynch has returned lately from ~~New-York~~ France, and comes now from New-York— The day was sultry; and at Summer heat— I rode only about an hour before dinner, and composed the Fable of the Lion and the Gnat, and one Stanza {{pagebreak}}more of the Ode to Licinius— One Stanza of Horace costs me more thought than five Fables of La Fontaine— The thoughts of La Fontaine are more manageable— His versification differs so little from Prose, that it is much easier for me to compose while riding than it would be to compose the same Fables in prose itself— The rhymes at the ends of the lines and the measure of the lines, affording aids to the memory which sometimes enable me to retain a whole fable of fifty lines— I find the Stanza of eight lines each of eight syllables with alternate rhyme the best measure for the fable; no one measure indeed is good for a succession of fables, and indeed they are a species of Poetry of which only one should be read at a time— The very practice of composing them palls upon my taste, so that I become ashamed of wasting upon them even the time devoted to my daily exercise— It seems to me that I could employ it more usefully—but I seek in vain the means— This however, together with my reply to the appeal, and this Diary keep my mind so constantly upon the stretch, that I have no time for reflection, and very little for reading— I am also growing weary of my reply and hope to finish it in eight or ten days more— Pelham, and Cicero and Valerius Maximus are all neglected, and I have scarcely half an hour a day left to answer a Letter— This intenseness of application becomes itself insupportable, and when the weather grows warm, I find myself with a dull head-ache; as happened, for the greater part of this day.

24. V:30. Friday.

Sewall Dr

Bosquin of N.J.

Emerson of Maine

Dr Sewall called and introduced his two friends, Mr Bosquin of New-Jersey; a native Frenchman, and who has been the last twelve years residing in France—and Mr Emerson of Portland Maine, who is travelling Southward for his health— I rode the ten miles round, composed the fable of the Bat and the two Weazels; and two Stanza’s of Horace’s Ode to Licinius— The fourth and fifth Stanzas reads thus

4:

Sperat infestis, metuit secundis

Alteram sortem bene preparatum

Pectus. Informes hiemes reducit

Jupiter idem

In adverse Fortune, *Hope* will cheer

And joyous moments check with *Fear*

The justly balanc’d Mind

Tis the same Being, Good and Wise

The Genial Breeze of Spring supplies

And Winter’s blasting Wind—

5:

Submovet. Non si male nunc, et olim

Sic erit. Quondam cithara tacentem

Suscitat Musam, neque semper arcum

Tendit Apollo.

Is Grief your Visitor to day?

To morrow drives him far away:

Bear cheerfully your wo.

Touch with your hand Apollo’s Lyre;

Not always will the God inspire

Not always bend his bow.

The whole Ode is full of charming philosophy; but these two Stanza’s strike me at this time as of exquisite beauty— Horace’s Stanzas are of four lines—mine are of six, and make rather a paraphrase than a translation— It is impossible to concentrate thought into single words in English as it is in the Latin— I have translated for example the single word Jupiter, by a whole line “Tis the same Being Good and Wise”— The thought is in Horace— It was Jupiter Optimus Maximus, who was Lord of the Air, and restored or discarded Winter— But the direct expression of the wisdom of goodness which preside over these changes of the Seasons, seems to me to add both to the Poetry, and to the Philosophy of the Verses: and the turn of piety which it gives to the whole Ode adds to its Pathos— I never understood the antithesis of the Lyre and the Bow of Apollo, till this day— The single thought running through the whole {{pagebreak}}Ode is admirable— I attended this Evening the Lecture of Doctor Sewall, which was upon digestion— A heavy shower prevented me from going in time to hear it all— I heard him for about half an hour— He Lectures well— But there is a vacation of a fortnight at the College from Easter, and Dr Sewall’s next Lecture is to be next Monday week— After returning home, I answered a Letter of W. B. Sprague of West-Springfield Massachusetts.

25. V:15. Saturday— Snow.— Visit of Volunteer companies.

Lee— William—

Volunteer Companies. 4.

I received this morning a note from Captain Seaton of the Volunteer Companies of the City, informing me that this was the day of their first annual parade; and that they were desirous of paying their respects to me, previous to my departure from the District: and enquiring if I should be at home, at One O’Clock. I sent him for answer that I should be at home, and would receive the Companies— William Lee, heretofore second Auditor of the Treasury, now dismissed from Office called to see me— He spoke to me with great feeling and disgust at the treachery and peculotion of Watkins, the bitterest drop in the cup of my afflictions; for although I am in no respect answerable for it, and no administration can escape from such defalcations, yet it will be charged as a stain upon the Administration, and actually proves the profligacy of one of its most earnest and active friends— The cause was that detestable vice of gambling. Lee says that his own official concerns are settled, and that his Successor Major Lewis told him it was impossible that the Office should have been kept in more perfect order.— The proscriptions from Office continue; and independent of the direct misery that they produce, have indirectly tragical effects—a Clerk in the War Office named Henshaw, who was a strong partizan for Jackson’s election, three days since cut his throat form ear to ear, from the mere terror of being dismissed— Linneus Smith of the Department of State, one of the best Clerks under the Government, has gone raving distracted, and others are said to be threatened with the same calamity— Lee told me in Confidence, that he was secure of an engagement which would yield him five or six thousand dollars a year, which I hope may prove true; but of which I fear he merely flatters himself— He told me he expected his son in Law, Baron Maltitz, and his daughter back from Europe soon.— That Maltitz had written the last four Acts of a German Tragedy, the first act of which had been written, and left a fragment by Schell. That it had been brought out at St. Petersburg so successfully that it had a run of 38 Nights. Soon after one O’Clock, the four Volunteer infantry companies came out, and drew up in line in front of the Portico of the house— Captain W. W. Seaton who was at their head addressed me and said that they had been desirous of coming to pay their respects to me, and to assure me of their good wishes for my health and happiness before my departure— I answered him that I was very happy to receive them, and was glad to have an opportunity of returning my thanks to them, and through them to all of the Inhabitants of the District for all the kindness I had experienced from them in the twelve years that I had been residing here. The Officers were invited into the House and took some refreshments; which were also sent out to the men upon the ground— After which upon their resuming their arms I went out and passed through the line shaking hands with every individual among them— They then paid me a Marching Salute, and filed off after being here about two hours— Among the Officers were Captain Burch, Mr Fay, Mr Poor, and Captain Hickey— Jeremiah Elkins was the Adjutant— Burch told me that he had named his seventh Son after me— After they were gone I rode my ten Mile round; and composed the Fable of the Cock and the Fox—badly— But I finished the imitation tolerably to my satisfaction of the Ode to Licinius— There is a spell of Versification upon me, but it brings forth nothing original—and I shall look back to it with a Nausea; as waste of Time— Abigail S. Adams walked to Mrs Elliot’s with William Elliot who came out for her— Mrs Adams is quite unwell. Walter Hellen dined here—

{{pagebreak}}26. V:15. Sunday—

Krehmer

I walked to the Second Presbyterian Church, and heard Dr Laurie preach from John 6.56. [“]He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.”— The meaning of these figurative words he said was explained by Jesus himself, for which he quoted the 35th. verse of the same chapter “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger: and he that believeth on me shall never thirst”— So that he said to eat the flesh and to drink the blood of Jesus was to believe on him— To believe on him in his mediatorial capacity— To believe in short in the atonement— Dr Laurie is an able man and a powerful preacher; and yet he has preached himself out of his vocation— He is the most unpopular preacher in the City. His argument this day was very closely connected together, and his manner most solemn and impressive— He read the 14th. Chapter of Job with a power and energy which made it almost new to me— The President was there— After returning home I received a visit from young Mr Krehmer, who has just returned from England where he went some Months since as a Messenger. He is attached to the Russian Legation— Says he passed Baron Krudener between this and New-York. He told me of the Duel between the Duke of Wellington and the Earl of Winchilsea— I walked again an hour before dinner; and composed the Fable or Tale of the Star-gazer, falling into a Well— La Fontaine tells it in four Lines; and then launches out into an argument in verse against judicial astrology— I expanded the Story into two Stanza’s, and then translated the moral reflections in five— Judicial Astrology is almost exploded at this day; but prevailed much in the time of La Fontaine— To reason against it now is to fight Shadows— But there was some pleasing imagery as well as good sense in the verses; and I imitated them by way of experiment: and I find no material difficulty in giving the thoughts of La Fontaine or rather equivalent ideas, for it often happens that the thought itself is inexpressible in English— I composed also one Stanza in imitation of Horace’s Ode to Grosphus.— Walter Hellen dined with us— My Son Johns wife is quite unwell, and his child quite sick— My own wife has a severe cough also.

27. V: Monday— Ride to the Navy-Yard

Tyler— Benjamin Owen

Cresson— Elliott.

Hamilton. James A

Gallatin— Albert

Fenwick

Mr Tyler came to ask me to return him a paper signed by a number of members of Congress, recommendatory of him, which he brought me some months since, and which I referred him to my Son John to find— Tyler has been ruined here in Lottery Speculations, and is now about removing to New-York— Elliott Cresson called upon me again. He has been these three or four Months in Virginia, and is now on his way returning to Philadelphia— He asked me again to write something in his Album, which I promised to do. I had not had Time when he sent it to me before, in January. He is of the Society of Friends and spoke much of the Colonization Society: of the success of which he has a very favourable opinion—with which in this respect mine does not agree— He has a profound horror of the condition of the Slaves in our Southern States— There is I believe in this respect some misapprehension and much prejudice— There are no doubt cases of extreme oppression and cruelty, and the impunity for them is complete; but I believe them to be very rare, and that the general treatment of Slaves is mild and moderate— Elliott spoke of some things relating to the present state of public affairs, with great severity, and especially of some Scandals in great circulation— The removals from Office are continuing with great perseverance. The Custom-houses in Boston, New-York, and Philadelphia have been swept clear; also at Portsmouth New-Hampshire and New-Orleans— The Appointments are exclusively of {{pagebreak}}violent partizans, and every Editor of a scurrilous and Slanderous Newspaper, is provided for— My next visitor was James A. Hamilton who began by telling me that he totally disapproved up a publication of his brother Alexander Hamilton in the New-York Evening Post. I had not seen this publication— James A. did not particularly describe the purport of this publication; but his object was to intreat, if I should think it necessary to reply to his brother’s publication; not to refer to anything that *he* has said to me in his conversations with me. He said that nothing he had said to me in our conversations was of a confidential nature, and nothing which he could object to my repeating; but that after this publication of his brothers if I should refer to what he had said to me, it would put him in a very awkward situation as respected his brother, and give him the appearance of not having equal zeal for the reputation of his father. He said he had come to say this to me, because there was an intimation in the pamphlet in which Mr Plumer’s Letter was published, that I should reply to the appeal— I said that not having seen his brother’s publication, it was impossible for me to say, whether it would require from me any notice of what he James A. had said to me— That my intention was to reply to the appeal— That he had said to me, what was confirmative of facts of which I had no doubt— That in our first conversation he had said there was a Letter from his father to Mr Cabot, very strongly urging reasons against a division of the States— That at our second conversation he had said he believed he had been mistaken with regard to a Letter from his father to Mr Cabot; but that it was a Letter from Mr Oliver Wolcott, containing his father’s views on the Subject— That he had also read to me, two or three lines from a Letter to him from his younger brother stating that Mr Wolcott had given or would give a full statement; and that it fully refuted Plumer’s charge— That he had also told me there was a Letter from his father to Mr Sedgwick written not more than three days before his death also containing his views against the division of the Union— He said I had mistaken him in some particulars— He had thought there was a Letter from his father to Mr Cabot—but it had not been found; he had afterwards believed it was a Letter from Mr Wolcott to his father; but that had not been found— The Letter from his father to Mr. Sedgwick had been mentioned to him by Mr Sedgwick’s Son; before these enquiries—but that also had been sought for in vain— He thought I mistook the purport of his brother’s Letter concerning Mr Wolcott’s statement— I repeated what I thought were the words of his brother’s Letter as he read them; and he said he would bring and shew me the Letter itself— I told him there was other testimony than mine, with regard to the proposal made to his father and mentioned to him the statement made by De Witt Clinton in the Senate of New-York in January 1809— He said he had no more doubt than he had of his own existence, that the Statement made by Mr Clinton was the fact— He repeated that he entirely disapproved of his brother’s publication, and would have prevented him from making it if he could—and he hoped I should not think it necessary to answer it—but if I should that I would let him have notice of what I should say, before publishing it— I told him I would readily do that; and would not introduce him or his information to me into the discussion, if I could with propriety avoid it— He also said he came to inform me that despatches had been received from Mr Offley, and Captain Crane—that nothing had been done— That when it came to a discussion of terms, the Turks had demanded two Ships of the Line; as the price of a Treaty; and that being declined, they had demanded one— Which being also declined, they had finally offered to take 50.000 dollars—which Mr Offley had been disposed to accept at once— But Captain Crane would not assume the responsibility of drawing beyond the 20000 for which I had given him a credit. Hamilton asked if I had expected that the Treaty would be accomplished for 20.000 dollars— I said No—but I had given the credit, as large as I could, from the fund of Contingent Expenses of foreign Intercourse— But that I would now if it were in my power not hesitate an instant to give fifty {{pagebreak}}thousand dollars for the Treaty, if it could be obtained: and would assume the responsibility of the payment at once— He asked how the money could be commanded— I told him that Alexander Baring would furnish it in five minutes; by an arrangement which the Minister of the United States might make with him—in the confidence of an Appropriation— He said he was extremely desirous it should be done, as probably if the present opportunity should be missed it would not again occur in many years— I fear it will be lost. Mr Gallatin called while Mr Hamilton was here— He and Mr Preble are both here upon the Boundary question— He says they will remain here till about the middle of June; and a statement is to be delivered to the British Minister on the first of July— These Visitors occupied me from soon after Breakfast till near four in the afternoon— I rode to the Navy-Yard, and composed part of the Fable of the Wolf and the Dog. Abigail S. Adams came home, and Elizabeth Cranch came to spend the week with her— My wife, my Sons wife and child are all ill—and I am sick at Heart— Fenwick came with a map of Blunt’s—New-York and Nova-Scotia.

28. V:30— Tuesday—

Lowry— Walter

Rebello. J Silvestre

Weather warm again. Mr Lowry the Secretary of the Senate brought me a printed copy of the Executive Journal of the last Session, instead of the copy in my manuscript Volume— The whole Executive Journal has now been published down to the present Time. Mr Lowry informed me that he should be obliged to dismiss the Chief Clerk in his Office. Mr Rebello the Brazilian Chargé d’Affaires paid me a visit again— He says he expects his successor in the course of the next Month. He mentioned a ridiculous rumour circulated in the City yesterday, that Mr Clay had been killed in a duel with Mr John Pope— I rode the ten miles round before dinner; but the Sun was out so powerfully that the ride was rather oppressive than pleasant— In my ride I finished the version of the Fable of the Wolf and the Dog— And began that of Simonides preserved by the Gods— This I take up as one of the most difficult Fables to translate in the whole collection of La Fontaine; but so I thought of the Astrologer in the Well— Simonides comes harder— This fable is told by Phaedrus; and if I do not misrecollect also by Quinctilian—and by Cicero. They tell it as the occasion upon which Simonides was the inventor of an artificial memory— Neither La Fontaine nor Phaedrus mention this— Elliott Cresson sent me his Album, in which I find since I had it before the added names of Mr and Mrs Madison and of Mr Monroe— I wrote in it my imitation of the Ode of Horace to Licinius, and an Envoi of three Stanzas of my own.

29. V:30. Wednesday— Ride to Georgetown

Fendall Philip R

Mr Fendall was here and I gave him some additional sheets of my reply to the appeal— He shewed me a Letter from Mr Van Buren the Secretary of State to him dated yesterday, stating that he was under the painful necessity of informing him that there would be no further occasion for his Services after the end of the month, and that he gave him this early notice of it, that he might continue his attendance at the Office till the end of the Month, or retire from it immediately at his option. He informed me that William Slade, and Thomas L. Thruston had received similar Letters yesterday, besides which Mr Brent, the Chief Clerk had been directed to give similar notices to George M’Cormick, and George Watkins— Linneus Smith, disqualified by a fit of insanity was removed some days since. I asked Fendall what he proposed to do— He said he had no settled purpose— He had been bred to the Law; but the profession presented {{pagebreak}}no prospects of means for supporting a family— Fendall is a man of very superior talents as a Writer— But I fear will suffer for want of other and more effective means. I rode before dinner to Georgetown, but from the oppressive heat of the Sun was obliged to shorten my ride— Returning by the way of Mr Frye’s house, I stopped there, and heard of some further dismissions from Office— Three in the War Department, one of whom is Richard Henry Lee, whom I had placed there, about three Months since— My composition this day was interrupted— I accomplished only one Stanza of the Ode to Grosphus, and one of the Fable of Simonides— Perturbation makes bad Poetry. I received Letters from O. Wolcott, and from my Son Charles— Also one from Mr Clay enclosing a copy of my correspondence with the New-Jersey Committee, printed upon Satin— I had likewise a Letter from Dr Hosack of New-York with a large Quarto Volume containing his Memoir on the Life of De Witt Clinton with a voluminous Appendix— I answered his Letter—and began an answer to Charles. Mrs Adams was still confined mostly to her chamber. John’s child is better, but still quite unwell.

30. V. Thursday.— Ride—

The morning was at Summer heat, and after Breakfast slipped away as it often does without interruption and imperceptibly— About three in the afternoon I mounted my horse, and had not rode a quarter of an hour before it began to rain and to thunder; I continued on nevertheless, till just before reaching the entrance of Mr Samuel Harrison Smith’s house, a heavy clap of thunder compelled me to take refuge there— I put my horse under a shed, and went into a house where I found Mrs Smith, and four or five young Ladies; her daughters with I believe a Sister of Mr Smith. He came in some time after from the U.S. Branch Bank, of which he is the President, with his Son— The Shower did not continue long, and I resumed and completed my ride— I composed only one Stanza of the Fable of Simonides, very badly, and one of the Ode to Grosphus rather better— I came home dumpish, answered a Letter from Mr Brigham the corresponding Secretary of the American Bible Society, inviting me to attend their anniversary Meeting at New-York the second Thursday in May.— Finished also my Letter to Charles.

*Day*. I rise about five O’Clock. Write upon my reply to the Appeal till eight— Between eight and nine, breakfast— Two hours after are absorbed in reading the Newspapers— I receive occasional visitors, who occupy one two or three hours— Write the Journal of the preceding day, which as observed at the beginning of the month is now a Journal of thoughts, and not of action— From three in the afternoon till five, I walk or ride my horse— Dine, between five and six; and write again in the Evening Letters, or on the Reply till between ten and eleven when I retire to bed— In my rides and walks I compose imitations of Fables of La Fontaine, or of Odes of Horace—but this occupation encroaches also upon some other part of my time— When in the midst of the construction of a Stanza, I return from my ride, I muse upon it sometimes an hour or two afterwards— And sometimes it takes me half an hour to write what I have been composing.— This Life would be happier than I have ever enjoyed if it could continue. But I have yet duties to perform— The tempest against me rages without; and I must quit this Eden to go home— What awaits me there is known only to him who disposes of all— Dugald Stewart gave Elliott Cresson the original lines written by Robert Burns, on turning up the Mouse’s Nest; and I find it in his Album— The last lines are before me— “And forward though I cannot see, I guess and fear.” and although I prefer the philosophy of Horace’s Odes to Licinius and Grosphus, I cannot keep my mind up to their elevation— Before the close of the next Month we are to remove, and I hope to have finished my Reply to the Appeal; and pray for the perseverance of Fortitude to endure whatever of severity may yet be reserved for me— For Counsel to point out the best disposal of my Time for the remainder of the days allotted me on Earth, and for merciful dispensations of Providence.