D/JQA/36 May 1829 Suzie Ting

Friday 1. May 1829.

1. V: Friday.

Dawes Rufus

Dawes Horace

Huntt. Henry

Rufus and Horace Dawes are Sons of the late Judge Dawes who reside at Baltimore— They came this morning, and Elizabeth Cranch and Abigail S. Adams returned with them to judge Cranch’s— Dr Huntt was here and spoke of the universal consternation of all the office-holders at Washington, upon the dismissions which have taken place within the last two days. A large portion of the population of Washington, are dependent for bread upon these Offices; and it is a proscription of which no one knows upon whom it will fall next— Every one is in breathless expectation—trembling at heart and afraid to speak— Some of the dismissions are deserved; from age—from incapacity—from intemperance—from irregularities of private life, and these are made the pretext; for justifying all the removals— The persons appointed are of equally various characters—some good— The greater part very indifferent— Some notoriously bad— On the average much less respectable than those dismissed— Among the last is the Postmaster—Thomas Munroe, a man of excellent character highly esteemed; in whose place is substituted a Dr Jones; of no character at-all— Mr Sweeny one of the principal Clerks is like wise dismissed— This operation upon the Post-Office is doubtless intended to serve as a foundation for others; and is of most mischievous tendency to the morals of the community— I rode this day to the Navy Yard, and Eastern Branch, the weather being pleasant and rather cool. I got through with the Fable of Simonides; but very imperfectly, much to my dissatisfaction, and taking in not half the ideas of La Fontaine. In the Evening however I got through with Horace’s Ode to Grosphus, as well as I believe I am capable of performing— In this and the Ode of Horace to Licinius I have succeeded so well, that if I could be equally fortunate every day it would afford me a useful and creditable occupation for my leisure— But there is a secret of composition which I cannot discover— The reason why I find the extreme difference in the facility of writing, one day over another— And the great difficulty is the standard beyond which I cannot rise; which however golden for the condition of life, is but a Saturnian age of lead for poetry. I wrote this Evening part of a Letter to Mr Clay in answer to two from him.

2. V:30— Saturday.

Mr Frye came out this day about 1. O’Clock and asked me if I had received my Letters by the Mail— I had not. He asked if I had heard any thing of my Son George— No. He said he had seen a short paragraph in the Baltimore American of this morning; that George had been lost from the Steamboat Benjamin Franklin, between Providence and New-York, on Thursday Morning before daylight— Judge Cranch came out about half an hour after and confirmed the fact—brought with him three Letters which came by the Mail—one from Charles King—one from George Sullivan; and one from Davis and Brooks, who took charge of the trunk and effects of my unhappy Son. God be merciful to him and to his wretched Parents— The Condition of his Mother, from the time I informed her of the Event is not to be described— John and Mary are in deep affliction— Judge Cranch returned soon to the City and sent out Dr Huntt, who stayed till the Evening— But there was no medicine for this wound. Mr Frye remained here about two hours, and left Mrs Frye here to pass the Night.

3. VII. Sunday.

Judge Cranch, Mr Frye and Dr Huntt called again successively to day and from them and from two New-York newspapers which Mr Frye brought with him I gleaned some further {{pagebreak}}particulars of that fatal Event, the loss of my Dear, Dear Son George— I see the causes of it distinctly— The motion of the Stage and Steamboat in twenty-four hours had produced a fever, with a rushing of the blood to the brain— He had complained of it in the Evening: said he wished the motion would be great enough to produce Sea-sickness; and spoke of stopping a day at New-York to be bled— He had been pleasant and cheerful in conversation with several of the passengers in the afternoon; but got up in the Night, and spoke to two or three persons in a manner indicating a wandering mind— And thus walking on the upper deck of the boat; alone and in the dark; it pleased the disposer of all Events, to take him to himself— Blessed God! forgive the repining of mortal flesh, at this mysterious dispensation of thy will! forgive the wanderings of my own mind under its excruciating torture! have compassion upon the partner of my Soul; and bear her up with thine everlasting arm— Deep have been her afflictions heretofore— But this! oh this! stay thy hand God of Mercy— Let her not say My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?— Teach her and me; to bear thy holy will; and to bless thy name— Judge Cranch told me that Dr Watkins arrived here, under arrest yesterday, at the suit of the Government— He was in the same boat from Providence with my Son and was returning to this City when he was arrested at Philadelphia— He was taken yesterday before judge Cranch, who committed him to prison, requiring bail to the amount of 5000 dollars which he was unable to give— Mr F. B. Key was requested by the President to assist the District Attorney Swan, who is now absent in the prosecution; and told the judge they might perhaps require bail, to a larger amount— Judge Cranch brought home, Abigail S. Adams— Mrs Frye went home with Mr Frye; but Mrs. W. S. Smith came out to spend some days with her Sister— Human suffering can go but one degree beyond what she endures, and from which I humbly supplicate the throne of Grace that she may be spared— Last Sunday at Church, Dr Laurie read the 14th. Chapter of Job, with an impressiveness of manner which struck me exceedingly. How much more deeply is it brought home to me now— It was proper that some one of the family should go to New-York, to receive possession of my poor Sons effects, and to ascertain if it might be possible to recover his remains— I was desirous of going myself, and had so determined, but at the earnest recommendation of Mr Frye consented to let my Son John go, in my place, remaining myself here, with my dear and most afflicted wife. John wrote to my nephew W. S. Smith, to ask him to go with him, and received an answer that he would.

4. VI. Monday

Post. Reuben

Patterson. Revd. Mr

Keep.

Almighty and Merciful God; in the dispensations of thy Providence, it has seemed good unto thee to visit me and my family with a deep affliction in the sudden and mysterious departure of my eldest Son. Thou knowest Oh! God! the wants and infirmities of thy creatures; to thy overruling Providence, I commit myself and mine—humbly imploring of thy mercy to grant us strength equal to the trials which thou hast destined for us. I pray that we all may possess that broken and contrite Spirit which is well pleasing in the sight of God—that we may humble ourselves in the dust, and be conscious that thy chastisements have been deserved— That until it shall please thee to call us before thee to account for the deeds done in the body, thou wouldst make our strength as our day, and above all that thou wouldst in thy sore displeasure spare and sustain our intellectual faculties— For my own, for those of the partner of my life I implore; and that thou oh, God! wouldst not leave or forsake us— My Son John left us this morning, before noon, and proceeded with Mr W. S. Smith for New-York— Mrs Smith went into the City with John, but came back before dinner— Mrs Frye came out and spent about two hours with her Sister.— The Revd. Mr Post, minister of the Presbyterian Church—the first, and the Revd. Mr Patterson of Philadelphia, came out on a visit to sympathize with me, for which I pray the blessing of God upon them. They spoke to me words of comfort—from the holy gospel of God, and they kneeled and {{pagebreak}}prayed fervently with me, and for me and my family— They also promised me to pray devoutly for us, in their own supplications to Heaven— A young man by the name of Keep—belonging to Boston, came, and told me that he had passed great part of the last, and of the preceding Winter, and had attended most of the Drawing Rooms, but I did not recollect his person. He told me that he was a fellow passenger with my departed son, in the Steam-boat from Providence last Wednesday— That he himself had left Boston on Tuesday; but that the Boat of that day failed— And that in the Boat of Wednesday there were the passengers of two days— That George came in the Stage of Wednesday Morning, and embarked immediately in the Boat— That his conversation all the afternoon was cheerful and intelligent; but that in the Evening, he complained of a severe head-ache—said he wished the motion of the Boat, would be so great as to make him Sea-sick— He asked him, Keep, if he was coming on to Washington, immediately; and upon his answering that he was; said he was glad of it—that he would come on with him— That he had intended to stop one day at New-York, to be bled; but that for the sake of his company, he would come on immediately— That he had been for several days unwell; and that on Monday night after going to bed he had taken an impression that there were persons breaking into his chamber. That he had risen from bed, and made search; and although he found no person, and there was no person there; he had not been able to remove the impression from his mind— That his nervous system was so deeply affected, that he could not exclude the impression that the birds were speaking to him; and that the machinery of the Steam-boat seemed also, as if it was speaking— Keep said that this idea had sometimes occurred to himself; that it was like the sound of a person speaking; and George said it seemed to him, like the perpetually repeated words “let it be.”— That he had conversed with a missionary on board, named Peter Jones, who had Indian boys with him, and had given him a donation— That he had retired to his berth about the same time with most of the other passengers, but had got up and returned to bed twice in the course of the Night— That he waked a Mr Parker, a stranger, and asked him if he had been circulating reports against him among the passengers— Upon his saying no George went with a Candle to the births of other passengers, and then returned to his own. That he finally rose about three O’Clock; went to Captain Bunker and asked him to set him ashore— The Boat was then going at the rate of 16 miles an hour— Captain Bunker asked him why he wished to be set on shore— He said because there was a combination of all the Passengers against him—and he had heard them talking and laughing against him— Bunker’s attention was taken from this, by an accident, which immediately afterwards happened to himself in hurting his foot— George afterwards had some conversation with a Mr Stevens, a Common-Councilman of Boston—who is now here; and who Mr Keep said had told him that he would have called upon me, but did not know how he should be received; he being a warm partizan of the present administration. I desired Mr Keep to say to Mr Stevens, that I should be much obliged to him if he would call. It was but about ten minutes after this conversation with Mr Stevens, when Stevens, seeing Georges Hat near the edge of the end of the upper deck of the Boat, enquired if any body had seen him within a few minutes— He was not to be found in the Boat— From the situation of his hat and Cloak, it was inferred; that in the wandering of his mind he had fallen overboard. It was too late for human help— The rest Oh! God! is only known to thee— It was thy will, to take him from the world, unseen by human eye; unheard by human ear— Oh! God! remember him and us in mercy; hear us on thy throne; and when thou hearest answer and forgive. {{pagebreak}}This was a day of deep and dreadful affliction to the partner of my life; whose state of health is itself alarming, by the still flowing mercies of God, our reason has not deserted us, but imaginations wild and unsustained by reason come over us both— I walked this afternoon round the square at the back of the College, and in the deepest anguish of my Soul, saw a Rainbow suddenly spread before me. It touched my heart by no superstitious fancy, but by an association of ideas, as an admonition to trust in the goodness and mercy of God.

5. VI. Tuesday.

The overwhelming calamity which has befallen me, has in a great measure prostrated my faculties, both of mind and body. Reason is unseated, and nature sinks in the agony of imagination. Dr. Huntt and Mrs Frye were here this day— The Dr. had little to tell except particulars of the delinquencies of that wretch Watkins, the pretext for an unfeeling and profligate system of official proscription, extending over the whole Union— My dear wife, suffering under severe indisposition herself; and affectionate with the most vivid attachments of a mother’s love; sustains this blow with fortitude firmer than my own— I passed with her almost the whole of this day— We agreed that I should read in the book of Common Prayer, to-morrow the service of the Dead; in the humble hope that our Creator, will graciously condescend to accept it in behalf of our hapless Son— I walked alone; two hours before dinner; to the Rockville Road thence to the Turnpike, and back by the way of the College— In this walk I meditated a prayer to God; believing that the severe dispensations of his providence, are intented for wise and good purposes; imploring him that his purpose in this may be known and felt by us, and that it may bear the fruits of blessedness upon us and upon our conduct— This is the temper of mind into which I believe I ought to be brought by this Event, and for which the grace of God is yet necessary to controul the depravity of my nature— I long to cast off the world; and would henceforth commune only with God, and with my own family— The Law of my members wars with the Law of my heart. I was not able effectually to accomplish my prayer and must meditate over it again— Oh! my unhappy Son! what a Paradise of earthly enjoyment I had figured to my self as awaiting thee and me— It is withered for ever— But let not murmuring or repining pass from my lips— I received a Letter from my Son John written last Evening at Baltimore.

6. VI. Wednesday.

The perturbation of my mind is still exceedingly great, and my thoughts are so wandering that I distrust the operation of my own reason. A nervous agitation has succeeded the stunning first effect of the blow, which enjoins with double force the duty of prayer for the mercy of God to sanctify for good to our Souls this dreadful calamity— The reason and the fortitude of my dear wife still sustains her, but her health is suffering with nightly fevers, and an aggravation of her cough— This morning I read to her, in presence of her Sister Smith of my Son John’s wife and of Abigail S. Adams, the Service of the dead, from the episcopal prayer book; accommodating it to the peculiar circumstances of his decease; imploring of the mercy of God that he would accept of this offering, as of our parental duty to our dearly beloved, and unfortunate child. It rends my heart to think of him as he was; all goodness and affection. Mr Hawley, the minister of St. John’s Church, came and spoke words of kindness and of consolation to us: and prayed with us. He told us some additional circumstances which he had heard from Dr Watkins, respecting the conversation of our dear Son the evening before his decease; which was cheerful, lively and intelligent; all concurring with what we had heard before. Dr Watkins is yet in prison, and his case is now before the Grand-Jury, of the District. {{pagebreak}}I rode my horse about two hours before dinner— Received a Letter from my dear Son Charles dated the 2d. on which day he received as we did the dreadful intelligence of his brother’s death— I answered his Letter— Mr and Mrs Frye; with their little Son Thomas came out and dined with us— Mrs Adams too came down and sat at table with us: but the exertion was too great for her strength, and in the Evening she fainted. Her Spirit is sustained by the Mercy of God. Oh! May her health not sink under it—

7. V:30. Thursday.

Dr Huntt was here this morning and advised my dear wife and me, with regard to the state of our health— Mr Andrew Bigelow the minister of the Unitarian Church called, in the kindness of sympathy, and administered soothing consolation in my sorrow: he prayed with me at my desire; and told me many circumstances of his acquaintance and relations with my dear and lamented Son— His brother John P. Bigelow was a member of the Common-Council of Boston, with my Son, and particularly intimate with him; and he speaks with admiration of the pure and independent Spirit with which his brother testified that George had always conducted himself in the Common-Council— It is a bitter and yet a soothing consolation to hear the praise and the promise of him whom we have lost— I rode to Georgetown, and on returning called at Mr Frye’s, and spoke with them but did not go in— My mind still wanders; and spent itself again in composing a prayer— I believe that Special Providences enter into the general purposes of the Creator, and trust it was in his designs to chastise me in the immature and lamentable fate of my Son— This thought I have reduced to writing and to Rhyme; and with it I have joined an admonition of duty to the blessings yet left me, and for whom this sudden judgment strikes me with involuntary terror; and I have added an ejaculation of Soul, for the suffering victim himself— There is a pressure upon my heart and upon my Spirits, inexpressible and which I never knew before— As it subsides, it gives way to dejection and despondency, equally unknown to my feelings before— I endeavour to return to the occupations which interested me before this calamity; but hitherto without success— All the prospects for the remnant of my life, in which I had delighted are broken up—and I have nothing left to rely on but the Mercy of God—

8. V:15 Friday.

Potter— Revd. Mr

Tuckerman Edward

Bowdoin Mr

The health of my dear wife is suffering under the stroke, the full severity of which we have not yet felt— The mind is stunn’d by sudden and heavy calamity, as is the body by the infliction of a blow upon the head— The consciousness of pain returns with a renewal of sensation, and disease and infirmity of body come back with aggravation— I feel this sensibly, but it presses more intensely upon my beloved wife— She was obliged this day to take to her bed—had a severe fainting fit, followed by distressing perspirations, a racking cough, and a strong fever— I received a Letter from my brother at Quincy, and one from Harriet Welsh— They were both consolatory— Harriet’s was addressed to my son John; and while every line of it attests the purity, the benevolence, and the cheerful Spirit of our dear departed Son, it aggravates the burden of our irreparable bereavement— I rode on horseback before dinner; and again endeavoured to fix my wandering thoughts by composition. After my return home the Revd. Mr Potter, Minister of St. Paul’s Church, at Boston, Mr Edward Tuckerman, and Mr Bowdoin, son of T. L. Winthrop called to visit me— They have been travelling from Boston the last fortnight by Land came to the City yesterday—went this morning to Mount Vernon, and proposed {{pagebreak}}going this Evening as far as Rossburg upon their return— Mr Potter appears to be travelling for health— I received in the evening a kind sympathising Letter from Dr. T. Sewall.

9. V. Saturday.

My dear wife continued very unwell, all this day—confined to her chamber, and almost entirely to her bed— Dr Huntt was here this morning. Mr Thomas Munroe late Postmaster of the City, but removed from Office the first of this Month, called and paid me a visit— Mrs Frye with her Son Thomas was here before our dinner— Abigail S. Adams went to spend the Sunday at Mrs Elliot’s— I received Letters from my Son John, and from G. Sullivan at New-York, from D. H. Storer at Boston, and from John Connell at Philadelphia— Answered Dr Sewall’s Letter— I rode my Horse two hours before dinner. My mind threatens sinking into impotence— It is inexpressibly painful to me to think; and every day more and more difficult to write— Mr Persico the Sculptor came out this afternoon, and took leave— He is going to morrow for New-York— There to embark for Liverpool and thence going to Naples to undertake the two Colossal Statues for the Capitol.

10. V:15. Sunday.

Walk to the Presbyterian Church, and heard Mr Campbell, from Hebrews 2.14. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15. And deliver them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” This was a sensible discourse upon the fear of death; not remarkable for any novelty of thought or peculiarity of eloquence— Mr Cutts with whom I came out of the Church told me he had now nothing to do, but attend to his gardening. I spent great part of the day in my wife’s chamber. She is this day a little better; but yet very ill— I read to her a few chapters of Horace Walpole’s reminiscences; and in the Evening I finished a Letter to H. Clay which I had begun the second day of this month.

11. V:15. Monday.

Cool weather again— Dr. Huntt was here this morning, and afterwards Mrs Frye. I received a Letter from my Son John at New-York where he proposed remaining till this day. I rode my horse the ten Mile round before dinner— The rest of the day occupied writing in my own room, and in the chamber with my wife reading to her in the intervals, when her health would admit of it.— I read Horace Walpole’s Reminiscences, respecting George the first and George the second— Their Queens, their Courts, their Ministers and Mistresses. The anecdotes are almost all degrading to the reputation of those personages; especially to the two kings, and to Frederick Prince of Wales, father of George the third.

12. V:15. Tuesday.

Mr William Slade was here this morning and spent more than two hours with me. He belongs to Middlebury in the State of Vermont, and at the very earnest recommendation of several members of Congress from that State particularly Mr Seymour of the Senate, I appointed him while I was Secretary of State, a Clerk in that Department— He is a Man of superior Talents; had been Secretary of the State of Vermont, and had published a valuable Volume of Vermont State Papers— He was qualified for much higher Office than that of an ordinary Clerk, and had been recommended for the Office of fourth Auditor, which I now regret that he did not obtain. He is one of those whom Mr Van Buren, on the 28th. of last Month dismissed from the Department, by a note saying that he gave them {{pagebreak}}that early notice, with the option to leave the Office immediately or at the end of the Month—observing that it was a painful duty, and assuring him of his good wishes for their welfare— Slade wrote to ask him if his dismission was caused by any imputation of misconduct— Van Buren answered equivocally that there was no charge against him— Slade replied by a long and severe Letter and published the Correspondence in the National Journal and Intelligencer— Mr Slade spoke to me of my controversy with the Boston confederates, and I told him I had nearly finished my Reply to their Appeal but that it was doubtful whether I should ever publish it—and that I certainly should not without giving it a thorough revisal— He intends leaving the City to-morrow or the next day, to return to Middlebury— I rode to Georgetown and to the Tenleytown Turnpike before dinner; and returned, calling at Mr Frye’s— Read the Walpoliana Some of Horace Walpole’s Letters written during the last years of his life—

13. V:15. Wednesday.

I received this morning a Letter from my Son John at New-York, dated on Monday and declaring that he had concluded to stay one day longer there— I finished the first draught of my reply to the appeal of the Boston confederates. It has occupied me three Months, and I feel a satisfaction that it is written and may remain behind me for my justification— But the events of the present time, and above all my domestic calamities warn me against the publication of it for the present: and probably it might be advantageously abridged by one half.— I rode this day back of the Race-ground, and by Pierce’s Mill coming out by the Lane from Adlums on the Turnpike to Georgetown; a road that I had never found out before— Mrs Frye was here— And on my return from my ride I found a man named West from near Chambersburg in Pennsylvania, who told me he came to see me merely from curiosity— I read Horace Walpole’s Narrative and Correspondence with David Hume respecting the quarrel of the latter with Rousseau— My dear wife was quite unwell again this Evening. I have invited Mrs W. S. Smith to go with us to Quincy: and I consented at Abigail S. Adams’s request that she should go home with Mr and Mrs. Bigelow.

14. V:15. Thursday.

Dr Huntt was here this morning and spoke of the proceedings of the President, and of his administration in the process of his reforms— They are now falling upon the brevet pay double rations and contingent emoluments of the Officers of the Army, which were allowed by Mr Calhoun while Secretary of War, upon a questionable construction of the Law; but which having been known to Congress and sanctioned by successive Appropriations, I had not withdrawn— The saving to the public will be of a few thousand dollars deducted from the pittance of the principal Officers of the army; which must be made up to them in some other way, or they must be starved out— Huntt says the Grand Jury yesterday found a Bill against Dr Watkins. I began this morning some remarks upon parties in the United States— Rode my ten mile round, and on my return, found my Son John returned from New-York, without tidings of his brother’s remains— Every measure has been taken however to recover them, if so be the Will of God— Mrs Smith returned this Evening to the City to her husband, who came back with John, but did not come out here— I read some pages of the Walpoliana, and finished the reading of Pelham— My wife is yet very unwell, and my own mind is rambling under deep distress; but I hope not ingratitude.

{{pagebreak}}15. V:15. Friday.

Last evening Mr Billing a collector of city taxes called upon me with an account of taxes for the last four years upon my Square N. 592. I had requested that it might be sold to pay the taxes with a view to obtain a perfect title from the Corporation; but it has not been done— I desired again that he would advertise the Square for that purpose, which he said he would do— Dr. Semple called upon me this morning to speak of the Affairs of the College— He told me of another meeting of the Baptist Association, and of another great effort which he said they had made to obtain funds, for paying off their debt— I thought it did not amount to much. He told me he was going to Boston and Providence, and before that to Virginia; to obtain contributions— He spoke with sensibility of my misfortune, and said he had lost a promising Son— William Browne late a Clerk in the Department of State came out and shewed me his Accounts, which he is now about settling— There is a balance of near 500 dollars, for which he is responsible and which he knew not where to find— I told him if he would procure a certificate from the accounting Offices, shewing that this balance would affect his Settlement, I would lend him the money upon such Security as he offered me. Mrs Frye and Mrs W. S. Smith were here. I rode my horse to the Navy-Yard and Eastern Branch Bridge— Wrote to Commodore Chauncey and to Mrs K. Browne, from whom I received a Letter last Evening.

16. V:15. Saturday.

Mr William Brown came this morning, and brought the certificate of the balance due upon the Settlement of his Accounts— Deeds to him of a lot of Land belonging to him in the City, and of 120 Acres of Land in Pennsylvania, which he promised to convey to me absolutely, for security, upon my promise to reconvey the same to him on his payment to me of the Money— Also an endorsement of E. M. Blunt.— He had not time to make the conveyances of the Lands this day, but promised to make them immediately after his arrival at New-York— He was very anxious to go to-morrow, his means for defraying the expense of the Journey being likely to fail him if he should stay longer— I gave him a check for 500 dollars taking his Note, payable on demand with interest, endorsed by E. M. Blunt—and his promise of the Deeds of the Lands for security. Mr Fendall came out and passed two or three hours with me— He has been to Baltimore with a view to making arrangements for editing the National Journal, if Dr Watkins should become morally disqualified by a verdict against him— I had some conversation with Mr Fendall, concerning my Notes on the subject of parties in the United States; and read to him part of what I had written— I gave him also the whole of my manuscript reply to the Appeal. I rode before dinner; nearly the ten mile round— My wife received a Letter from Charles— Thomas and John Welsh have failed for a heavy Sum, and the family are again ruined. Not a day passes without bringing me some new affliction. May I have strength to meet them all, as becomes a man and a Christian, and may the divine mercy preserve me from despair.

17. V:15. Sunday.

Abigail S. Adams left us to return home with Mr and Mrs Bigelow. I walked to the Presbyterian Church where Mr Campbell baptized a female infant—and a Stranger preached from Matthew 16.26. [“]For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?” The value of the Soul, and the loss of the Soul were the topics upon which the preacher dwelt with great emphasis— Dr Huntt was in the pew with me— He thought it a very strong discourse— Walking home, I stopped at Genl Macomb’s House, but he had not returned from Church— Mr and Mrs Frye, with their little Son Tom dined with us—and Mr and Mrs W. S. Smith. I am reading Burns’s Letters, and the Edinburgh Review of Lockhart’s Life of Burns.

{{pagebreak}}18. V:15. Monday.

Richard Henry Lee called upon me this morning. He is one of the persons who at my special desire had been appointed a Clerk in the War Department under the Paymaster General, and who has been removed— He says it will be a benefit rather than a disadvantage to him, but I am afraid he is mistaken— It gave him a pittance which I fear he will not find elsewhere— He is going to Boston, and asked me for a Letter of Introduction to Mr Quincy, President of the University at Cambridge which I promised him. He goes with Fendall, and speaks of a wish definitively to settle there. He strongly feels the indignity of his dismission and the unworthy pretexts upon which it was made. I rode by Pearce’s Mills and Adlum’s Corner back through Georgetown, and composed three Stanzas but my mind is sinking into absolute stupefaction— Dr Huntt was here this morning— A Summer’s eve and I walked in the Porch—

19. V:15— Tuesday.

Hamilton James A.

Elliot William

Sparks Jared

Sewall Thomas

Griffin Dr

Clergyman from N. York

    of Boston

The Summer is setting in with oppressive heat; about my usual time of riding, a thunder shower came up— I walked about half a mile from the house and returned, and afterwards had no other exercise than walking in the Porch— William Elliot came and took leave of me; a Clerk in the Patent-Office dismissed by Mr Van Buren. He was the most scientific man in any of the public Offices and a very efficient Clerk. He is going in to Pennsylvania, and says he has the offer of a situation better than that he has lost. He proposes to pass the next Winter here. Mr James A. Hamilton came and shewed me the despatches received from Mr Offley and Commodore Crane, who have failed in their Negotiation— So however that with new Instructions they may succeed with ease— The dates of the despatches come down to 23. February— Hamilton told me he was going to-morrow for New-York, and apologized for not shewing me his brother John’s Letter to him as he had promised me he would when he was last here. He said he had without thinking of it packed it up with his papers to send to New-York; but he promised to send it to me— I told him I had seen his brother Alexander’s publication with surprize; but it was probable I should not for the present take any notice of it— He repeated that he entirely disapproved of it, and that his younger brother did so likewise— Mr Sparks called here early in the Evening; just returned from Europe, where he has been to seek for documents relating to our revolutionary War and where he has had access to the public Offices, both in France and England. He says he has collected many and of much importance; but Mr Van Buren, demurs upon the fulfilment of the contract made with Mr Sparks by Mr Clay, for publishing the Correspondence of the Ministers of the United States in Europe, during the Revolutionary War— Mr Sparks spoke of the aid which he had received from the Marquis de Marbois, in obtaining access to the public documents in France— He goes for Boston to-morrow— Dr Sewall came with Dr Griffin, the President of Williams College; a Clergyman from New-York and a person from Boston, the names of both of whom I did not retain— I received a Letter from Mr John Stevens, at Boston, who was in the Steam-boat, with my dear, and lamented Son, when he was lost.

{{pagebreak}}20. V. Wednesday.

Semple— Dr

Fendall Philip R.

Thayer

Ransom.

The heat is becoming so oppressive that I can no longer ride in the middle of the day— I therefore rode this morning the ten mile round; before breakfast, returning by the way of the race-ground, and the College— Dr Semple called upon me immediately after my return: said they had made a dividend of 12 1/2 per Cent of their small debts, and that they were now ready to give me the lien on their property which they had promised. Asked me which I would prefer a mortgage or a deed of Trust— I thought a mortgage would be the simplest, and he said they would prefer it for the same reason. There is already a mortgage to the Bank, and a Deed to Trustees for the other Creditors generally— But as those creditors shall be paid off that Deed will be superseded— My Mortgage must come after that to the Bank— Mr Fendall brought back my Manuscript Reply to the Appeal, upon which he made several remarks— He is going to-morrow for Boston, with R. H. Lee, and expects to return here, about the 10th. of next Month. I spoke to him of my Notes upon the History of Parties in the United States which are swelling under my hands; but of which I am growing weary. Mr Thayer and Mr Ransom brought me a Letter of Introduction from Mr Charles Bulfinch— Mr Thayer is a Son of Dr Thayer of Lancaster Massachusetts— Mr Ransom is a Clergyman from Vermont— They have been passing the Winter at Charleston S.C. and are now returning to the North— I received a Letter from my Son Charles, and composed the following Hymn— The Hour Glass. Alas! how swift the moments fly, How flash the years along, Scarce here, yet gone already by: The burden of a Song— See childhood, Youth and Manhood pass, And age, with furrow’d brow: Time was, Time shall be, drain the glass; But where, in Time is now?— Time is the measure but of change: No present Hour is found: The past, the future fill the range, Of Time’s unceasing round: Where then is now? in realms above: With God’s atoning Lamb. In Regions of eternal Love; Where sits enthron’d I am. Then Pilgrim, let thy joys and tears, On Time no longer lean: But henceforth all thy Hopes and Fears, From Earth’s Affections wean, To God let votive accents rise, With Truth, with Virtue live: So all the bliss that Time denies, Eternity shall give.

21. V. Thursday.

Worth Coll.

Rogers Lloyd N.

Marshall John junr

Semple Dr

I rode this Morning to my old bathing place on the Potowmac River, and there bathed and swam about ten minutes— Then rode round by the Capitol; home before Breakfast. Called at General Macomb’s, but he was not at home. Coll Worth and Mr Rogers paid me morning visits— Worth comes from fortress Monroe and is going to West Point, which he urged me also to visit. Mr Marshall is the eldest Son of the Chief Justice of the United States, and made me a visit of civility. He sat with me an hour or more after dinner— Dr Semple was also here, and spoke again of the Security which he proposed to give me for the College. He desired me to mention a Lawyer, whom they might employ to draw the conveyance; and I named Mr Barrell, who he said was perfectly agreeable to him— I rode an hour this Evening with my Son John in his gig. And I answered the Letter received from Mr John Stevens. There was published in the National Journal of this morning said to be taken from the New-Bedford Mercury a short poem of three six line Stanza’s called the Spark at Sea—and ascribed to my ever lamented Son George— They are beautiful— Tender, Melancholy, full of delicacy, and indicative of that warm and affectionate heart which was his virtue and his misfortune— The lines seem to have too an extraordinary bearing upon that mysterious incident of his own fate— The spark at Sea, which glimmers o’er the Seaman’s grave, and which is emblematic of faithful friendship, forms an association, deeply pathetic in itself and rendered intensely so, by the unconsciousness of its application to himself.

{{pagebreak}}22. V. Friday.

Harrison

Barrell.

I rode again this morning before Breakfast, by Pearce’s Mill, and Adlum’s corner through Georgetown— The weather was oppressively warm for riding even at that early hour— Mr Barrell was here, and had a long Conversation with me, concerning my demands upon the Columbian College— He advised a Deed of Trust rather than a mortgage to which I assented— And I gave him the Securities of my debt that he might have reference to them in drawing the Deed— a young man named J. Burton Harrison wrote me a note, mentioning that he had been the bearer of a Letter to me from Mr Ticknor in January 1827. and requesting to see me, and for Letters of introduction to Bonn and Berlin; to which places he is going. He came at one O’Clock, the time I had appointed— I told him I had no acquaintance at either of those places— He then asked me for a Letter to the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, but I told him I was not upon a footing of acquaintance with that Prince, which would warrant me in introducing my friends to him— Mrs W. S. Smith and Mrs Frye with her Son Tom were here after dinner, and I took an Evening ride with John.

23. V. Saturday.

Lee— William

I rode this morning the ten Mile round, before Breakfast— This arrangement deprives me of the most convenient time for writing and I write with much more difficulty in the interval between Breakfast and dinner— My observations upon parties grow under my hands, and I shall not be able to finish them here. This is a great disappointment as I know not when I shall be able to resume them— William Lee was here— He had told me when last here that he had secured an employment which would more than indemnify him for the loss of his Office— He now came to borrow 200 dollars to enable him to go to Boston. But I declined lending them. He told me that Mr Eaton, the Secretary of War, and Mr Williams Lee’s successor as 2d. Auditor had assured him that on the first of next Month, there would be a general sweep out of all the remaining Offices in the Departments. I rode this Evening with John to the Navy-Yard.

24. V. Sunday.

Walk to the Presbyterian Church and heard Mr Campbell preach from Romans 5.19. “For as by one Man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” The usual calvinistic argument—derivative sin, and derivative atonement— My mind is inaccessible to this doctrine— They who say it is the Will of God, have some countenance from the Scriptures, They who argued from the analogy of physical transmitted evil are not without evidence; but when they argue its Justice my reason stops— There is express authority to the contrary in Scripture, and I believe that— Mr Campbell baptised a female child, and gave notice of a Sunday School meeting in the afternoon— At four in the afternoon I attended the funeral of Mrs Susan A. Hall, wife of David M. Hall, and daughter of Mr Charles Bulfinch— On my return I stopped at General Macomb’s and asked him for a furlough to T. B. Adams jr. during the Summer Months— He is stationed {{pagebreak}}at Sullivan’s Island near Charleston S.C. and I told the General I had received a Letter; not from him but from an old gentleman a friend of mine at Charleston, intimating that there would be danger in a Summer residence at Sullivan’s Island, to a Northern Constitution, and advising an application for a furlough to the Lieutenant. The General promised readily to send one, but said that Sullivan’s Island was as healthy a situation as there was in the United States and that he had resided there four years himself— He asked for how long I wished the furlough— I told him only while the danger lasted— He said it would be till the frost— Susan Roberdeau and the General’s three daughters were there— It was past seven when I got home and we dined.

25. V. Monday.

Torlade Chevalier.

I rode before breakfast the ten Mile round— The Chevalier Torlade Charge d’Affaires from the King of Portugal de facto Don Miguel, paid me a long morning visit, and mentioned to me his present situation here— He had arrived here with Letters of Credence from Don Miguel as Regent—having been appointed during the preceding Regency of his Sister Donna Isabella— But before his arrival here Don Miguel had assumed the Crown as King, but was not recognized by none of the European Powers— I had declined receiving him on the ground that Don Miguel being at all Events no longer Regent his Credentials as such could not be received, and reserving the question of recognition till the new Credentials should be received— These are now come, but the President still suspends that reception of him— He says he is going to revoke immediately all the Commissions of the Portuguese Consuls; and that he himself to his great regret will be compelled to embark shortly on his return to Portugal. The dignity of the king not permitting him to keep his charge d’Affaires here unrecognized. He says that Don Miguel positively refuses to marry his niece, and that an inclination for a Bavarian Princess has perhaps some influence upon this determination— He told me that his despatches from his Government expressed great regret at the change of Administration here. But I incline to think that Don Miguel’s sympathies are with the Hickory broom. Mr Torlade asked if there had not been received from Governor Barbour, an exposition delivered to him, an exposition of Don Miguel’s right to the Crown of Portugal, by his Minister at London to be communicated to me with an Autograph Letter from the King— I had not received the Letter, but had some recollection of the exposition, as having been received either from T. L. L. Brent, or from Mr Barbour— Mr Torlade said Mr James A. Hamilton told him he had seen it; but that Mr Daniel Brent said it was not now to be found in the Department. Mr Torlade spoke of the desire his Government had to conclude a commercial Treaty; and that they would readily agree to one upon the basis of equalizing duties such as we had proposed. I asked if he had powers to sign a Treaty. He said no—that his Government had thought best not to give him power to treat until they had ascertained whether he would be received. We had much other Conversation upon Portugal and Brazil.

26. V. Tuesday.

Morning ride on horseback to Georgetown, and ride after dinner with my Son John into the City— Dr Huntt was here after breakfast— My observations upon parties in the United States now absorb all my time, and have swollen to a much greater extent than I had intended— I must break off writing further on them now or postpone my return to Quincy, and I fear if I do break off that I may never resume them— They lead me over much of the same ground that I have already traversed in the Reply to the Appeal— These compositions upon the past, abstract me from contemplations of the future, and alone preserve me from despondency, which I cannot controul— I had foreseen evil enough— All that I had foreseen has come, and {{pagebreak}}it is nothing— Nothing to that stroke which I did not foresee, and which has unman’d me— I received a note from Mrs W. S. Smith declining to go with us to Quincy; and one from Mr R. Cutts asking a Certificate from me that I approved of his conduct as second Comptroller— The weather was sultry.

27. IV:45. Wednesday.

Downes Mrs

Wood— Miss.

Porter Sir Robert Ker

Barrell

Semple— Dr

Morning ride to the Eastern Branch Bridge— Miss Wood and Mrs Downes came to solicit a contribution for a new Baptist Church that they are about to build— A swarm from the Church of Obadiah B. Brown, which itself is not half a congregation— This is the fashion of all the Churches in Washington— All up to the ears in debt, and all splitting up to form new Societies— Sir Robert Ker Porter an Irish traveller whom we knew in Russia, and who there married a Russian Princess, called on me very unexpectedly this morning. He has been three years and a half in the Republic of Colombia, perhaps British Consul at La Guayra, and says he is now returning to England; there to embark for St. Petersburg for his daughter who is at the institute of education for the female nobility— The Princess his wife is dead— He said he had arrived at Philadelphia, and could not proceed without coming here to see me, and his friend Vaughan. He spoke much of Colombia, which he thinks cannot be a Republic, and of Bolivar of whom he is a great admirer— Believes Santander will be shot— Fears Bolivar will be assassinated, and that Paez will succeed him— I rode an hour with John after dinner. Dr Semple and Mr Barrell were here in the Evening— It was finally agreed that Mr Barrell should draw and Dr Semple should execute to-morrow a deed of mortgage to me of the College Land and property to secure payment of 65 per Cent of the College debt to me principal and Interest; in which is to be included also 500 dollars with interest due to my Son John in right of his wife— Mr Barrell spoke of the Indictment now against Dr Watkins, which is at Common Law, for fraud, or forgery or both— There is a demurrer to the Indictment which has been argued yesterday and this day and is to be continued to-morrow—by T. Swann District Attorney, and F. S. Key for the United States and by W. Jones and J S. Coxe for Watkins, whose reputation is at all Events blasted.

28. IV:30. Thursday.

Biddle— James

Semple— Robert

Rode the ten mile round before breakfast— Commodore Biddle paid me a morning visit; now from Philadelphia— He said there was some question of Etiquette upon which Captain Creighton now on the Coast of Brazil, and the British Admiral Owen did not exchange visits—and he says that such a state of things always produces scenes of quarreling between the Officers or Seamen of the respective Squadrons. He spoke of the probable return of Commodore Porter to this Country, and of the prospect of his restoration to the Navy, which he thought would be very disagreeable to the other Officers— I told him I thought it not improbable that it would be effected— Porter has asked leave of the Mexican Government to visit the United States, but had not at a late period obtained it. I rode out with John after dinner— Dr Semple was here and brought me the Deed of Mortgage drawn by Mr Barrell— My observations on parties still chain me down; and I have undertaken to compose a Ballad upon Impressment— We want national Songs, and the few that have been written are very poor— The American flag is the best and ought to be set to musick. Why is the art of Song writing so rare?

{{pagebreak}}29. IV:30. Friday.

White Asa.

Frye Nathanl

When I rode out this morning there was a thick fog— I went by the Race-ground back of Pearce’s Mills, the fog gradually clearing away, so that precisely as I came out at Adlums corner, the Sun came out in all his power, scorching from the fog; and I had the rest of my ride, for a great part facing him— I came home heated and overpowered with fatigue— A man named Asa White came with a petition, and a recommendation from a Lodge of Masons at Weymouth Massachusetts where he originally belonged. He said he was a boat-builder by trade and had been for some time employed in the public Service at Portsmouth Virginia; but was discharged last Summer; and is now without employment— He was apparently in great distress, and in some alienation of mind. His dress and appearance indicated no urgent want, and his petition was for an appointment, which I told him I had no power to bestow— I expressed a sympathetic concern for his suffering, at which he overflowed with gratitude— The cause of his grief additional to his disoccupation, he did not explain— After dinner, I rode out with my Son— Mr Frye was here in the Evening— I asked him for the papers relating to my payments on account of Thomas J. Hellen, which he promised to send me to-morrow Morning. He spoke of paying in certain bank stock, at the price which he had paid for it; though since depreciated. I told him I thought the Orphans Court would allow him for the depreciation— We have had several days of Summer heat which have brought on me an oppressive languor.

30. VI. Saturday.

Huntt. Henry.

I was very unwell all Night and this day—the first that I have been confined to the house, since the inflammation of my eyes at Ealing in 1815— I took a glass of Epsom Salts before rising, and afterwards by direction of Dr Huntt, an emetic, the operation of which was sluggish, and kept me for eight hours in a state of debility, qualms and faintness in which I could scarcely walk stand or even sit up.— I wrote a few lines in the morning; but found it impossible to continue; or to resume writing in the course of the day; which was at Summer heat— After noon there was a very heavy thunder gust, which lasted about an hour, and cleared off cooling the atmosphere partially— About Sunset this evening I was relieved by the operation of the emetic but found my weakness still upon me, so that I returned to bed just after the dusk. This single day of indisposition; almost without pain has brought sensibly home to my heart the multitude of enjoyments and blessings with which I am favoured by the giver of all Good, and for which I am not duly grateful— The loss of any one of them immediately makes its value felt— Health, next to conscious integrity is the greatest of them all—and in the loss of health how much is imputable to ourselves. I was able this day a little of Novels, and a little of Newspapers.

31. V:30. Sunday.

After an indifferent Night I found myself this day much better than yesterday; but still so weak that I could not venture out to Church— Dr Huntt was here, and prescribed to me to take 15 grains of rhubarb at night for several evenings to come— I read the Evening Service for the Sunday after ascension, and spent the remainder of the day in idleness. Rode an hour and a half after dinner with my Son John— Mrs Adams unwell with a severe head ache— A Heavy thunder gust in the Evening— Ouseley the Gardener at the President’s House, and William Pote came to bid us farewell on our approaching departure. Dr Huntt told us of the removal of Joseph Nourse, Register of the Treasury.

*Day*. Nothing regular— The Calamity inexpressibly severe with which I was visited on the last day of the last Month, has left me a remnant of life which can be varied only by degrees of affliction— May I not be permitted to forget my duties!