N° 48 **49**

Bath Apr 26 (Tues Even) [1796][1]

Watchful, my dear Sir, for y^{r} interest, I seize the earliest opportunity of acquainting you that there is a vacancy of physic^{n} to the Salisbury Infirmary just declared in consequence of Dr Dobson's resignation and quitting the profession and that the elect^{n} will come on about a fortnight hence. Consequently if you think it wou'd ans^{r} y^{r} purpose, no time ought to be lost. Dr Grove[2] is the other sen^{r} resident physic^{n} but relinquishing the Infirmary long ago. Dr Barlow is gone to the West Ind^{s} and his return doubtful, so that the place, at present, seems to present a promising opening for a phys^{n} especially if he succeeds at the Infirmary. Such is the opinion of Dr Dobson whom I met yest^{y} on the case of a young lady about 12 miles from Salisbury and who promised to pay attention to any candidate whom I sh^{d} recommend. Dr Harvey, late of Holt now of Wincanton, has connections with the Everetts and the leading persons in the neighbourhood, and has this day (on meeting him casually in Bath) promised, if you settle and will call on him, he will at my request, to give you recommend^{y} letters to the Everetts etc. I have also endeav^{d} to engage Mr Seagram, surg^{n}, in y^{r} interest. From the above you will learn my opinion, but as I have always said, in a matter of such moment, I cannot, dare not advise. From comparing circumstances on a view of the place and consulting your friends you may perhaps be able to form a judgement. Subscribers are requested to withhold all promise of their votes till the day of election—a prudent measure and probab^{y} suggested by the Earl of Radnor. Thus all may start fair. No honor lost by application—tho' the candidate fails of success. Your Brown's Elements and Hamilton's Morgagni[3] arrived before Mr Townsend's departure and safe here Dear Sir, With best respects to your mother}
sorry I was out when you called}
being a week in London}

yours assuredly
A. Fothergill

P.S. If you resolve to reconnoitre the town you may call on Dr Dobson with freedom (to whom I have opened the matter) and learn every particular. One saddle horse will at least be necessary if you settle at Salisbury, a very genteel town and opulent neighbourhood. But strict oeconomy these times must be the maxim throughout England. Dr Dobson has heard of no candidate yet, except a Dr Baker,[4] and thinks this need be no discouragement to others as he hints that he makes 600 per annum in his present and therefore seems indifferent. I have now given you all I know on the subject and have only to add my best wishes. I shall meet Dr Dobson again at Boyton[5] to see Miss Lambert on Thursday. Vale!

[1] The following letter (**50**) refers to the Salisbury vacancy, dating this one as 1796.

[2] Charles Grove (1747–1806), MD (St. John's College, Cambridge), physician to Salisbury Hospital.

[3] James Hamilton (1767–1839), *Observations on the seats and causes of disease; illustrated by the dissections of the late professor Morgagni of Padua*, vol.1, Edinburgh, 1795. No more published.

[4] Possibly Thomas Baker (1755–?), MD (Oxford?), practised in Bath, Norwich, and Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire.

[5] Boyton, a parish near Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

N° 47 **50**

Bath May 25th 1796

Dear Sir

During my absence from home arrived your obliging present of 4 chickens, one of which was the same night secretly conveyed from my garden, supposed to be effected by some rapacious cat. As the basket was ordered to wait here I shall, when Mr Townsend comes over, which I expect will be some time before the end of June, return it with y^{r} books by the carrier. By whom the vacancy at Salisbury is filled I have not heard, but think on the whole you determined wisely as it cou'd not (admitting you had carried it in preference to the other candidates of which there might have been much doubt) have been occupied without considerable expense at the offset. To carry an election for a hosp^{l} or even dispens^{y} in London, often costs the candidate from 500 to 1000$^{£}$ sterling. Some of these have a small salary annexed, others not, and in the country, except Haslar and Plymouth, I know not of one that has any salary—candidates always in plenty who offer their service gratis. Besides the multiplicity of other charities continually starting up, tends to divest the current of subscriptions, by w^{h} most of the hosp^{ls} are reduced to a low ebb, and find difficulty to keep their doors open to the wonted number of petitioning invalids. The numerous dispensaries have contributed not a little to the above defalcations, and have at the same time materially injured medical and chirurg^{l} practitioners and subtracted considerably from their annual resources. As soon as you are doing well at Castle Cary and have a large scope of country free from competitors, and live almost without expense, I cannot see why you may not in time extend y^{r} present sphere and render it productive of a very handsome income, perhaps superior to that of a large town with 3 or 4 senior antagonists. If you set apart 2 hours every day in prescribing for paupers they will not fail to spread your fame, and bring in opulent farmers and by degrees the neighbour^{g} gentry. But to do this [you] must sit down resolutely bent to continue, for if the slightest hint escapes you of a design to relinquish, it will at once destroy the interest you have made and damp all future hopes of establish^{t} among them. Dr Pulteney at Blandford[1] and other eminent men have done exceedingly well in small, insignificant, country towns. It is not the mere town that is an object but a populous neighbourhood and expanse of country unoccupied. An independency in physic is not to be obtained in these times without patient perseverance and indefatigable diligence for a course of years. The heavy expense of a great country [practice] is a grievous drawback and keeps many young practitioners of merit in a state of penury thro' life. If you obtain the interest of the apoth^{s} of the neighbour^{g} towns it will be a material step gained. Next to these you must gain over the clergy, school masters, midwives etc. etc. Dr Hawes J^{ur} displays much ingenuity and acumen in his Morgagni and I shall be glad to see the sequel. At present you may hire a horse cheaper than keep one w^{h} requires a serv^{t} to take care of him. In all difficult cases propose a senior physician in consult^{n} who, if he has y^{r} interest at heart as I have, he may rivet y^{r} interest. With best respects to y^{r} kind mother, with thanks for her present. I remain, D^{r} D^{r}

y^{r} assured friend

A. Fothergill

[1] Richard Pulteney (1730–1801), MD (Edinburgh 1764), FRSE, FLS, Extra-Licentiate of the RCP (1765), apothecary and physician, practised in Blandford, Dorset.

N° 51 **51**

Bath Octr 29th 1796

Dr Sir,

Herewith I hope you'll receive safe Brown's Elemt^{s}, 4 vols., Hamilton's Morgagni; 1 vol. with your M.S. cases—for the perusal of w^{h} accept my thanks. Had I not waited for Mr Townsend and your promised journey to Bath the parcel wou'd have been dispatched much sooner. Respecting Wry's case w^{h} you have well explained I know not whose care he is under in the Bath Hosp^{l} but I fear the prostate gland and cervix vesicæ[1] are indurated. Warm bathing, electr^{y} and blister to the lumbar region with Aq: Nephrit: alcal:[2] with milk internally might, I should hope, administer relief. In Abraham's case—the sensorial power is intercepted in some branches of the dorsal nerves and from this torpor–irreg^{r} motions are excited in other organs. Here, pumping of B:T: on the loins[3]—electr^{y} and blister[ing] are clearly indicated.

Internally T: Gucaci: vols 3 drachms T: Opii g^{r} xx—bis die aa [?]: e Lignis.[4]

The case of haematuria is extremely well explained and judiciously treated. The contusion of the kidney injured the secretion and gave a tendency to gravellish concretions. Next to rigid abstinence—on which I should place most stress—wou'd be alvine laxatives to produce piles or determin^{ns} to the hæmor^{l} vessels to disburthen the renal.

I was lately consulted together with Dr Crane[5] on the subdean's case at Wells; a periodical idiopathic haematuria—past the meridian of life and bon vivant—plethoric and sedentary. Has had 4 attacks in about 10 years—by similar plan has always found relief.

I am glad to hear y^{r} practice increases and agree with you in full conviction that a country station affords all the superior advantages respecting health, study etc., you mention. Respecting fees—moderation is the safest and most political side to lean to. I lately borrowed Zoonomia[6] at the Lib^{y} and run it hastily over. It exhibits an intermediate system between Cullen and Brown with improvement on the former and without the extravagancies of the latter. Much ingenuity however with no small portion of eccentricity. But it sh^{d} be read 2 or 3 times before a critical opinion can be formed, and half a century must elapse before the system can be expected to be adopted, and many revisions before it can be perfected. I perused Mr Hamilton's Morgagni with much pleasure, but with the orig^{l} or Alexander translation[7] being in most student's hands, I wish he had given an orig^{l} work on dissections with histories of cases prefixed without confining himself wholly to Morgagni. Morgagni's cases of pyrexia are by no means so clearly marked as might be wished. To reduce his rude matter into order according to modern pathology is a most arduous undertaking. Were accurate histories and dissections recorded at all our hospitals, a most important work might in time be formed from the materials. At present they are too scarce and too <u>isolated</u>. Mr Hamilton, so far as he has gone, has executed his plan greatly beyond what I cou'd have expected and in his notes and observations has displayed no small share of critical acumen. I wish him all possible success—But alas! while the public mind is absorbed in politics

and stunned by the din of arms scarcely any medical work how important so ever and tho' written with a sunbeam would be sufficient to command attention—much less remunerate the author. With best respects to Mrs Woodforde I remain,

Dear Sir, much yours,

A. Fothergill

P.S. When you come this way or forward any packet, pray don't forget to send Lettsom on Tea[8] and the other little tracts, some of which a friend or 2 wants to look over.

[1] The neck of the bladder.

[2] Aqua Nephritica had nutmeg as its principal ingredient. Alcal. possibly refers to an alkali, i.e. potash or soda.

[3] We have been unable to clarify this.

[4] Fothergill was prescribing (in the signs for Apothecary measures) 3 drachms of Tinctura Guaiacina volatilis and 20 grains of Tincture of opium—aa—of each—to be taken—*bis die*—twice a day. e Lignis could be a reference to Nephriticum Lignum, a South American wood used as a diuretic. e Lignis is not a recognized usage however.

[5] John Crane (1760–?), physician at Dorchester.

[6] Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802), *Zoonomia; or, the laws of organic life*, 2 vols., London, J. Johnson, 1794–96.

[7] Morgagni, see letter **23**, note 7. See also letter **49**, note 3.

[8] John Coakley Lettsom, *The natural history of the tea-tree, with observations on the medical qualities of tea, and effects of tea-drinking*, London, E. & C. Dilly, 1772.

N° 49 **52**

Bath Nov 5th 1796

Accept my thanks, Dr Sir, for your obliging present just now arrived. I am pleased to hear y^r^ dear mother got home safe and has had no return of a 2nd attack which however we have still some reason to dread, especy if she suffers anxiety to prey on her mind, but which she must by all possible means strive to avoid. Shou'd it unfortunately recur, shou'd recommend cupping with scarificat^n^ in the nape of the neck followed by a blister immediately on the part. The cathartic to be repeated as circumstances may point out and a nasal discharge encouraged by an occasional sternutatory.[1]

The head elevated in bed by an additional pillow. Nutritive diet in moderation but never a full meal. Drink may consist of good table beer, or toast and water with a little Lisbon or old raisin wine.

You'll easily comprehend the reason of these admonitions, and from the nature of the disease, see clearly their importance. I need not be more particular as your own good sense and penetration will readily suggest the principal indications, and your filial regard and affection will prompt you to pursue them with attention. With best wishes for y^r^ dear parent's perfect recovery. I remain, Dear D^r^, y^rs^ very sincerely.

A. Fothergill

[1] A medicine used to produce sneezing.

N° 50 **53**

[December 26] [1796?]

Dr Sir,

By accident, I this moment saw your advertisement in the Bristol paper—send me by coach or post immediately the list of subscribers that I may write to each I have any knowledge of, in your favour

Decr 26 Yours sincerely

Bath Walcot Parade N° 17 B. Dawson

P.S. To the above kind proposal, I must heartily [word missing] and you may rely on what interest we can muster. Be first well-assured of Dr W. resignation, for should the report be premature or sh^{d} he alter his mind you'll all be dished for geese, and y^{r} friends scouted for ganders. At all events, as the contest may be strong, and continue many weeks, launch not out into unnecessary expense, where the event must be uncertain and where perhaps, 2 of y^{r} opponents may unite their forces, and substitute cabal in place of merit. The Board sh'd request Governors not to promise their votes to the 1st comer but to wait till the merit of the respective candidates is well weighed, and their credentials duly examined. But the family of the wrong-heads is everywhere numerous and generally carry matter their own way, right or wrong, but more freq^{y} ye latter, being unqualified to judge. With best wishes for y^{r} success, D^{r} D^{r}, much yours

A. Fothergill

N° 62 **54**

Bath Jan: 25th /97

Dr Sir,

In daily expectation of some favorable opportunity of conveyance, I have waited till now that Mr Jean offers to deliver you this letter. In autumnal diseases and particularly in gouty habits attended with atonia, it will, I presume, be generally found that the temporary relief obtained by the lancet is on the whole dearly purchased. The dysenteric case you describe is I fear f^{m} long continuance become habitual, and the determination to the intestinal glands not easy to be removed. In some of these inveterate cases a considerable tract of the rectum and larger intestines have, on dissection, been found in a schirrous, sometimes in an ulcerated state, with considerable thickening of the intestinal coats and coarctation in certain parts of the canal. If this sh^{d} on examination with the finger be found to be the case, the disease will terminate in an incurable marasmus. If not, there may still be hopes especially if the patient cou'd go to a warm climate for 5 or 6 months, as Lisbon, Naples etc. At all events he sh^{d} wear flannel next the skin, and keep up a constant and if possible equable perspiration by mild anodyne perspiratives. The follow^{g} demulcent for common drink often proves salutary. Take of mutton suet fresh—One Apothecary ounce

—Milk—One pound or 12 Apothecary ounces
—Flour—One half Apothecary ounce
—Cinnamon—One half drachm[1]

Simmer the whole over a gentle fire about 5 minutes stirring it constantly. Leeches to the hæmorrhoids might afford temporary relief if there be throbbing and distention. The camp dysentery proceeding from marsh miasmata or putrid animal effluvia is doubtless contagious, but the present case seems not to have arisen under any suspicious circumstances of this sort, and it is supposed his domestics remain free from the disease. The malignant fever in the West Indies has, I hear, carried off since the commencement of the late ill-fated exped^{n} more than 16 med^{l} practitioners, above 200 officers and privates almost innumerable. I am pleased to reflect on y^{r} inclination of hazarding such a dangerous voyage was happily defeated, especy as I hear of y^{r} increasing success in a fine healthy rural situation free f^{m} the horrid din of arms. I am happy to hear y^{r} dear mother continues to recover, and remain with best wishes Dr Sir, much y^{rs}

P. s. No news f^{m} Mr Townsend. A. Fothergill

Dr Hawes writes that Mr Kempton, surgeon, carried his elect^{n} for London Hosp^{l} against 9 others, attended the committee and the day follow^{g} died apoplectic, aged 21.

[1] Fothergill gave the amounts in the signs for Apothecary measures.

N° 54 **55**

Bath Aug: 27th 97

Dear Sir

Your letter of yesterday did not arrive till near midnight, consequently cou'd not be ans^{d} by the Shepton carrier who sets out about noon. Being marked carriage paid, my housekeeper refused paying 9^{d}, w^{h} Pickwick's porter charges, assuring her the carriage was not paid. This you will of course explain that she knows how to act, to pay what is right, or prevent imposition. Besides the latter part of the letter implies its being sent by a messenger, not by any of the coaches. On such occasions as these never trust to anything short of an express messenger. The enclosed to Marshall I delivered this morn^{g} who was absent from home. To the many inquiries concern^{g} Mrs Purlewent w^{h} have been made since I saw her (now near 7 weeks!) I must confess I was much at a loss how to answer, and not a little surprised at your silence! From y^{r} accurate and circumstantial acc^{t} it appears that the remedies proposed, and particularly the digitalis, seemed to hold the disease at bay by subduing the hydropic symptoms, and insuring a copious flow of urine. When she grew tired of this, the disease, with its concomitant affections of the brain, gained ground, accompanied with increasing debility. That various other med^{s} have been since successively tried without the desired effect, for the increasing danger seems now to threaten a fatal termination. In a case of such infinite consequence to the patient—to her afflicted husband, and to the family! —a case w^{h} has its seat in the brain! and is in every point of view so extremely urgent!

and w^{h} demands in its treatment the utmost skill and discernment, and at the same time the most prudent and vigorous measures, you must be convinced that it is impossible for me, with either justice to our patient or satisfaction to myself, to propose any new plan without being on the spot and examining the pulse, the countenance and every leading and present circumstance w^{h} a quarter of an hour's observation at the bedside can alone supply, and w^{h} far exceeds the most elaborate description. Please to inform Mr Purlewent of this truth and if he inclines that we sh^{d} meet and make one more vigorous effort in her favor, you'll give me timely notice, and assure him of my best, my ardent wishes to administer every possible relief in this most distressing case. In the interim I am D^{r} D^{r} much y^{rs}

A. Fothergill

P.S. Mr Baynton waits my remarks on his tract w^{h} I lent you on ulcerated legs and delays the press for 2nd edit^{n}.[1] He wrote last week while I was in London. N.B. My regards to y^{r} d^{r} mother.

[1] Thomas Baynton, *Descriptive account of a new method of treating old ulcers of the legs*, Bristol, N. Biggs, 1797; second edition, Bristol, Emery & Adams, 1799. The P.S. seems to imply that the year was 1799, when Baynton's second edition appeared. Fothergill's regards to Woodforde's mother negate this possibility. She was dead in August 1799. The evidence of Mrs. Purlewent's case (see letter **56**) suggests 1797 as the most likely. Perhaps Baynton's *Account* had appeared very early in 1797 and he was hoping for a second edition later that year or early the next.

N° 55 **56**

Bath 8^{ber} [October] 16th 1792 [1797]

Dear Sir,

I lament that your patient's case continues to baffle all your efforts. You have, it seems, tried the full force of diuretics, sudorifics and even mercury itself, whence it appears clear to me that the disease ought no longer to be treated vi et armis,[1] but that the constitution ought to be restored and the digestive organs improved by some mild restoratives, otherwise it is to be feared she will soon undergo a total prostration of strength, and get into a lingering state of hopeless debility worse than even death itself. Not long ago an epileptic girl at a neighbouring boarding school, of a feeble constitution and still weaker digestive powers attended with severe headache and giddiness. She had tried, before I saw her, sundry Herculean remedies which rather exasperated the disease. I advised a course of Bath waters, here on the spot, with mild restoratives, on w^{h} she soon recovered and that without any subsequent relapse. A beautiful young lady of 15 in Portland Place labouring under similar symptoms is now going on under similar treatment with very promising signs of success. Please to communicate this to Mr Purlewent with my best respects and acquaint him that had I an opportunity of seeing his wife (whose case I greatly pity), I should by no means despair of convincing her of the absolute necessity of beginning some plan of this kind and submitting to strict regimen, without w^{h} the best plan may be defeated. To prevent loss of

time and to clear the system of the remains of mercury, w^{h} may be done in about 3 days, I would advise the following; instead of giving way to despondency let me persuade her to cherish hope and resolve for her own sake and that of her family, to let nothing on her part be wanting that may administer to her relief or contribute to the satisfaction of her relations. With best wishes for her recovery. I am, Dr Sir, much yours.

A. Fothergill

P.S. The tracts on pneum^{l} medicine publ^{d} by Beddoes, Watt etc.,[2] are, amount^{g} to ab^{t} 14 or 15^{s}/- Many of the cases are now doubted. 3 numbers were lent to me to read, but I shall not purchase the rest. The Boston Amer^{n} Mem^{s}, a Micell^{s} work with some good papers.[3] 1st vol. I have had from Bath Agricultural Soc^{y} but not the rest, but of these matters more when we meet. N.B. My respects to Mrs Woodforde.

[1] "By force of arms".
[2] Thomas Beddoes (1760–1808) and James Watt (1736–1819), *Considerations on the medicinal use of factitious airs and on the manner of obtaining them*, 5 pts. in 1 vol., Bristol, Bulgin & Rosser, [1794?]–1796.
[3] *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vols. 1–2, Boston, 1785–93.

N° 52 **57**

Bath Feb 17th 1798

Before me, Dear Sir, is your favour received a few days ago, from w^{h} I am much concerned to hear your dear mother has suffered another attack. However as you are in possession of the means which formerly not only afforded relief, but also procured a longer interval than cou'd well be expected, you'll be at no loss how to modify the same to present circumstances and the exigencies of the case. Should these fail I see no objection to a trial of electricity, but must observe that notwithstanding it seems so perfectly apposite to the nature of the disease and at first view holds forth the most promising hopes of relief, yet in no disease to w^{h} it seems adapted has it so little answered my expectation as in palsies. This among other instances ought to inspire diffidence in medical theories even when they assume the most flattering aspect. "Non fingendum aut excogitandum (says the great Verulam) sed inveniendum quid natura aut faciat aut ferat."[1] But after all, I am not certain that many of its failures may not have been owing to the want of skill or dexterity in the operator rather than inefficacy of the remedy. If the slow typhus you describe be really epidemic showing clear signs of contagion, an emetic on the 1st attack, agreeable to Lind[2] and other respectable writers, may sometimes, as in your own use, crop the disease in its bud. But this I apprehend depends on the contagion being received by the saliva and conveyed to the stomach. When rec^{d} by the cutaneous pores or inhaled in inspiration, as perhaps more often happens, it is too far out of the sphere of action of an emetic, and the disease accordingly runs its course. As we are but seldom able to trace the mode in which the morbid fomes is received into the body, I wou'd earnestly persuade a full and fair trial of the following method of prevention which has lately been found to counteract even the plague itself, not only as prophylactic but even cure when administered in the 1st stage of

the disease. Let the patient be stripped in a warm room and powerfully rubbed with Oleum Oliva over the whole surface till copious perspiration ensues, which is to be encouraged in a warm bed and repeated evening and morn^{g} 3 or 4 times if need be, using near a pint of oil each operation. Let the diet be light, spoon meat of the vegetable kind and strict temperance observed. Let a journal of such cases be kept, and the genuine effects undisturbed by other remedies be noted, and then let me know the result. Dr Currie's tract on water in fevers etc. I have not seen.[3]—van Swieten and Morgagni I understood you have already read—after this, such volum^{s} writings, however excellent, are perhaps better calculated to refer to occasionally than to peruse again at so short a period, especy now that the theories of both are almost obsolete. I should rather advise writing cases imaginary, according to the classes of Sauvages or Cullen.[4] First simply, and next with complications, giving the prognosis, indications and ratio medendi, marking the contraindications. This I know to be highly useful to a young pract^{r} in preparing him for every case that may occur and giving him a promptitude and facility in prescribing not easily attainable by any other means. After this compare your practice with the best pract^{l} authors. While M^{rs} P[urlewent?] persists in leaving her case to chance 'tis but loss of time to suggest rational means. There is a duty belongs to the patient as well as the physic^{n}: both must conspire to effect a cure. With best wishes to Mrs Woodforde. Dr Sir

y^{rs} A. Fothergill

P.S. Your brother will I hope observe y^{r} instructions respecting the little arrear due to Dr Hawes which ought to be acknowledged as you rightly judge with gratitude.

[1] "One should not concoct or think out theoretically, but one should discover what nature does or brings". Francis Bacon (1561–1626), Viscount St Albans, Lord Verulam.

[2] James Lind (1716–1794), *Two papers on fevers and infection*, London, D. Wilson, 1763, pp. 59, 66.

[3] James Currie (1756–1805), *Medical reports, on the effects of water, cold and warm, as a remedy in fever, and febrile diseases . . . with observations on the nature of fever; and on the effects of opium, alcohol, and inanition*, Liverpool, M'Creery, for Cadell & Davies, London, 1797.

[4] One of many editions of François Boissier de Sauvages de la Croix (1706–1767), *Nosologia methodica, sistens morborum classes, juxta Sydenhami mentem et botanicorum ordinem*, Amsterdam, Bros de Tournes, 1763, and William Cullen, *Synopsis nosologiae methodicae*, Edinburgh, 1769. Subsequent editions were much revised.

N° 53 **58**

[no date or place][Bath,1798?][1]

My dear Sir,

Since y^{r} departure, I have been considering your dear mother's unfortunate case with attention and shall, agreeable to promise, briefly communicate the result. 1st It appears to me that the deafness, from whatever cause it might originate, is manifestly now connected with nervous debility, and relaxed tone of the tympanum. The secret^{n} of wax is prevented, and the Eustach^{n} tubes probably obstructed. The indications are to strengthen the nerv^{s} system in general—and the organ of hearing in particular—and to remove local obstruction. She must avoid tea, drastic or purg^{g} med^{s}, anxiety of mind or whatever weakens or enfeebles

the system. On the contrary, she should use a generous diet, exercise in the open air, tonic remedies and sea bathing; the last in June and July. To excite the auditory nerves, and produce secretions of cerumen, brisk sternutat^{s} and electrical vibrations are perhaps the likeliest means that art can afford, as also towards removing obstructions in the Eustach^{n} tubes. To this end an injection thrown up the nostrils so as to pass thro' the tubes in the mouth deserves trial and likewise passed into the auditory passage. As she hears best during a loud noise she sh^{d} frequent the belfry when the bells are ringing a full peal, and habituate herself to this often, or to any other loud noise, as the report of fire arms or artillery. Lastly let her try at Evills the effect of the different hearing trumpets or acoustic machines, and keep one by her. With best wishes for her relief. I am, Dr Sir, on all occasions, y^{rs} very sincerely

A. Fothergill

[1] The reference to Woodforde's mother and her illness dates this letter.

N° 63 **59**

Bath Sep 28 1798

Dr Sir

Herewith I hope you'll receive safe Dr Currie and with thanks for the perusal, also the little pieces w^{h} I here inclose for y^{r} amusement and information. Dr Currie's method is a bold one and demands no small circumspection in those who may be induced to imitate it, since one unfortunate case may bring the pract^{r} the imputation of murder—such is the force of prejudice. I was no less struck with y^{r} adventurous scheme of translating Haller's Elementa Physiologiae, opus quidem arduum!![1] an undertaking w^{h}, like the conquest of Troy, wou'd require a ten year seige! Of all the Latin writers Haller is perhaps the most difficult, a studied obscurity pervades the work and however this might ans^{r} his intention of impressing it on the memory of his juvenile readers, it is presumed few will like to imitate it or to take it for a model. To translate the great work wou'd require the abilities of a 1st rate classic [scholar] and a through acquaintance with the German phraseology and the author's peculiar, abstruse mode of expression. These and other considerations have hitherto deterred English readers from any attempt of this sort. I cannot therefore advise you to such an irksome, unpromising undertaking. If you can read him so as to comprehend the main scope of his reasoning, be content with that. But if you want to improve your Latinity and attain an easy, perspicuous style take Boerhaave or van Swieten. I have just received a polite letter from His Excellency Count Berchtold who intends to translate my late tracts and disperse them thro' Italy and Germany.[2] His preservative and curative method in the plague will I trust save many lives and prove also efficac^{s} against typhus and yellow fever.[3] He recommends oleum oliva also against hydrophobia, and approves highly of what I hinted on that subject.

With best respects to Mrs Woodforde I remain

Dr Sir, much yours A. Fothergill

N.B. The new discovery of Galvani on the influence of metallic conductors in exciting nervous electricity[4] tends to confirm my theory and bids fair to be useful in many painful diseases especy such as are seated in the external muscles.

[1] "A work which is indeed hard going".
[2] Leopold von Berchtold (1750–1809) apparently did not do so.
[3] Leopold von Berchtold, *Descrizione del nuovo rimedio curativo e preservativo contro la peste*, Vienna, F. A. Schraembl, 1797.
[4] Luigi Galvani (1737–1798), *De viribus electricitatis in motu musculari commentarius, cum J. Aldini dissertatione et notis. Acc. epistolae ad animalis electricitatis theoriam pertinentes*, Modena, Soc. Typog., 1792.

N° 59 **60**

Bath 8ber 16/98 [16 October 1798]

Dr Sir,

In your last letter are many passages over wh I pored a long time without being able to decipher them. Mr Dawson who happen'd to be by was still more puzzled. I am therefore at a loss how to answer them.

I called at Cruttwells[1] on Saty and paid the cash to the assignees as you'll see from the enclosed receipt.

If you'll condense Mrs P[urlewent's?] case into a compact form and in a fair legible hand and send it to me I will transmit it to the editor of Medl Facts[2] etc. Dr Reid's 2nd editn[3] I have not seen. The scrophuls phthysis constitutes but one species and that no doubt is often hereditary. The heat after meals is rather owing to fresh chyle entering the vessels and passing thro' diseased lungs. Phlogiston is now a non-entity with the ablest chemists, and can be well spared from pathology. That the bronchæ abound in mucous glands cannot be denied, tho' chiefly not of the conglobate but conglomerate kind. The phlegm acquires thickness and viscosity from absorption of the aqueous part. The sebaceous glands secrete a different matter of an unctuous nature and are often enlarged and suppurate where there is no scrophula or hectic tendency. The primary cause of obstruction in both appears not to be inflammation but atonia. The suspension of hectic [fever] in mania seems rather owing to the deep mental impression wh occupies the brain, and lessens determination to the lungs rather than diminution of blood or oxygen. Abscesses no doubt cause hectic symptoms in other organs as well as the lungs—but temperament and idiosyncrasy vary the symptoms.

Dr Reid's practice is rational, only too fond of emetics. Myrrh is by no means inert, but perhaps the main ingredt in Griffith's mixture[4] but the whole is overrated and often misapplied. Neither Blane[5] nor Rush[6] have I yet seen. Currie's practice is sufficiently bold and may, without great care, bring a young practitioner into great disgrace. It is, however, ingenious and bespeaks a philosophical turn. From your letter it does not appear that you received my packet by the carrier the former week with wh I returned Currie[7] with thanks and sent Falconer on diet[8] with some other small tracts for yr entertainment, tho' doubtless he would take care to bring them from the full moon, not doubting this I did not

ask him on Saturday last. According to your request of a French author I here send you to peruse M. Le Begue[9] of w^h you'll please to take great care being a very scarce book and not easy to be obtained.

A spare copy of my last ed^n on Cheltenham waters having cast up, it is at y^r service—so you need not return it. I believe now nothing of importance in your letter has escaped me. To comprehend the general meaning of Haller is one thing. To translate him correctly another. Beware of too intense study.

"Neque semper arcum tendit Apollo."[10]

with remembrance to Mrs Woodforde. Dr Sir

much y^rs A. Fothergill

[1] Probably R. Cruttwell of Bath, the publisher of Fothergill's tracts.

[2] The editor of *Medical facts* was Samuel Foart Simmons (1750–1813), physician, doctor of physic (Leyden 1776), FRS, licentiate of the College of Physicians (1778). In 1781, Simmons became the editor of *The London medical journal*, which issued a volume yearly from 1780 to 1790. The journal then changed its title to *Medical facts and observations* and Simmons remained as editor. Eight volumes of *Medical facts* were published between 1791 and 1800. Woodforde's account of Mrs. Purlewent's case was never published.

[3] Presumably, Thomas Reid, *An essay on the nature and cure of the phthisis pulmonalis. The second edition enlarged. To which is added an appendix on the use and effects of frequent vomits*, 2nd ed., London, T. Cadel [*sic*], 1785. First edition, 1782.

[4] Possibly Moses Griffith (1724–1785), physician, MD (Leyden 1744), London practitioner, credited with the invention of a "compound iron mixture of the Pharmacopoeia". William Munk, *The roll of the Royal College of Physicians*, 2nd ed., London, The College, 1878, vol. 2, pp. 164–5.

[5] Gilbert Blane (1749–1834), *Observations on the diseases incident to seamen*, London, printed by J. Couper & sold by J. Murray, 1785; third edition, London, Murray & Highley, 1799.

[6] Benjamin Rush (1745–1813), *Medical inquiries and observations*, 5 vols., Philadelphia, T. Dobson, 1794–98.

[7] See letter **59**.

[8] William Falconer (1744–1824), *Observations on some of the articles of diet and regimen usually recommended to valetudinarians*, London, 1778.

[9] Possibly, Achille-Guillaume Le Bègue de Presle (1735?–1807), *Le conservateur de la santé, ou avis sur les dangers qu'il importe à chacun d'éviter, pour se conserver en bonne santé et prolonger sa vie. On y a joint des objets de reglemens de police relatifs à la santé*, Paris, P. F. Didot, Jnr., 1763.

[10] "Nor does Apollo always bend his bow". Horace, *Odes*, 2.10.19–20. See also letter **9**.

N° 61 **61**

Bath Nov: 3/98

Accept, Dear Sir, my best thanks for your obliging present of a fine pheasant; I am glad to hear my 2 packets reached you safe. Y^r affecting account of y^r dear mother's relapse into such a deplorable state of debility gives me great concern. I have considered y^r account with much attention and happy indeed should I be cou'd I suggest any thing that might add efficacy to the measures you have already so judiciously pursued, or ward off for sometime longer an event w^h you see just cause to deprecate. If this be not an entire breaking up of constitution, somewhat still perhaps may be done for her relief, especially as you are constantly with her. At all events y^r tender care and attention in addition to y^r professional skill afford her no common consolation. On the next page I shall sketch out the heads of the treatment w^h appear to me advisable, w^h you can vary as circumstances point out. In

addition to w^{h} I sh^{d} recommend both upper and lower extremities and the course of the spine to be powerfully rubbed every even^{g} till a general glow or perspiration ensue, with camphorated oil, wearing flannel next the skin. With the close of the medical journal I dropped the work and have only seen the 1st vol. of Med^{l} Facts, so know nothing when the 8th will appear, tho' most likely in the usual course.[1] Agreeable to y^{r} request I shall look over the case with pen in hand and write to Dr Simmons,[2] but think you must allow him to abridge it, sh^{d} he be scarce of room, in such an extensive correspondence from all quarters. As I cannot have the pleasure of y^{r} company to partake of the bird here, I think it will be acceptable in London and shall therefore accompany the packet this even^{g} by the mail. That you may have the supreme satisfaction of administering relief to y^{r} afflicted parent is the fervent wish of, Dr Sir, y^{rs} ever A. Fothergill

[1] The transcription is 1st but 7th would make more sense. But Fothergill iterates 1st in the next letter where it does make sense, and in Letter **74** he asks for the 2nd and subsequent volumes. *The London medical journal* closed in 1790. The first volume of *Medical facts and observations* appeared in 1791 and the seventh in 1797 but the eighth and last appeared in 1800.

[2] Samuel Foart Simmons, see letter **60**, note 2.

N° 64 **62**

Bath Feb 16/1799

Dr Sir,

Tho' much pressed for time, I instantly ans^{r} y^{r} lett^{r} to be in time for the carr^{rs} return, for certainly not a moment ought to be lost. That a congestion is going on in the cavities of the brain seems highly probable, however that nothing may be wanting in this truly deplorable case that may contribute to y^{r} mother's relief, or the satisfaction of y^{r} self or friends I think (so far as can be judged at this distance) it will be advisable to proceed as follows on the subsequent page.

In consequence of the floods, travelling is almost impracticable as I experienced yest^{y} in the neighbourhood of Frome. The same difficulty prevails abroad. No mails due to F^{h} embargo. Dr Lowder[1] a few days ago requested a perusal of M^{c}bride otherwise it wou'd accompany the lett^{r}. Having dropped Duncan's Comments[2] and also the Med^{l} Journal[3] when it changed its title and order of publication and only seen the 1st vol. of Med^{l} Facts etc. I cou'd wish to see the remaining vols. with y^{r} next letter, for I shall be impatient to hear how y^{r} poor mother is, and whether it be within the compass to ward off the impending blow. To disburden the brain is the manifest intention but I fear she is too feeble to bear drastic purges—safer perhaps by stimulating clysters. Let the head be elevated and the feet kept warm, perhaps mild sinapisms[4] might be useful. With best wishes I remain Dr Sir in extreme haste y^{rs} assuredly

A. Fothergill

[1] Possibly William Lowder (1740–1801), MD (Aberdeen 1775), Licentiate of RCP (1786).

[2] Andrew Duncan, the elder, editor of *Medical and philosophical commentaries by a society of physicians in Edinburgh*. Twenty volumes of the journal appeared between 1773 and 1795. From 1796 to 1804, the journal was continued as *Annals of medicine*, also published in Edinburgh.

[3] *The London medical journal* changed its title to *Medical facts and observations* in 1791.

[4] Mustard poultices.

N° 57 **63**

[no date or place][February 1799?][1]

Dr Sir

The late inundations retarded my last as they have also the post in various places. On Thursday last I rode deep in water and was afterwards caught in the severe storm of wind rain thunder and lightning, since w^{h} I have been feverish and much indisposed. Your packet this morning came safe but I was out and had not a moment of time to ans^{r} y^{r} very satisfactory letter till now, so must send per post. As the med^{s} proposed have warded off the fatal stroke longer than we had reason to expect we shall not cease, while life remains, to use every effort to keep the machine in motion, as it must give you future satisfaction to reflect that nothing essential has been omitted. The extravasated fluid compresses the brain in various parts but particularly about the origin of the optic nerves, hence the loss of vision. Hence too the turgescency of the face with heat, flushing and febrile pulse. The brain has few lymphat^{s} and absorption there is tardy even in young subjects, so that we have every difficulty to struggle with. The sympt^{s} seem to warrant further depletion, as the only chance. Abstinence too sh^{d} be used as a main auxiliary, and perhaps wine had better be omitted, as we must study to keep down the symptom^{l} fever and keep the system as cool and temperate as possible. With best wishes for her relief, I am, Dr Sir, yours sincerely

A. Fothergill

P.S. Should she still be alive when this reaches you, proceed as follows as circumstances shall point out.

[1] The floods (see letter **62**) and the reference to Woodforde's sick mother roughly date this letter. The weather was very severe in February 1799. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1799, **69**: pt. 1, 246.

N° 58 **64**

[no date or place][1799][1]

Dr Sir,

This day I was fav^{d} with your obliging letter but not till the post had set out. Having hitherto warded off the final stroke longer than cou'd have been reasonably expected, we must still strive to diminish the congestion in the encephalon which perverts the functions

of the brain, and w^{h} supports the disease in its original character. I cannot help suspecting from y^{r} last acc^{t} that she takes more food and that too of the animal kind than is consistent with the plan of depletion. "Quo magis nutriveris (says Hippocrates in such cases) eo magis laedit."[2] In such cases of an oppressed brain, food will not nourish, nor tonics afford strength. Arteriotomy surpasses cupping or venesection as it removes at once a quantity of arterial blood, and should therefore still have a trial as far as [10 or 12 Apothecary ounces].[3] The digitalis, remarkable for diminishing the velocity of the pulse and producing a copious flow of urine, should at least once a day receive a fuller a trial. I think I mentioned a sternutatory with Pulv: Asari with a little Elleb: Alb:[4] which from your silence does not appear to have been used. On mature deliberation respecting this critical situation I think in addit^{n} to abstemious diet the following should be the outlines of the present treatment. I feel for her sufferings and am Dr Sir yours assuredly

A. Fothergill

[1] The worsening sickness of Woodforde's mother dates this to spring 1799.

[2] "The more you feed, the more harm it does". Hippocrates, *Aphorisms*, vii, 68. The particular Latin translation of the original Greek has not been identified.

[3] Fothergill gave the prescription in Apothecary signs.

[4] Pulvis Asari was made from the leaves of Asarabacca. Elleborus Albus was one of the names for white hellebore.

N° 60 **65**

Bath June 14/99

Dear Sir,

Nothing but time, I well know, can restore tranquility to a mind suffering the pangs of grief for the loss of an affectionate parent. Letters of common condolence serve but to renew the affliction and are therefore ill-judged and impertinent. This, I trust, will sufficiently apologize for my late silence. The mind must have still longer time to recover its tone and before that aching void you yet experience can be completely removed. It was not without surprise that I rec^{d} your last dated from Crewkerne, especially as you had repeatedly expressed y^{r} satisfaction in being so prosperously established in y^{r} native soil, and so well content with the prospect of increasing practice. The step you have taken is a bold one, and it is hoped those friends who have advised it will make a point of contributing to y^{r} establishment, and prevent the necessity of an unpleasant retrograde retreat to Castle Cary among old friends with perhaps new faces. At Castle Cary you had no competition, at Crewkerne you have already 2 and will have to scramble for one third of the booty among strangers. Besides you know the old proverb tho' I hope you may prove an exception to the general result. Lyme cannot but have at least 1 resident physi^{n} every summer, and therefore not to be depended upon. Patients from hence go to Southampton and Weymouth not to Lyme, at least very few. From Dr Daniel[1] I once had a letter or two but no other correspondence or interview. If his practice ever amounted to 700$^{£}$ or even 600, it exceeded considerably what I sh^{d} conceive, and am clear that these calculations are generally

exaggerated, of w^{h} we had a late instance at Bath. In such times as these when every little town is overstocked, and apoth^{s} engross almost the whole business, it will behove physicians to moderate their expectations and live very oeconomically. Wishing you that degree of success as may be most conducive to y^{r} happiness. I remain

Dr Sir, y^{rs} assuredly

A. Fothergill

P.S. The Med^{l} Facts I have not till just now had time to dip into, but shall skim over them at leisure and then inquire some mode of safe conveyance.

[1] Presumably Samuel Daniel (1755?–1798?), MD (Edinburgh 1776), extra-Licentiate of the College of Physicians (1777), practised in Crewkerne, Somerset.

N° 66 **66**

Bath 7^{ber} 30/99 [30 September 1799]

Y^{r} last very obliging letter, my dear sir, claims my early acknowledgement. The perusal of such lett^{rs} breathing the warm effusions of friendship recalls a thousand pleasing ideas and presents to the mind, after many years have elapsed, a scene of renewed gratification and entertainment. Select lett^{rs} of this kind, I have always carefully treasured up, and cou'd not, without doing violence to my feelings, commit entire bundles of lett^{rs} indiscriminately (as some do) to the flames. Some indeed it wou'd be wrong to preserve—others it wou'd be a kind of sacrilege to destroy. Partiality to our friends ought not to prevent us from making the necessary discrimination, tho' I must confess it often disposes me to lean to the favorable side and I am not sorry to find it inclines you to the same bias. It however carries you to excess when you talk of transcribing my letters, and reading them in conjunction with Dr Gregory's excellent work on Duties of a Physician!

Friendship, peculiar boon of Heav'n,
The noble mind's delight and pride,
To men and Angels only giv'n,
To all the lower world denied,[1]

Friendship, however, like love, sometimes hoodwinks the judgement. It therefore behoves the philosopher to guard against the excesses of both.

But now ad rem—time presses! I am sorry I have not the authors on the materia medica you mention or they sh^{d} accomp^{y} this. M^{c}bride it seems you have got nearer home and I here send you by the Weymouth coach, Hippocrates 2 tom^{s}, a curious memoir on the mammoth's bones from a learned judge of the western territory,[2] and my copy on rabies canina just published.[3] With the packet you mention please to return the French tract on corrosive sublimate and Dr Gibbes's Syllabus of Chem^{y}[4] etc. In revising M.S. and other engagements have not had time to skim over y^{r} med^{l} journals, but will return on short notice if wanted. Dr Sir, y^{rs} assuredly

A. Fothergill

[1] Samuel Johnson, *Friendship: an ode.*

[2] We have been unable to trace this reference. References to the early literature on mammoths is to be found in Rembrandt Peale, *Account of the skeleton of the mammoth, a non-descript carnivorous animal of immense size,* London, E. Lawrence, 1802. See letter **85** where Fothergill meets the creature face to face.

[3] Anthony Fothergill, *An essay on the nature of the disease occasioned by the bite of a mad dog*, Bath, 1799.

[4] George Smith Gibbes (1771–1851), *Syllabus of a course of chemical lectures*, Bath, W. Meyler, 1799.

N° 56 **67**

Bath Sat: 9 Nov 99

Dear Sir

Herewith you'll receive warm from the press, tho' somewhat disfigured with corrections, my new essay, being the 1st copy that has seen the light, being as yet not published.[1] With it I return with thanks y^{r} 6 vols. of med^{l} tracts extending to the begin^{g} of 1797, f^{m} w^{h} period to the close of the present year 2 more vols. must I think be in readiness for the subscribers.[2] The omission of the prices of books is a capital defect as I long ago hinted to the author but it still remains, and an almost useless catalogue swells the vol. and adds to the expense —the long winded cases in surgery in particular want the pruning knife, still, however, the work is a useful one, only too prolix. Before our Philosophical Soc^{y} last night I read a long interesting letter with w^{h} I was lately fav^{d} by an ingenious Philadelphian[3] on a new remedy against dysentery and lues venerea. Also on origin and prevention of the pestilential fever, which you may see when you come next to Bath.

Bradley and Willich's medical magazine,[4] it seems, increases in reputation and in orig^{l} papers. The new Analyt: Review defunct.[5] I hope you rec^{d} safe 1 Oct. by Weymouth coach: Hippocrates opera, 2 tomes, Essay on mammoth, and my copy (for revision) on rabies canina.[6] The former parcel sent Feb. 18—tract on corrosive sublimate, Gibbes's Chemical Syllabus, woods poor bill[7] etc. it is presumed you have done with long ago. Some of the books a phys^{n} here wishes to see, but if you have looked over the passages you wished to see in Hippocrates he must wait a little till you return the whole in one parcel by the carrier, for the Weymouth coach is I think stopped for the winter. Dr Haygarth on the Tractors is in the press[8] w^{h} I hope to have when published as you need not buy it.

Dr Sir, much yours. A. Fothergill

P.S. My boy sends the enclosed to his mother.

[1] Probably Anthony Fothergill, *An essay on the preservation of shipwrecked mariners*, London, 1799. Fothergill had already sent his work on rabies, published the same year. See letter **66**, note 4.

[2] Eight volumes of *Medical facts and observations* were published, the last in 1800.

[3] Presumably Benjamin Rush, the Philadelphian physician.

[4] Anthony Florian Madinger Willich (?–?) and Thomas Bradley (1751–1813) were editors of *The medical and physical journal*, which first appeared in March 1799.

[5] *The analytical review; or history of literature domestic and foreign, etc*, (May 1788–December 1798), 28 vols., London, 1788–99.

[6] See letter **66**, note 3.

[7] Reference unclear.

[8] John Haygarth (1740–1827), *Of the imagination, as a cause and as a cure of disorders of the body; exemplified by fictitious tractors, and epidemical convulsions. Read to the Literary and Philosophical Society*

of Bath, Bath, R. Cruttwell, 1800. Haygarth was a distinguished physician living in Bath at 15 Royal Crescent from 1798. Fothergill, however, makes no personal references to him. See Introduction, p. xxii.

N° 67 **68**

Bath Decr 28^{h}/99

Many thanks D^{r} D^{r}, for your kind and seasonable present of a very fine turkey of w^{h}, as I cannot hope for the pleasure of y^{r} comp^{y}, to partake next week with a few friends we shall drink y^{r} health with three cheers. You are right and I was wrong, I had overlooked the French tract w^{h} had fallen behind other books. In return for y^{r} kindness and my own remissness please to accept these little tracts w^{h} are much at y^{r} service. The case you relate is remarkable and the event must be extremely doubtful. The symp^{s} seem evidently to proceed f^{m} injury of the spinal marrow—whether this be irreparable will depend on the degree of injury and the patient's fate will probably be determined within a few days. The brach^{l} nerves seem to have suffered more than those of the lower extremities hence their motion more difficult to restore, but this happens also in palsies from an internal cause. A copious discharge from the lower part of the nape of the neck will give the best chance, but beware of removing too much blood or enfeebling the system. Slight electr^{l} shocks along the course of the spine may prove beneficial, and keeping up a free perspiration with guaiacum. Time presses and, the carrier ready to set off, must therefore here drop the pen, but not without best wishes for y^{r} health and success thro' many happy returns of the season—Dear Sir

much yours adieu!

A. Fothergill

N° 65 **69**

Bath Frid: Night /2 past 12 O'clock [January 1800?]

Y^{r} lett^{r}, D^{r} D^{r}, dated the 8th came this afternoon in my absence, as I find it now on my return past midnight. Nevertheless as the case is truly urgent I snatch up the pen at this late hour to ans^{r} it without delay. I have considered with attention your accurate and circumstantial acc^{t}, and do sincerely sympathize with you on the young woman's case. The main symp^{ts}, as you justly observe, give strong suspicion of internal dropsy of the brain, yet so far as I can judge at this distance they afford only presence of water in the cavities of that organ. The adult age, the absence of dilation of the pupils, of strabismus and of convulsions, all dispose me to hope the case may not be so wholly desperate. That there is, however, a preternatural determination of blood to the encephalon is, I think highly probable, and that there may also be irritation in the primæ viæ from worms of larger size, w^{h} may render the case more complex and more equivocal. Sh^{d} the above symptoms however appear y^{r}

mercurial plan will give perhaps the best chance. On the next page I shall put down what seems to be the ratio medendi but must leave it to be modified by you who are on the spot, and watch with anxiety the progress of the disease. At all events the long abst^{d} calam: [?] the plethoric habit, and determinat^{ns} to the brain demands active evacuants. That nature may second y^{r} endeavours and y^{t} you may have the comfort of restoring this young woman is the sincere wish D^{r} D^{r} , y^{rs} affectionately
P.S. Y^{r} fine turkey on {A. Fothergill
Monday last proved exquisite, and helped to regale a select party of a dozen friends among whom I wished for y^{r} presence. PS: Your prudent practical plan of study I much commend.

N° 72 **70**

Bath Aug: 23. 1800

Dear Sir,

My late London journey w^{h} took up a whole week deprived me of the pleasure of seeing you as well as 2 other med^{l} gentlemen who came here on urgent business during my absence, as did also Dr Renaudet on a visit the day before I set out, whom I was very sorry to leave. Such cross incidents are to be regretted but can neither be foreseen or prevented. Your obliging letter of yesterday (tho' much pressed for time) I must now briefly ans^{r} as the carrier is ready to return. Marcard's performance[1] I have not read, but am not quite satisfied with the term tonic as applied to the tepid bath. Anodyne sedative emollient wou'd have been more appropriate, much less can I approve of Darwin's[2] advice of a bath at the temperature of 96 to 98 for half an hour every day. Such unqualified assertions tend to mislead young practitioners. Both extremes of hot and cold bathing are too indiscriminately used and are productive of many serious evils under the present empirical practice, the result of ignorance and fashionable caprice. In country practice where a warm bath is required the elegancy and conveniency of our baths here cannot be expected or obtained, but a narrow bathing tub or semicubrium ought to be had in every market town. A tin one invented at Manchester and called a Couchett [?] may be had of any capital tin man in Lond^{n} but the price I suppose is pretty high. The tin shower bath is common, but a very imperfect contrivance. The digitalis indeed retards the velocity of the pulse and seems to me to suspend, but by no means cure a hectic fever, and the extreme debility and cold sweats induced, I fear, often more than counterbalance its supposed specific power on the heart and arterial system. Without extreme caution and good manag^{t} it may often tend to precipitate an event we wish to retard. This is not meant to discourage prudent trials, but to impress caution. "Valeat itaq quod valere potest."[3] Wine no doubt may be advantageously used. Clysters arise where indurated[?], or deglutition interrupted. Cold liquids may be given in typhus, tho' few prudent practitioners will presume to plunge the sick (as some advise) into a cold bath. The pain or rather anxiety in hydrothorax is rather f^{m} pressure on the diaphragm and mediastinum than on the stomach or liver.

Thornton's second edit^{n},[4] Burserius[5] and Duncan's Hoff^{n}[6] I have not seen. In haste, D^{r} D^{r}

I remain much yours. A. Fothergill

[1] Heinrich Matthias Marcard (1747–1817), *A short description of Pyrmont*, London, 1788.
[2] Probably Erasmus Darwin. Source not found.
[3] "So let that be strong which can be strong". Not attributable.
[4] Presumably, Robert John Thornton (1768?–1837), *Medical extracts: on the nature of health. New edition*, London, Robinson, etc., 1794. New edition, London, J. Johnson, 1796–97.
[5] Presumably, Giovanni Battista Borsieri (1725–1785), *Institutionum medicinae practicae, quas auditoribus suis praelegebat J. B. Burserius*, 4 vols., Milan, 'Typ. Imp. Mon. S. Ambrosii Majoris', 1781–89; or, *The institutions of the practice of medicine . . . Translated from the Latin by William Cullen Brown*, 1 vol., Edinburgh, W. Mudie, 1800.
[6] Friedrich Hoffmann, *A system of the practice of medicine; from the Latin. . . . [Translated] By . . . W. Lewis. . . . Revised . . . by A. Duncan*, 2 vols., London, J. Murray & J. Johnson, 1783.

N° 71 **71**

Bath 9ber [November] 1800

Dear Sir,

Your accurate description of Mr Hall's case (whom you obligingly recommended to my care) I have maturely considered, together with all the phenomena the disease presents to us on close examination. The severity of the pain has from time to time been alleviated and the cure, by the suitable means employed, wou'd probably have been effected some time ago, had not the obstruction been uncommonly stubborn, whether invincible, time will discover. That the ductus communis,[1] tho' not entirely, yet remains in a great measure blocked up is evident, and most probably from biliary concretions of the rugged angular kind, wh however we may hope, in time, to dislodge and that all may do well, provided that the organic structure of the liver be not irreparably injured, particularly the posterior part of the lobe wh eludes the touch.[2] In wh case the adjacent pancreas generally partakes of the affection. At present I have the satisfaction to acquaint you that the Bath water both internally and exter^y agrees well, and that the pain is less frequent and less intense as the disease produces torpor. I wish much to discontinue opium as much as may be, fm wh nothing can be expected beyond that of a palliative. As such however may sometimes be indispensable. If the jaundice continue much longer it will probably end in a confirmed dropsy, of wh the oedema of the ankles seems to be the harbinger. In short, the case is beset with many unpromising circumstances, to wh the season of the year and very humid atmosphere will add, I fear, insurmountable difficulties. The angina scarlatina[3] with a dark bloated appearance of the tonsils has of late made its attack on several persons, partic^y the weak and relaxed, of wh, fm the pressure of the times, and scarce and bad provisions, we see too many instances. Such predisposing causes, in my opinion, militate strongly against bleeding, or other enfeebling evacuations.[4] The buffy surface of the blood is too apt to impose us in this and many other cases of malignancy of wh the scarlet efflorescence is a mark in the above cases. Whether the cynanche trachealis or croup was not complicated with the scarlatina in the 2 unhappy boys you mention, I am not quite clear, tho' I suspect it. You add the sister and the father also fell victims (dreadful fatality) but afterwards you say both escaped—how can this be? But your letter seems written in such haste, I cannot make out many passages. The season modifies the disease and causes it sometimes to exhibit sloughs, often not, as in the present case, tho' perhaps more highly dangerous than when accompanied with ash color'd specks, even deep ulcers of the tonsils only, but the

danger increases in proportion as the larynx suffers. The genuine croup seems confined to child^{n} f^{m} 3 to 12 or 14 and is known by the peculiar sound of the voice like that of a young cock attempting to crow. No scarlet erruptions, no tumified tonsils—the tracheal sloughy membrane not the cause but consequence. The disease not yet proved to be contagious. Hence you'll see it differs in its essence from angina scarlatina. To cure the former we must prevent the formation of the membrane w^{h} is an exudation of the albumen of the blood. A work of no small difficulty, but w^{h} may be accomplished if we can render absorption equal or superior to the exhalation. Of this and other topics more when we meet. Meanwhile I remain, D^{r} D^{r} yours

assuredly
A. Fothergill

[1] The common bile duct.

[2] Here, as in letter **54**, is evidence of the physical examination of patients.

[3] Fevers, with severe throat, notably angina scarlatina and croup, were the subject of much nosographic interest in the eighteenth century, notably among authors writing in English. See John Fothergill, *An account of the sore throat attended with ulcers*, London, C. Davis, 1748; John Huxham (1692–1768), *A dissertation on the malignant, ulcerous, sore throat*, London, J. Hinton, 1757; Francis Home, *An enquiry into the nature, cause, and cure of the croup*, Edinburgh, A. Kincaid & J. Bell, 1765; Samuel Bard (1742–1821), *An enquiry into the nature, cause and cure, of the angina suffocativa*, New York, S. Inslee & A. Car, 1771. Later authors have identified these descriptions with either scarlet fever or diphtheria.

[4] John Fothergill, whom Anthony much admired (see Introduction, pp. xi–xii, and Letter **1**) opposed bleeding in this condition. "How many lives were lost", wrote William Withering in 1793, "until Dr Fothergill and Dr Wall taught us to withold the lancet and the purge". Cited in R. H. Fox, *Dr John Fothergill and his friends*, London, Macmillan, 1919, p. 54.

N° 68 **72**

Bath Dec^{r}: 17, 1800

Dear Sir

Amidst a variety of letters w^{h} demand prompt dispatch, I have time to acknowledge y^{r} obliging present of a fine hare, and to pack up for y^{r} perusal Hewson's 2 vols. on Lymph^{s} and Opera Sydenham,[1] the only ones I can lay my hands on at present the rest being invisible—part lent and part perhaps exchanged for others, especially Baglivi.[2] Those forwarded will however be sufficient, I presume, to occupy all y^{r} spare time if you go carefully thro' them before we meet. Till then D^{r} D^{r} adieu

Dreadful times! A. Fothergill

Bella, bella! horrida bella![3]

[1] Presumably one of the many editions of Thomas Sydenham (1624–1689), *Opera universa . . . Editio altera, priori multum auctior, etc.*, 2 pts., London, R. N. for W. Kettilby, 1685.

[2] Possibly one of the many editions of Giorgio Baglivi (1668–1707), *Opera omnia medico-practica et anatomica*, Lyon, Annison & J. Posuel, 1704.

[3] "Wars! horrible wars!". Virgil, *Aeneid*, 6.86.

N° 69 **73**

[No place or date][1801?][1]

Dear Sir,

Y^r lett^rs written volante calamo[2] neither myself nor Mr Dawson, who happened to be with me, cou'd perfectly decipher, w^h inter nos will I hope be a caution to you in future, especially in letters of such consequence, where every iota ought to be perfectly legible. For it will not avail you who can write well to plead the example of some physicians whose half-formed letters or rather execrable hieroglyphics can never be made out but by guess, and w^h occasion very often, dangerous errors, to say nothing of the waste of time in hammering out the meaning. From what I can collect as to the present case, w^h I have considered with much attention, the symptoms seem to proceed f^m indigestion and an impaired tone of the alimentary canal. Hence the flatulency, eructations and disordered motion of the heart and arterial system, impaired vision, vertigo etc. This affection I imagine has been coming on more than a month ago, and if you inquire more minutely into his history, constitutional habit, mode of life, etc. (concerning w^h you are silent) you'll be able to trace the malady to some error in eating, drinking, semin^l evacuation, sedentary life etc., to w^h attention must be paid in the treatment. From this view of the case and connected, as it manifestly appears to be, with debility, there can be no room I conceive for bleeding or any large evacuation. But to judge with exactness at this distance, without seeing the patient is impossible, and particularly as to the propriety of sea bathing. Tho' y^r tonic plan seems eligible, yet where the digestive organs are weak, it cannot be too simple. If no material benefit result f^m a ten day trial of the following, a course of the Bath waters, the effic^y of w^h in dyspepsia is so well established, ought to be had recourse to.

I need not add that strict temperance must be enjoined "alias laterem tantum lavas."[3]

Sydenham arrived safe and has afforded you an excellent example of accurate observation, and elegant Latinity. Your med^l jourls, f^m incessant interruptions and large vol^s obtruded upon me to read and examine, I am sorry to say have been detained longer than intended, having yet not got thro' the 1st vol. but I hope now to proceed as fast as other avocations will allow. I have only room to add my best wishes for your success in your matrimonial[4] and all other laudable pursuits Dr Sir, adieu!

A. Fothergill

[1] The reference to Woodforde's forthcoming marriage dates this as 1801. The reference to Sydenham seems to indicate situating the letter here. Accurate dating gets more difficult from here on.

[2] "With flying pen". See also letter **23**.

[3] "Otherwise you are just washing a brick". Not attributable. "Washing a brick" was proverbial for wasted effort.

[4] On Woodforde's marriage, see Introduction, p. xvii.

N° 70 **74**

Bath 7^ber [September] 25th 1800 [1801?][1]

Dear Sir,

Accept my thanks for your obliging letter and kind present w^h accompanied it. I am

pleased to hear your patient is better and that the theory thus far seems to be confirmed by the practice. As a slight error, however, in diet or regimen may readily renew the disorder, too great care cannot be taken to guard against a relapse, to remedy w^{h} will require no less than a course of Bath water drunk at the fountain head. Of your 3 vol^{s} of med^{l} journal I have looked over 1st and 2nd replete with multifarious observations, consisting, as we generally find in miscellaneous works of this kind, observations and remarks of very dissimilar merit.

"Quædam bona, quædam mala, mediocria quædam." [2]

The good however preponderate and render the work sufficiently interesting.

These vols. I return now with thanks, by the carrier and hope to finish the 3rd ere long and return it with Dr Lettsom's new publication on vaccination[3] expected daily and w^{h} you therefore need not buy. I am glad I have the 4 vols you wish to see of Whyte on nervous disorders[4] and 3 vols College Transactions[5]—w^{h} being books of frequent reference, please to keep clean and let me have them by the end of Octr and if by that time you can conveniently spare for a few weeks Duncan's Annals (or continuation of the Commentaries[6] from the end of the 20th vol., w^{h} 20 vols I have) and Simmons's Med^{l} Facts f^{m} 2 vol. down to the present time (w^{h} I understood him is to close the work) you'll oblige Dear D^{r}

y^{rs} sincerely

A. Fothergill

P.S. Some new public^{s} are commended, but not yet with in these libraries, as Medical and Chirurgical Review,[7] Ferriar[8] and Rush's[9] Essays, Saunders on Min^{l} Waters,[10] Whately on Gonorrhea[11] and some Edin^{r} Med^{l} Theses, but the cowpox continues to absorb the attention of the med^{l} world beyond all other subjects.—Vale

[1] The reference to Lettsom, note 3 below, dates this as 1801.

[2] "Some things good, some things bad, some in-between". Not attributable.

[3] John Coakley Lettsom, *Observations on the cow-pock*, London, J. Mawman, 1801.

[4] Robert Whytt (1714–1766), *Observations on the nature, causes, and cure of those disorders which have commonly been called nervous, hypochondriac, or hysteric*, London, T. Becket and P. A. du. Hondt, 1765. The reference to 4 volumes is puzzling.

[5] *Medical transactions*, published by the Royal College of Physicians of London, London, vol. 1, 1768, vol. 2, 1772, vol. 3, 1785.

[6] Andrew Duncan, the elder, editor of *Annals of medicine*, Edinburgh, 1796–1804, the continuation of his *Medical and philosophical commentaries*, Edinburgh, 1773–95, vols. 1–20. See letter **62**.

[7] Presumably the journal, *The medical and chirurgical review*, London, begun in May 1794, ended January 1808.

[8] Possibly, John Ferriar (1761–1815), *Medical histories and reflections*, vol. 1, 1792, vol. 2, 1795, vol. 3, 1798, Warrington; London, printed by W. Eyres etc., for T. Cadell.

[9] Benjamin Rush, *Essays, literary, moral and philosophical*, Philadelphia, [printed by] T. & S. F. Bradford, 1798.

[10] William Saunders (1743–1817), *A treatise on the chemical history and medical powers of some of the most celebrated mineral waters*, London, W. Phillips, 1800.

[11] Thomas Whately (d. 1821), *Practical observations on the cure of the gonorrhoea virulenta in men*, London, J. Johnson, 1801.

N° 74 **75**

Bath Sat^{y} 10^{ber} [December] 26th [1801][1]

Dear Sir,

Herewith according to promise, I return with many thanks by Mr Bennett all y^{r} bound vols., No 8 [of *Medical facts*][2] and 1 N^{o} of Phys^{l} Journ^{l} and consequently 4 N^{os} of the journ^{l} remain with me, w^{h} I have not had time to glance over.[3] I also send for y^{r} entertainment Dr Lettsom's new publication on vaccination,[4] an interesting work particularly to young Benedictines destined to produce a beautiful race of children, and therefore make no doubt y^{r} amiable partner will also carefully peruse it as a matter of mutual concern. I also send Dr Falconer's new tract on prevention of the plague[5] etc, w^{h} I have only just received but not read—you may keep both, however, till towards the end of January when I hope to return the 4 N^{o} of Phys^{l} Journ^{l}. I regretted y^{r} stay here was so short, but hope you had a safe if not pleasant journey home. Bath is still by no means so full as was expected and what adds to the gloom the rainy season presents to constant view, cloud caped hills and muddy streets w^{h} keep our belles and beaux in close winter quarters and ushers in the Xmas festival under sombre aspect. The definitive treaty however, now anxiously expected will, it is hoped, when it arrives brighten the scene, and peace attended with the loves and graces once more rekindle joy in every countenance. Then will all the nations of Europe have cause to rejoice and having weathered out the horrors of war look forward with complacency to better days and a more genial season.

"Aspice venturo laetentur ut omnia saeclo."[6]

That you and Mrs Woodforde may live happy and see many such seasons is the fervent wish of,

Dear Sir,

yours assuredly

A. Fothergill

[1] This dating is tentative, the evidence for 1801 is: December 26 was a Saturday in 1801; Lettsom's work referred to as "new" appeared in 1801; the promise to return volumes of the *Medical and physical journal* in February was carried out in 1802. The reference to a definitive treaty would seem to suggest the Treaty of Amiens, 25 March 1802 (a preliminary peace agreement was signed in 1801). However the reference to Falconer on plague, published in 1802, creates problems unless it was published at the end of 1801 and carried the following year's imprint, a not unusual practice.

[2] See letters **61** and **74**. Volume 8 which appeared in 1800 was the last in the series.

[3] *The medical and physical journal*, London, 1799–1814. Published 2 vols. per year beginning in March 1799. Six volumes should have appeared by the date of this letter, and it seems Woodforde still had volume 6 in his keeping. See letter **76**.

[4] See letter **74**.

[5] William Falconer, *Examination of Dr. Heberden's observations on the increase and decrease of different diseases, particularly the plague*, Bath, 1802. Also note, William Heberden, the younger (1767–1845), *Observations on the increase and decrease of different diseases and particularly of the plague*, London, 1801.

[6] "See how all things rejoice in the age/century that is to come". Virgil, *Eclogues*, 4.52.

N° 79 **76**

Bath Feb 24th 1802

Dr Sir,

Mr D.—the unfortunate young gentleman whose case you accurately describe and whom you properly recommended to try a course of these salutary waters under my care, I have the pleasure to inform you appears to be in a progressive way of amendment. The water agrees well and begins to shew restorative effects, but a case of this nature, the most obstinate and perhaps difficult to treat with propriety of any in the whole circle of practice, demands every additional resource and attention to the mental as well as corporeal faculties and withall a longer course than I fear his time will allow. But more of this in my next. The youth you mention who labours under petechiæ sine febre, will I make no doubt do well under the judicious regimen you advise. From the late scarcity and bad provisions, the blood has been impoverished and the solids deprived of due tone, no wonder that cases of this kind are more frequent than formerly and more tedious in the cure. In addition to the remedies you have so properly ordered, I wou'd recommend (should similar cases occur) nitr^{s} acid and spruce beer for common beverage because the former readily evolves oxygen, the latter carbonic gas both of w^{h} are peculiarly indicated.[1] The 2 tracts I lent you came safe by M^{r} D[awson?]—and I am glad they afforded you and Mrs Woodforde useful information.

The remaining 4 numbers of Med^{l} and Physi^{l} Journal[2] w^{h} you kindly sent for my inspection I perused with much satisfaction and have committed them to the care of M^{r} D[awson?]—who undertakes to forward them safely by the family now about to return home. As the 6th N^{o}[3] did not appear I suppose you had begun to read and had not got thro' it, or it wou'd have accompanied the other five. Their correspondence seems very extensive and the work abounds with original papers of different degrees of merit as must be expected. "Quædam bona, quædam mala, mediocria quædam."[4] But, all in all it is a work no young practitioner sh^{d} be without. Dr Simmons's London Med^{l} Journal and also his subsequent tracts and observations are, I suppose, wholly discontinued.

Whether Duncan's Commentaries (w^{h} I went on with to the end of the 20th vol.)[5] be continued with its wonted care in selections and former popularity I know not. You can perhaps tell if you continue the work. The state of medicine at Edin^{r} as well as on the continent used to afford interesting information. The best theses used to be selected and published by Dr Webster and Smellie, but I hear nothing of that work of late. Dr Lowder[6] of this place being dead a fine collection of books to be disposed of, but probably in London. I miss him much as he and I used to interchange books often. The College and Licenciates[?] tho' learned bodies seem in a torpid state and bring forth nothing collectively tho' some individuals are still active. I hope this will find you and Mrs Woodforde well and am Dr Sir,

y^{rs} assuredly

Mr B. Dawson desires}
his Compliments}

A. Fothergill

I send for y^{r} perusal White on bilious fevers[7] but have not read it. Also Gibbes on Bath water.[8]

[1] Fothergill obviously considered the case to be akin to scurvy, regarded as a disease of the blood in which acidic preparations were called for.
[2] The transcription has 5, but Letter **75** indicates 4, which makes more sense in the light of what follows.
[3] The transcription has 22nd .This must be an error. 6th would make most sense. See letter **75**.
[4] "Some things good, some things bad, some in-between". See also letter **74**.
[5] The 20th volume appeared in 1795 and was continued as *Annals of medicine*. See letter **62**, note 2.
[6] William Lowder died in 1801, see letter **62**.
[7] Possibly, Robert White (?–?), *Serious and impartial inquiries into the causes why a great number of people die of a putrid malignant fever*, London, J. Wilkie, 1778.
[8] George Smith Gibbes, *A treatise on the Bath waters*, Bath, W. Meyler, 1800.

N° 73 **77**

Bath June 11th 1802

Dear Sir,

Yesterday I was favd with yr letter accompanied with Gibbes on Bath water but as White on bilious fever did not accompany it, I presume you had not got thro' it, nor had I read it. When you send next letter or packet will be time enough. If the plan I proposed produce the desired effect of suppressing febrile commotion, and diminishing the pulmony hæmorrhage, I am very glad, but must request you to be on yr guard against every extraordy effort, or even brisk exercise whether on horseback or on foot, and therefore it will behove you also, abstinere a vino et Venere[1] for some weeks to come, and till the ruptured vessel be perfectly conglutinated. To secure wh the medicine and strict regimen shd be rigidly pursued. An epitome of practice drawn fm practical writers who describe facts rather than opinions may be very useful, and still more so cases of diseases with complications militating against the ordinary modes of treatment, wh without previous theory must tend often to embarrass the practitioner, or lead him into dangerous errors such as continually betray themselves in the routine of empirics, or rash half-instructed dabblers in medicine. Juncker's Conspectus Therapiae[2] I have searched for but, as I cannot find it, conclude it must have been packed off long ago with others ejusdem farinæ,[3] the perusal of wh rarely compensates the time and pains. Reading shd be confined to approved authors only. Since Dr Simms drop t the journal and Duncan altered the title etc of the Comments, I have been without any medl journl and therefore want to see some number of medl reviews to determine wh to prefer, and judge of ye merit of late publications. Wishing you and Mrs Woodforde's health and prosperity. I remain

Dear Sir, yrs A. Fothergill

[1] "To abstain from wine and Venus". Not attributable.
[2] Presumably, one of the many editions of Johann Juncker (1679–1759), *Conspectus therapiae generalis, cum notis in materiam medicam tabulis xx methodo Stahliana conscriptus*, Halle, Orphanotropheum, 1725.
[3] "Of the same class of fodder". Not attributable.

N° 76 **78**

Bath Sepr 1st 1802

Dear Sir,

Absence from home has caused the present delay in answering y^{r} last. Tho' your late silence after such a formidable attack on the lungs gave hopes that the plan I had proposed had in a great measure ansrd the intention, yet in a case of such consequence it left an unpleasant doubt w^{h} y^{r} lett^{r} has at length happily dissipated. The progress the complaint has made will, it is hoped, afford a caution in future never to neglect a hæmoptysis however slight. The Med^{l} and Chir^{l} Rev^{s}, 7 vols., accompanied y^{r} lett^{r} and shall be looked over whenever a leisure hour will permit. From a late advertisement f^{m} Lackington I thought this was the work that lately dropped, tho' I now perceive another under nearly similar title was meant. The present vols., so far as I can judge, seem carefully executed, and if they endulged essays like the Phys^{l} Jour^{l} they wou'd not have room to analyze the daily med^{l} labours of the press. Murray's Materia Medica[1] I have not seen but believe it a work of merit, as that of Heberdius[2] will undoubtedly be, with all the advantages of festina lente[3] and the repeated reconsiderations of a man far past the grand climacteric. If Burserius rivals van Swieten in ease perspicuity and fidelity, and avails himself of the latest improvements, the work must be highly valuable. How far the young Bruno[4] is equal to a good English version I know not, but this I know, that few of the Scottish writers produce tolerable English at least in the medical line. As you have the prospect of increasing your family I wish your worthy partner a propitious minute, to w^{h} her intimate alliance with a physician must not a little contribute by inspiring hope, that anchor of the soul.

Respect^{g} Mr D.'s case, after so long a chasm it is impossible for me to give a decided opinion without a personal interview on so critical a question. That the cause hinted at has retarded progressive recovery is not to be wondered at, and being so contrary to the plan I proposed cou'd not have been foreseen. I wish it had been revealed sooner, to w^{h} particular attention wou'd have been given. With best respects to Mrs Woodforde, Dr Sir, much yours
A. Fothergill

[1] Presumably Murray, letter **13**, note 10.

[2] No work on materia medica seems to have been produced either, posthumously, by William Heberden, the elder (1710–1801), or by William Heberden, the younger (1767–1845).

[3] "Hurry slowly". Old saying.

[4] Giovanni Battista Borsieri, *The institutions of the practice of medicine . . . Translated from the Latin by William Cullen Brown*, vol.1, Edinburgh, W. Mudie, 1800. 5 vols., London, T. Cox, 1806. William Cullen Brown was the son of John Brown also known as Bruno.

N° 78 **79**

Bath 7^{ber} [September] 4th Sat^{y} [1802?][1]

Dear Sir,

Your former with the books arrived safe and my ans^{r} with little tracts have been waiting

some days for a conveyance, w^{h} now agreeable to y^{r} request occurs in your mention of Mrs Gillum thro' whose hands I forward this with Transactions of London College, 3 vols. Whytt[2] being out will return against you have done with these. The small tract by White, apoth^{y},[3] I thought you had overlooked till at length Dr Gillum[4] sent it home. Dr Williams's little tract[5] was sent me to look over some time ago and is a sensible performance. In haste Dr Sir much yours

A: Fothergill

[1] Saturday was the 4th in 1802.
[2] Presumably one of the many books by Robert Whytt.
[3] Presumably William White (1770–1826), MRCS, surgeon-apothecary to the Bath Infirmary, author of *Observations and experiments on the broad-leaved willow bark*, Bath, S. Hazard, 1798.
[4] Presumably Raphael Gillum (1770–1819?), MD (Edinburgh), who practised in Bath.
[5] Not identified.

N° 80 **80**

Bath 8^{ber} [October] 16 S: Morn [1802?][1]

Many thanks, Dear D^{r} for the fine young leveret you obligingly sent me w^{h} proved very tender and regulated 2 or 3 friends. As we had not the pleasure of y^{r} company to partake we most readily drank y^{r} health. I am much pleased to hear of the increase of y^{r} family and Mrs Woodforde's happy recovery and hope her future progeny will be equally healthy and inherit her firmness of constitution, a blessing w^{h} surpasses wealth and all the accidental gifts of fortune. I cannot but sympathize with y^{r} worthy patient Mr D., and shall be happy when he calls here to reconsider his case and render him all possible service as the hint you mention affords a new key to the treatment. Herewith I forward for y^{r} entertainment 3 new tracts w^{h} you'll please to look over and forward before the end of this month (October) as I must return them to Dr Hawes. I am in no hurry about Med^{l} Trans^{s}. With best wishes to you and Mrs Woodforde. I remain, Dear Sir, most sincerely y^{rs}

A. Fothergill

P.S. News just arrived of the death of Dr Ludlow of Corsham[2] f^{m} locked jaw in consequence of a puncture of a thorn; a stout man in his very prime!!!

[1] Saturday was the 16th in 1802.
[2] Daniel Ludlow (1765–1802) MD, MRCS, practised in Corsham, Wiltshire.

N° 81 **81**

Bath April 9th 1803

Dear Sir,

Your last letter accompanied by the London Medical Transactions together with the

additional N^{o} of the Chirurgical and Med^{l} Review came safe, and I regret that the task of discharging previous arrears in my correspondence has prevented acknowledging your obliging letter till now. An attack, tho' not violent, of the epidemic catarrh has also contributed to the same end, and obliged me to postpone all engagements that did not appear very urgent. I am now, thank God, tolerably recovered tho' still rather valetudinary and am happy to hear your own health is so perfectly restored, as to be competent to the fatigues of y^{r} station in such a sickly season. I am also much pleased to hear of the handsome manner in which you have been elected by the Med^{l} Soc^{y} in Bolt Court.[1] As Mr D.—our quondam patient has not reappeared I conclude he has been, like many others, beguiled into a belief in some of the speedy and infallible remedies daily obtruded on the credulous multitude. How many victims to modern quackery after being miserably duped may exclaim—"Decipiuntur specie recti."[2] Respecting your important question concerning venesection in the present peripneumonies, I have met with very few that cou'd bear the use of the lancet a second time with impunity. Such seems the nature of the disease impressed by the epidemic constitution that, notwithstanding the flushed countenance and full throbbing pulse and vernal season disposing inflammation, yet it is remarkable (as Huxham long ago observed in a similar epid^{c})[3] how suddenly the scene changes, and how unexpectedly a copious bleeding sinks the powers of the system! Some athletic young men used to full diet and robust exercise and periodical venesection are, however, manifest exceptions to the general rule and may perish thro' neglect of venesection in the first stage of the disease, especially where there is a strong tendency to congestion either to the lungs or brain attended with acute fixed pain, orthopnoea, dry skin, delirium etc. In doubtful cases it is a golden rule to bleed with the finger on the pulse, if this rise and grow fuller proceed, but if it sink or falter stop immediately. It is much easier to reduce strength than to gain it. The natural and most favorable crisis in this, as well as the slighter attacks of the disease, as in the general influenza, is a free and copious expectoration, w^{h} supersedes bleeding, and most other evacuants. In Paris the epidemic reigned many weeks before it arrived in London and is said to have swept off at least one fourth of those that were seized. Either the disease was more virulent or the treatment injudicious; the great fatality has by some been attributed, and perhaps not unjustly, to profuse venesection w^{h} it is hoped, tho' some times abused, yet is seldom carr^{d} to so dangerous an excess in this country. Certain physic^{s} have run into the opposite extreme, and not only drench their patients with red port by way of prophylactic, but support them, as they call it, thro' the disease by frequent glasses of brandy and even brag of their success in thus carrying them thro' hair breadth escapes!!![4] No wonder, for if they escape, they escape as by fire! Thus the children of Ammon of old were forced to pass thro' the fire to Moloch! "Incidit in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdem."[5] But there is no method too preposterous for some men to adopt. Whether this epidemic be contagious or not is a question on w^{h}, as Sir Roger De Coverley observes,[6] which may be said on both sides. Accordingly the faculty are, and perhaps long will be divided on the subject. As soon as I can find leisure to glance over your numbers, I shall expect entertainment especially from your remarks on Burserius. That you and Mrs Woodforde may long enjoy uninterrupted health and prosperity is the earnest wish of Dr Sir, yours etc.

A. Fothergill

P.S. Perhaps you may hear of some place that may suit Mr Jackson an intelligent young

surgeon-apoth^{y}. I inclose the two letters partly for your amusement, partly as making weight—now a small parcel.

[1] The Medical Society of London was at Bolt Court.
[2] "We are deceived by a mirage of right". Horace, *Art of poetry*, 25. See also letter **21**.
[3] John Huxham, *An essay on fevers, and their various kinds, as depending on different constitutions of the blood: with dissertations on slow nervous fevers; on putrid, pestilential, spotted fevers; on the small-pox; and on pleurisies and peripneumonies*, London, S. Austen, 1750. Many subsequent editions.
[4] Brandy was regularly employed as a remedy by the Brunonians, the followers of John Brown. See Guenter B. Risse, 'Brunonian therapeutics: new wine in old bottles?', in W. F. Bynum and Roy Porter (eds.), *Brunonianism in Britain and Europe*, London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1998, *Medical History* Supplement No. 8, pp. 46–62.
[5] "He crashes into Scylla while wishing to avoid Charybdis". Philip Gaultier de Lille.
[6] Sir Roger De Coverley, a character described by Addison in the *Spectator*.

N° 82 **82**

Bath August 10th [1803]

Dear Sir,

A declining state of health of many weeks back since I had the influenza obliges me with the advice of med^{l} friends in concurrence with my own opinion to undertake a journey. This and a variety of avocations have deprived me of reading your med^{l} journ^{l}. I had, however, packed them up ready for Saturday's carrier with many thanks and am sorry they have been so long detained.

Sydenham with a choice few being packed and mailed down. I regret you cannot have the former and that you must not expect this long long time to hear again

from Dr Sir, y^{r} sincere friend

Vale! et cave ut valeas[1] A. Fothergill

N.B. A very urgent message from Frome waits impatiently and forbids more. Best respects to Mrs Woodforde and all enquiring friends.

[1] Farewell! and take care you keep well". See also letters **31**, **32**, **33**, and **84**.

N° 83 **83**

Bristol 7^{ber} 7th [September 1803]

D^{r} D^{r}

Before I embark I cannot let slip the opport^{y} (tho' extremely short) of acknowledging your kind and anxious letter, which amidst a crowd of others of similar and friendly import

have been pouring in from various quarters, as I foresaw, and therefore wished to avoid the painful task of a formal farewell, and as this resolution has been pursued towards all, none I hope on due consideration will take it amiss. The determination respecting a tour in America and to visit those friends with whom I had these 15 years or upwards maintained a friendly and interesting correspondence, has been ever a favorite wish, and tho' for prudential reasons not publicly mentioned, has at length only been accelerated by a declining state of health and the candid opinion of medical friends, of no small experience. I am not the less obliged to you, however, for your kind offer and very affectionate letter. My health I trust (if we arrive safe) will improve, and you must not consider this as a final, only a temporary separation and that, in due time, I flatter myself with the hopes of revisiting my native country and beloved friends. But you and my other friends must not be impatient to hear fm me, till I have had time to make little excursions where lettrs are to be delivered, and fix on headquarters. A constitutional state of weak lungs is the source of my complaints but none of the symps very severe or very alarming. The vessel, ready to drop down towds King's road, forbids more. Health and prosperity attend you and Mrs Woodforde and all enquiring friends adieu! A. Fothergill

P.S. Yr books I conclude arrived safe with due thanks, but I regretted as the inn keeper wou'd not receive money in the carrier's absence, Robert was obliged to let 'em go with carriage unpaid.

No 77 **84**

Bath Mond: 30th Nov.[1]

Dear Sir,

I was favored with your letter yesterday evening and take the earliest opportunity of answering it. Last week I had reconnoitered Milsom and Bond Street and have this morng renewed the survey and the following is the result; Edgar buildings quite full. Milsom Street 34, Wests, Milleners, have 2 drawing rooms, 2 attics, 1 dressing room, 1 hall and the use of the kitchen etc. at 4 guineas per week, without linen.

Wm Games, Jeweller, Milsom Street.

1 Back parlour, 2 best bedrooms, 1 garret and hall. 3 Guineas without linen—NB Cannot spare kitchen but will work for a family.

Rummins—12 Bond Street—2 Bedrooms, 2 Servants rooms, 1 sitting room—perhaps 1 more sitting room by Monday next but not certain. 3 Guineas and half including the use of linen.

None will promise without entering immediately, so there is no time to be lost. Cuffs, Druggist, Milsom Street,[2] let since my former inquiry and all upon the alert. From the above yr friend Mr Bennet will be able to determine and a line may be directed, or perhaps better to the parties themselves, the sooner the better. Any luggage sent here shall be taken care of, and I shall be glad to render you or yr friends any acceptable service I can. Please

to remember me to my worthy quondam Patient Revd Mr Moss, to whom I wish success and that you may have the pleasure of restoring him and that every thing may conspire to render y^{r} approaching happiness complete. Vale! et cave ut valeas![3] Adieu

A: Fothergill

[1] This letter bears no obvious relation to the rest of the correspondence. It does seem to have been from Fothergill, and probably from the period before he left for Philadelphia. We have included it here before the letters from Philadelphia for completeness.

[2] Presumably John Cuff (1780?–1809?), chemist and druggist, located in Milsom Street, Bath.

[3] "Farewell! and take care you keep well". See letters **31**, **32**, **33**, and **82**.

N° 84 **85**

{Philadelphia July 4th 1809
{M^{r} J^{n} Warden's Merch[ant?].

Before me, dear D^{r}, is y^{r} truly grateful and affectionate letter of April 30 w^{h} I received yesterday and gladly embrace this opportunity of answering it immediately under cover to my friend Mr Vanderhoist, American Consul at Bristol. But as Mr Warden's ship is ready to sail, brief I must be. Y^{r} long silence made me think you remiss, and one letter of mine having not reached you probably impressed you with a similar suspicion of my tardiness. To maintain a regular correspondence at the distance of 3500 miles in such critical times is indeed no easy task. For the late long interruption, tho' we lament it, we can only mutually plead "Veniam petimus[que] dabimusque vicissim."[1] From a polite and friendly letter with w^{h} the new President (Mr Madison)[2] lately honored me I have reason to hope the late national animosities will be amicably adjusted, and a friendly intercourse with Great Brit^{n} revived, in spite of the Corsican tyrant and his intriguing emissaries.[3] The Bristol trade to this country has long been engaged by Liverpool so that a ship to Bristol is become a "rara avis".[4] Hence the cheapest part of conveyance is in a manner lost. Your letter tho' single bears the British postmark of 2/7 w^{h} seems exhorbitant, by a Bristol ship wou'd only have been a mere trifle. The Lond^{n} Post Office I understand will not now receive a letter for America without insisting first of all on the full pay for the whole way—a grievance w^{h} requires redress. The pleasure I received from y^{r} lett^{r} was alloyed by the difficulty of deciphering several words, especially of names of authors w^{h} after repeated trials I was obliged to give up. To prevent this in future only keep y^{r} right elbow nearer the breast and make the lett^{rs} more close and compact resembling an Italian hand. What wits may ensue from mistaking the letters and recipes of a physician! "Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautam."[5]

Books as well as letters have been occasionally captured in their transit to America, as our Philosoph^{l} Society as well as individuals have witnessed. In the United States are many colleges—the University of Philadelphia is the chief for medical degrees—require 2 years residence and by a new rule the candidate is not obliged to publish his thesis unless he chooses to do it. In April last I saw 62 diplomas conferr'd. Theses and examinations all in English. To obtain a degree a pupil must attend all the professors and pay to each 20 ^{Dolls}—4$^{£}$ 10^{s} 0^{d}.[6] Here all the branches of medicine are taught and few students go to Edin^{r}

—Dr Woodhouse profess^{r} of chem^{y}[7] died last week, apoplectic in his 39 year. 3 candidates offer for the chair. Last year has been fatal to many med^{l} men. Among whom I have lost my invaluable ever to be lamented friend Dr Hawes! whose death is an irreparable loss to the Humane Society and produces a chasm in society. "Semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt."[8] Dr J. R. Coxe has lately published the 1st American Dispensatory[9] being an improved edit^{n} of the last Edin^{r} accommodated to the U.S.—the work is judiciously executed, a little vol. called Conversations in Chemistry by a Lady,[10] is a valuable compendium, concise and perspicuous. Here and in the other great cities the booksellers are continually reprinting the best English authors on various subjects and justly complain of the exhorbitant price of British books. Pitt's accursed tax on paper became a grievous tax on literature—for this and his tax on income his memory will long be held in execration.[11] What is now become of his vain boasting? "Restitution for the past and indemnity for the future." What a horrible scene lately exhibited at Shuckbro hall!

Today, 4 July, is the Anniversary of American Independence, almost the only festival celebrated by America. The military in new regimentals fire in platoons. Cincinnatæ[12] and other companies dine in public, drink patriotic toasts under the sound of cannon and martial airs. Old and young keep the festival and pay honour to the celebrity, Jud[g]e [?] Smith urges me to see a balloon launched—and fireworks w^{h} are to crown the evening. The federalists and democrats on this day show their mutual repulsion, and keep at a respectful distance from one another.

A steam boat, w^{h} is really a novel undertaking, conveys persons as a regular packet boat between New York and Albany[13]—another is just launched at Philad^{a} and is to ply in the river Delaware—a noble tide water a mile broad.[14] In the United States are found various drugs, fossils, pit coal and almost all the metals and semimetals. Bones of the huge mammoth are found in various states and of another large nondescript animal long extinct. At the Woodlands, the beautiful seat of A. Hamilton[15] esq^{r} where I sometimes dine, is a rare collection of exotic plants brought from all parts of the world, superior to any collection I ever saw, except the royal gardens at Kew and Paris. In Philad^{a} Mr Peale's museum[16] presents a wonderful assemblage of articles in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. In one of the rooms is the skeleton of an elephant, of a mammoth and of a mouse. In another the portraits of all eminent characters who figure in and since the revolution all executed by Mr Peale and the whole museum formed by him. Sydenham you'll recollect has more than once been translated with notes etc. a new version wou'd cost much money time and patience, for the sake of small honor and less profit, nay rather for certain loss. "Your ardent endeavour to discharge the duties of your station skillfully and conscientiously" is the surest way to merit fame and fortune, and to obtain what is still much better—peace of mind and contentment which the world cannot give. Beware of engaging in expensive speculations, increasing practice and increasing family will be sufficient to occupy all your time and no small portion of y^{r} gains. Emancipated from the toils of the profession with a comfortable competency and my 2 English serv^{nts} who are still with me I live much at my ease. Having travelled and tolerably satisfied my curiosity with American scenery I wait only the return of general peace to revisit my native country. My respects [to] Mrs Woodforde. Also to Mr Frowd whose letter I rec^{d} 10th June and will ans^{r} the first opportunity. I have barely room to add D^{r} D^{r} sincerely and affectionately yours

A. Fothergill

[1] "We seek lenient judgement and will give it in return". Horace, *Art of poetry*, 11.

[2] James Madison (1751–1836) was elected President of the United States on 7 December 1808 and was inaugurated on 4 March 1809.

[3] President Thomas Jefferson signed the Non-Intercourse Act on 1 March 1809, which forbade all overseas commerce with Great Britain and France. On 19 April 1809, President James Madison issued a proclamation reinstituting trade with Great Britain, thus suspending the Non-Intercourse Act.

[4] "A rare bird". Horace, *Satires*, 2.2.26; and Juvenal, *Satires*, 6.165.

[5] "Happy is he whom the dangers of others make careful". Not attributable, possibly a proverb.

[6] Twenty dollars would have been the equivalent of five pounds. Four pounds ten shillings equalled eighteen dollars. This is quite a discrepancy but there may be a transcription error. A similar monetary issue arises in letter **20**.

[7] James Woodhouse (1770–1809), professor of chemistry in the University of Pennsylvania from 1795 until his death.

[8] "Your honour and name and praises will remain forever". Virgil, *Ecloques*, 5.78.

[9] Presumably, John Redman Coxe (1773–1864), *The American dispensatory*, Philadelphia 1806.

[10] Presumably one of the many editions of Jane Marcet (1769–1858), *Conversations on chemistry; in which the elements of that science are familiarly explained and illustrated by experiments and plates*, Philadelphia, James Humphrey on Change Walk, 1806.

[11] Reference to taxes introduced by William Pitt, the younger (1759–1806).

[12] Veterans of the War of American Independence.

[13] *The North River Steamboat* (its name was later changed to *The Clermont*) was inaugurated on 17–21 August 1807. The trip took thirty-two hours from New York City to Albany. The steamboat was designed by Robert Fulton with financial backing from Robert R. Livingston.

[14] The *Phoenix*, a seaworthy steamboat designed by John Stevens, operated on the Delaware River for six years beginning in June 1809.

[15] Alexander Hamilton (1755–1804), archetypal Federalist, Secretary of the Treasury (1789–1795) under President George Washington (1789–1797).

[16] Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827), portrait painter and naturalist, established a museum in the State House of Pennsylvania (Independence Hall), Philadelphia. Rembrandt Peale (1778–1860), Charles's son, was the author of *Account of the skeleton of the mammoth, a non-descript carnivorous animal of immense size, found in America*, London, E. Lawrence, 1802. Presumably the one on display.

N° 85 **86**

Philadelphia March 13th 1810

Dr Dr,

Before me is your very obliging letter of Novr 15th arrived 3 days ago, wh I take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging by the British packet via Falmouth, the only conveyance on wh we can rely and, if war should ensue, (wh heaven avert), that will cease, and we foreigners may perhaps be compelled to decamp.[1] Such is the critical situation of affairs in wh national discord has plunged us. As yours has been 4 months on its passage you must not be impatient if this should not reach you till after midsummer. We have 100 miles land carriage to New York where the packets rendezvous and above 3000 more to Falmouth across the great Atlantic, yet by that noble discovery, the invention of letters and of the magnetic needle, friends are enabled to maintain a social intercourse from pole to pole. Without this heart-consoling resource, absence fm those we hold most dear wou'd be almost insupportable. Our great cities last season happily escaped the malignant fever excepting a few sporadic cases here and at New York, tho' Brooklin a large village separated from New York only by the river was grievously infested. In Connecticut to the N.E. a malignant typhus (called spotted fever) has repeatedly appeared and tho' circumscribed

by narrow bounds, carried off many within a few days, often within 36 or 48 hours from the attack! Medical consultations have been held and various conjectures formed, but the malady triumphed over every mode of treatment as in the terrible epid[l] yellow fever of 1793 and 1798.

In a land of liberty and equality a strict medical police can seldom be duly enforced, all are anxious to relieve if sick, but such intercourse spreads the contagion and, when the disease has spent itself, dormant germs lurk in clothes and utensils, like smother'd embers till favorable circumstances conspire to renew their activity while perhaps a majority of practitioners deride all suspicion of contagion. "No such thing now as a contagious disease except the smallpox and itch and they are not contagious only infectious." Oh rare logic—what it is to be learned? Dr Caldwell,[2] a quondam pupil of Dr Rush, in a course of lectures combats his præceptor's doctrines and some of his pupils are so sanguine as to think he bids fair to diminish the splendor of the rush light, and will soon become a star of the first magnitude. They will next exult with Horace.

"Micat inter omnes/

. . . velut inter ignes /luna minores."[3]

I feel for the worthy ancient painstaking professor who with all his eccentricities is certainly a man of science and profound research. But novelty often dazzles incompetent judges more than sterling merit. As that great luminary Cullen had his arrogant pupil Brown for a rival—so Rush descending fast in the vale of years, "Sic transit gloria mundi!"[4]

The discarding of Latin enables pupils to march easily thro' 2 courses of lectures and with English examinations and an English thesis, (at their option to publish or not) to mount rapidly to the "summos in medicina honores".[5] The Colleges about to break up, had about 300 pupils this year, what an inundation of graduates will be let loose on the public!!

In Connecticut some time ago fell a shower of meteoric stones like others of the sort, of w[h] I have a specimen.[6] Here are found most of the metals except tin. Chrome yields a beautiful yellow pigment and bears a high price. Is the author on purgatives Hamilton, the little accoucheur of Edin[r] tho' perhaps now facile princeps?[7] His works of D[r] Hall[8] I hear are commended, but since I dropped practice my ardor for new medical works has given way to other studies of the miscellaneous kind—philosophical, theological, moral, and everything within the range of polite literature. For reading is still my delight which affords a calm serene pleasure superior to all other pursuits. Sometimes I occasionally dip into a medical writer w[h] falls in my way. For like a true sportsman I still like a crack of the whip. The works w[h] I have lately been [missing words] and edified were professor Blair's Sermons[9] and Han[h] Moore's admirable new work on Coelebs[10] in w[h] excellent characters are drawn con amore with a glowing pencil pattern, worthy imitation. The papers announced Han[h] M's death tho' I trust she is living[11] to delight and instruct a degenerate age. The above works I earnestly recommend to y[r] perusal. They come home to men's business and their bosoms and are highly impressive. Selections f[m] the Gent's Magazine 3 vols supply many curious and entertaining miscellaneous facts and anecdotes. D[r] Stoll[12] and the other med[l] works may be had of the foreign importers in London more likely than here where foreign journals are served very irregularly and are long behind. Bonaparte you know sinks, burns, and destroys all American ships met with his cruisers. The cortex in rheumatism is not new, was many years ago recommended to my notice by my illustrious namesake and very justly in the chronic state, when protracted by debility. The disease is very prevalent here still more so the phthysis pulmonalis w[h] in the Bills of Mortality constitutes a 5th if

not a 4th of the deaths!! The digitalis tho' rarely equal to cure yet seldom fails to check the hectic fever and to afford a considerable truce is at least an important auxiliary. For "non regredi est progredi".[13]

Medical Ethics I have not seen, but anything from the pen of my excellent friend Percival[14] must be interesting and also from Dr Heberden.[15] Vaccination I flatter myself will still maintain its superiority over inoculation notwithstanding the insidious attacks of its enemies, see the candid report by the Londn College[16] and testimonies fm all parts of the globe. Sydenham as an accurate observer stands unrivaled except by the father of physic, Hippocrates. But beware of his wild theories and his early propensities to the lancet wh he lived to moderate. British constitutions since his time have tended more to laxity and nervous debility to which refined luxury and unnatural modes of life have contributed. We have had a severe winter, my thermr without, on 23 January, stood below zero, the greatest cold I have yet experienced. In the north and northeast parts, 5 or 6 [degrees] lower. Except repeated colds I have reason to be thankful for an improved state of health, my 2 English domestics still with me, all the ingredients of happiness within my reach except a good wife. Tho' an ardent admirer of the incomparable Lucilla yet as she is engaged to the worthy Cælebs and I know not where to find such another. I believe I shall decline matrimony a while longer. You'll please to see our friend Mr Frowd 'ere long and show him this letter to keep him in good humour and to gain time till I can catch a leisure hour to write to him. My best wishes to you and amiable partner Dr Dr yours truly

adieu A. Fothergill

[1] President Madison reinstated the Non-Intercourse Act with Great Britain on 9 August 1809.

[2] Charles Caldwell (1772–1853), *Medical and physical memoirs, containing . . . the origin and nature of the late pestilential epidemics of the United States*, Philadelphia, T. & W. Bradford, 1801. Caldwell held that yellow fever was of local origin and opposed the view that it was imported from the West Indies, as suggested by the College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

[3] "Shines out among all others like the moon among the lesser fires". Horace, *Odes*, 1.12.46–8.

[4] "So passes the glory of the world". Anonymous, words spoken at the investiture of the pope.

[5] "The highest honours in medicine". See also letter **36**.

[6] Presumably this was the meteor that fell on Weston, Connecticut, on 14 December 1807. This marvel was visible over much of New England and New York and became a national sensation.

[7] "Easily the foremost". Fothergill confused James Hamilton, senior (1749–1835), a physician, with James Hamilton, the younger (1767–1839), the professor of midwifery at Edinburgh. James Hamilton, senior, published *Observations on the utility and administration of purgative medicines in several diseases*, Edinburgh, J. Simpson, 1805; first American edition from the second Edinburgh edition, Philadelphia, B. Johnson, 1809. James Hamilton, the younger (not related), published various works on midwifery.

[8] Unclear reference.

[9] Presumably one of the many editions of Hugh Blair, *Sermons*, London, W. Strahan, 1777.

[10] Hannah More (1745–1833), *Coelebs in search of a wife. Comprehending observations on domestic habits and manners, religion and morals*, vol. 1, London, T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1808; 2 vols., third edition, London, T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1809.

[11] Indeed, she would live twenty-three more years.

[12] Presumably, Maximilian Stoll (1742–1788), *Ratio medendi in nosocomio practico Vindobonensi*, 7 vols., Vienna, 1777–90.

[13] "Not to go back is to advance".

[14] Thomas Percival, *Medical ethics; or, a code of institutes and precepts, adapted to the professional conduct of physicians and surgeons*, London, J. Johnson and R. Bickerstaff, 1803.

[15] Probably William Heberden, the younger. Woodforde may have told Fothergill of Heberden's *Oratio Harveiana* . . . 1809, London, J. M'Creery for T. Payne, 1810.

[16] Presumably, Royal College of Physicians of London, *Report . . . on vaccination* [London, 1807].

[N°] 88 **87**

Philadelphia Septr 22th 1810

Before me, D^{r} D^{r}, is your very grateful and obliging letter of June last, arrived in 2 months and 16 days. In it, I mark with pleasure y^{r} ripening judgement, unabating ardor and improved style. Every young physician who aims at future excellence ought to attend to the manner as well as the matter, especially if he ever intends to submit his observations to the critical eye of the public. How mortifying it is to observe so great a neglect of this in many modern publications, in other respects very valuable? But a slovenly vulgar style and perplexed manner often tires and disgusts the reader at every step. Under the present heavy expense, postage in England, w^{h} outweighs the American, tho' sufficiently high, I cannot desire you to write long letters often, w^{h} might also interfere with y^{r} laborious engagements, but I wou'd recommend you to take a large sized sheet, and fill it by degrees as reading and interesting occurrences may suggest or supply materials; this wou'd render the work easy and preclude the irksome idea of sitting down to complete a long letter at once, w^{h} is apt to induce us to procrastinate or perhaps postpone the formidable task altogether. Please always to leave a vacant place for the seal, and before you seal a sea letter secure it first with a wafer, otherwise the marine air acts upon the wax, breaks its texture, and the letter comes open. If you have any friend or correspondent at London, Liverpool, or Bristol, y^{r} letter clear'd to such a person with a request to forward to Philadelphia or even New York, tho' 100 miles from us, wou'd generally come with more certainty and expedition, unless by some act of insanity the intercourse sh^{d} again be shut up, of w^{h} the paper wou'd soon apprise you. Is it not mortifying that England has now been harassed with a war of 18 years and yet remains without the smallest prospect of peace! That the reign of George the 3rd, a pious monarch, sh^{d} be doom'd to be written in letters of blood! That war sh^{d} be reduced to a lucrative trade to enrich a few at the expense of millions weighed down with taxes! But a truce to politics—a subject too gloomy to be contemplated.

Dr Rush teaches theory and practice, a Brunonian at bottom but pretends to improve Brown's doctrine, declaims against all nosological systems and particularly Cullen's classification, reduces all diseases to one. Disease, says he, is a unity and there is but one disease—irregular excitement. This advocates re-echo, the pleasing simplicity—but one how delightfully the labor is shortened! If you want to see more, see his essays in 3 or 4 vol^{s} new edition in London.[1] Morgagni's language is crabbed and obscure—an excellent translation by the late Dr Alexander under the auspices of my worthy patron, the late John Fothergill M.D., is perused with equal profit and far more pleasure, in 2 or 3 vol^{s} 4to. My copy was left with my books under the care of Mr B. Dawson Bath, and you are welcome to peruse it, but if you have bought the Latin copy, go on with it, it only requires a little more time and patience. Besides it exercises y^{r} Latinity—a matter of some consequence. German authors are often quoted, but very expensive and often not to be depended on, witness Storck[2] and others full of the marvelous and written ad captandum vulgus[3] or to magnify the author. Beware of purchasing them, many of them soon become dead letter and when sold will not yield half the original price. I hear a Bristol Med^{l} Review[4] is publishing w^{h} may give you an insight in foreign med^{l} works better than the high eulogies

of foreign journals. In the Monthly Magazine of Jany and Feby last see how the French extol their authors to curry favor with their despotic emperors, a few standard British writers (evidently their superiors) read with care and well digested will better requite an English physician. System upon system changes, like the fashions, and chameleon like, assume different hues according to the fancy of the author, but facts grounded on experience and stated by authors of known veracity will stand the test of ages, while wild theories and fanciful speculations will vanish like the "baseless fabric of a vision nor leave a wreck behind." Dr Cullen saw their fallacy, and embraced a prudent scepticism. I read most of the late Dr Heberden's Obser^{ns}[5] and his accuracy and integrity may I think be depended on, and demand y^{r} attention. The present fashionable gossamer female clothing urges the consequent catarrh very often into a fatal phthysis, therefore y^{r} caution for Boerhaave about change of clothing in warm days is very just and important. But fashion derides health and reigns with uncontrollable sway. The life of a country physician tho' very laborious, yet that labor gives firmness and elasticity to the frame, and barring colds and accidents, highly contributes to health and longevity. The fatigue sweetens repose, and repose soon repairs the wear and tear of the preceding day, and fits us to encounter the toil of tomorrow with heartfelt alacrity hence "labor ipse voluptas"![6] Experto crede Antonio.[7] After being wet and cold beware of solicitations to drink spirits or strong liquors. Strip off as soon as possible the wet clothes, wash y^{r} skin with cold water and then rub briskly with a coarse towel and even flesh brush. 5 Children already! after the 6th appears—"Festina lente" "nequid nimis,"[8] Voluptates commendat rarior usus.[9] Tho' country practice be very laborious, yet custom and the pressure of the times circumscribe the emoluments, and it is sound policy to render the demands under rather than over the mark. The fees are better in Somersetshire than in Northamptonshire and adjacent counties. I observe that P.S. by our good friend Frowd, and am glad he is so well. You and he will treasure up materials for another welcome letter, and may if you please show him this as a mark of my extensive punctuality, assiduity, [illegible] & loquacity. Commend me to y^{r} better half and accept this token of my high consideration. A. Fothergill.

[1] We have been unable to locate any multivolume edition of any work by Benjamin Rush published in London in this period.

[2] Anton Störck (1731–1803), Swabian physician.

[3] "To win over the populace".

[4] Unclear reference, no such review was published.

[5] Possibly, William Heberden, the elder, *Commentarii de morborum historia et curatione. [Ed. by William Heberden, Jnr.]*, London, T. Payne, 1802; or, *Commentaries on the history and cure of diseases. [Tr. by William Heberden, Jnr.]*, London, T. Payne, 1802.

[6] "The toil itself is the pleasure". Not attributable.

[7] "Believe Anthony who has experienced it". Virgil, *Aeneid*, 11.283. Virgil has "Experto credite", Fothergill has adapted this for his own purpose.

[8] "Hurry slowly", "Nothing too much". Old Greek sayings translated into Latin.

[9] "Pleasures are enhanced by less frequent indulgence in them". Juvenal, *Satires*, 11.208.

[N^{o}] 87 **88**

Philadelphia March 14th 1812 [1811?][1]

My D^{r} D^{r},

Y^{r} very obliging letter of Jan 11th is just arrived w^{h} I hasten to ans^{r} by a ship going in

ballast to Lond^{n} and can now only return so, as the nonintercourse is again unhappily revived against England but not against France. "Dat veniam corvis vexat censura columbas."[2] The papers here overflow with the King's illness and every ominous occurrence in England, therefore let us not occupy social pages in future with ungrateful political events with which the papers never cease to bore us, copying disasters and groundless rumors even usque ad nauseam.[3] The College lectures are just closed—a very numerous class about 400! So the increase of D^{rs} outstrips if possible the rapid increase of population. The new census of the U.S. is about to appear[4] which will surprise all Europe at the fertility of American females, who far outstrip the noted Mary Tofts the rabbit woman[5] of prolific memory. The hosp^{l} report of last year presents the amazing number of 17 cases [of] vaccination. No vaccine society—the vulgar proclaim the inefficacy of the operation—and so the discovery is left to chance—and to make its way as well as it can. Last week I threw into Pulsons Daily[6]—an earnest and pathetic exhortation to parents, guardians and spouses, to be adopted by the clergy and enforced at baptism, in favor of early vaccination. The clergy, were they so disposed, might greatly promote the salutary discovery and unite in disseminating its benefits by exhortations of this kind from the pulpit. But this like former admonitions are read, the paper thrown by, and the subject forgotten. So daily papers and other weekly ones read by all ranks and degrees w^{h} with weekly political meetings and party cabals are enough to absorb public attention in the thorny gulf of politics. But the evil stops not here. These vehicles of slander calumniate the worthiest characters, engender party spirit and cause federalists to hate democrats and democrats to execrate federalists and produce deadly animosities among families and neighbours, while the boasted freedom of the press degenerates into the most outrageous licentiousness. Instead of composing most strifes and bickerings of different courts it strives to inflame the angry passions and to set nations together by the ears. Thus a 7 years inveterate war seems to have brutalized mankind, and threatens to plunge 'em once more into a state of barbarism. But of this <u>satis superque</u>.[7] Some of the German and foreign professors who had hastily adopted Brown's system, I hear have candidly recanted and given it up as a dangerous and pernicious doctrine. The 2 leading principles excitement and collapse were, I think, well established by my venerable preceptor Dr Cullen, and applicable to a great extent in pathology, but the fanciful system engrafted on this by Brown, with a number of uncouth terms and by pathetical dogmas inapplicable to clinical practice I always thought were built on a sandy foundation, accordingly it seems tottering to its downfall. In D^{r} R[ush]'s works however tho' abounding with wild ideas you'll meet with some useful extracts and practical remarks w^{h} in a long course of lecturing and practice cou'd not fail to occur to a studious and careful observer. But the <u>unity</u> of disease, the <u>fondness for mercury</u> and <u>drastic purgatives</u> and the <u>unbounded use of the lancet</u> even in malignant fevers, you'll compare with what you have heard, read and observed in clinical practice and know how to estimate accordingly. Huxham and other able British practitioners wisely caution against profuse venesection in malignant fevers. The lancet in the hands of a thro' paced[?] bleeder is like the sword in the hands of the executioner. What is it but adding the sword to pestilence!

<u>Iugulare</u> morbum[8] is a Latin expression of a rapid cure, and may be translated to cut the throat of the patient, a tonic w^{h} wou'd spare numerous bleedings and many doses of jalap and calomel. Your remark on the incompetency of upstart lecturers in London and the danger of their misleading pupils, who place implicit faith in doctrines peremptorily

delivered, is perfectly just. In the excellent authors you now study you'll find sound practice grounded on experience. Theories have ever varied and will continue to subvert each other and after reigning a little while be forced to give place to future ones. But established truths will last to the end of time tho' often difficult to be ascertained. Pilate shrewdly asked what is truth? "Opinionem commentam delet dies, naturae judicia confirmat."[9] is a maxim worthy of Dr Bacon.[10] Morgagni in the crabbed original, like Haller, presents a Herculean work, but yr resolution and industry with yr nil tam difficile[11] will in time accomplish it. But let not yr ardor encroach on the hours of rest or prompt you to exhaust too far the sensorial power, to the injury of health, the loss of wh I remember is the loss of every thing valuable. Intense study will, I fear, increase yr constitutional watchfulness in a confirmed habit if too much indulged. The English copy of Morgagni I think quite sufficient and will spare much midnight toil and time spent on obscure intricate passages. Our capricious climate is more variable than the British and exhibits much greater degrees of heat and cold, yet excepting occasional coughs I enjoy good health, for which, and a comfortable independence, I have cause to be very thankful to the supreme dispenser of all good, to whose beneficence we owe all we enjoy here, or hope for hereafter. May He disperse the gathering storm which hangs portentous over our beloved country and humble to the dust the audacious sanguinary tyrant who dares to threaten its destruction! How are the nations under his control and groaning under his iron sceptre to be pitied! How many thousands of helpless innocent families has the unfeeling monster stripped of everything and left to wander in search of bread thro' pillaged country, ruined and almost deserted! Tho' yr letters are very acceptable, yet I cannot, must not, urge you to write often. Postage I find is too expensive for you and franks avail nothing—only take a large sheet, condense under a few heads and fill up at leisure. Multum in parvo and semel in anna.[12] Leave a blank for the seal and wafer sea letters before sealing. With best wishes to you and Mrs Woodforde I remain Dr Dr yr assured friend

A. Fothergill

[1] This must be 1811 because on 2 November 1810 President Madison released a proclamation reopening trade with France but forbidding American trade with Great Britain. Madison was misled by the French; they continued to interfere with neutral American shipping (as Fothergill noted in letter **86**). Madison learned of the French deception in September 1811. Apart from this, the next letter is almost certainly March 1812 and Fothergill would have been unlikely to have written two long letters to Woodforde in the same month.

[2] "The censureship absolves the ravens and falls heavily on the doves". Juvenal, *Satires*, 2.63.

[3] "Right up to nausea".

[4] The third national census was conducted in 1810. The U.S. population had increased by 2 million, or 36.6%, over the population of 1800.

[5] Mary Tofts (1701?–1763) "the rabbit-breeder" of "Godlyman" (Godalming in Surrey). She reportedly gave birth to 15 rabbits in 1726, but this and other marvels proved to be sensational hoaxes.

[6] Presumably, *Pulsons Daily Advertiser* of Philadelphia.

[7] "Enough and more than enough".

[8] Literally, "to cut the throat of the disease".

[9] "Time destroys a concocted opinion but confirms the judgements of nature". Not attributable.

[10] Presumably Francis Bacon.

[11] Fothergill is referring to the proverb cited in full in letters **5**, **13**, and **22**. "There is no difficulty so great ingenuity does not overcome it".

[12] "Much in little and once in a year". Not attributable.

[N°] 86 **89**

Philadelphia March 1812
(Mr John Warden's Ransr: [?] A)

Your kind letter, my dear doctor, I was favour'd with, within these few days (about 2 months from the date) as you express a wish to hear from me soon I take an entire sheet to ansr it by the 1st ship from hence or from New York, for rarely does a Bristol ship appear, Liverpool has nearly the whole trade that yet remains. I am pleased to hear that you and your wife and family are all well. The severe winters here try me with increasing rigour and particularly the late one in wh the mercury more than once has been below zero and even now frequently at 15, with sudden transitions marking, in 24 hours, 25 to 35 degrees! Such are the variations in this capricious climate. The late comet had scarcely disappear'd before another was announced, add to this tempests and shipwrecks have been uncommonly numerous and, to complete the climax, most of our capital cities have been visited by frequent and violent concussions from earthquakes tho' happily very few lives have been lost, nor has England, tho' it is hoped will end in brutum fulmen.[1] Our pacific people think war unnecessary and say let us allow them (as Shakespeare expresses it) to "speak daggers as long as they use none."[2] But time and room are too precious for politics—the papers will give you satis superque.[3] As the language, manners and mode of living so nearly resembles those of England, I never felt any difficulty on those points, but these severe catarrhs I experience every winter more and more, will, I foresee, oblige me to revisit the mild climate of England, and cou'd I meet with an agreeable condition[?] May next and arrange matters to my mind I think I shd be tempted to risk the voyage hazardous as it is opus plenum [?].[4] But of this I forbear to speak at present. An unexpected event has lately occurr'd wh will derange my plan as to this country. My man, I find, has been married to my housekeeper near 12 months and she is nearly at downlying and if she takes after her mother will have a numerous family. Before this letter was closed brot to bed of a son hence, they will probably continue in this country and open a boarding house. This they hazard a good prospect for a precarious maintenance. But I still wish them well. To get good white servants here is almost impossible. Plenty of negroes, but generally debauched, idle, drunken and worthless. This is a general evil and wou'd deter me as it has deterred many from keeping house. Proceed we now to the chief objects of yr letter.

Yr remarks on Dr R[ush's?] writings are I think very just. The cold affusion is said to have been used here in the hot paroxysm with tolerable success, but is by no means in frequent use, only sponging with vinegar. The varieties of scarlatina are treated commonly with evacuants, venesection, S. Nitre, Camphr and sometimes with Cortex Peruvianus or Rad. Senekæ or Serpentaria somets with Mercurials and Arsenicals[?].[5] But the disease varies in different seasons and the genus of the epidemic ought to be diligently studied. Of the numerous cases I witnessed in England by far the greater number were aggravated by depletion, but successfully treated with bark, minl acids and warm aromatics, agreeably to my namesake's judicious method.[6] A blister fm ear to ear and antiseptic gargles were highly useful. Also breathing antiseptic vapours and warm pediluvia with mild perspiratives, and this plan I think you'll generally find the safest and that few cases will bear venesection and purging with impunity. In ascites and also in phthysis

pulmonalis as well as in the yellow fever (w^{h} Philad^{a} escaped these two last summers) a mercurial salivation is extolled by many. But whether justly and whether the subsequent mercurial effects do not counterbalance the advantages and temporary suspension of the diseases, I must doubt. The digitalis is in these maladies also among the Herculean remedies, but its effects differently reported—"Laudatur ab his culpatur ab illis."[7] Formerly I often found it highly beneficial in pulmon^{y} hæmorrhage preceding phthysis but in a confirmed state of this or of dropsy I consider it rather calculated to suspend and gain time rather than to complete the cure. The manag^{t} of this and many other dangerous med^{s} demands the care and daily attention of an able physician. The consumption according to our weekly bills carries off in the bloom of life at least 1/5 of the whole sum of mortality, and in the eastern and northern states a yet greater proportion. A comparison of this with the English bills may from the result ans^{r} your question. The alkornaque,[8] a root f^{m} South America, has been lately as a specific, and styled the divine alkornaque, under trial, but I hear no authentic proofs of its divine attributes and suspect it to be neither more nor less than a base imposition by some modern Spanish or American quacks. This day died of a purulent consumption terminated by empyema the mistress of this boarding house, aged 31—till the moment of her death she felt no pain in the chest—could sleep on either side, no hectic sweats only flushing at times in one cheek and transient rigors—expectorated phlegm and pus copiously—appetite good—pulse 75 to 80, talked cheerfully—considered herself getting better even this day till at length she calmly expired! Her father died of the same disease, of 7 fine children grown to maturity 6 dropped off successively, and there remains only one son aged 18 who is expected to follow the rest. A striking instance is afforded by this family of the hereditary taint. To watch this and to check it in the bud ought to be the grand object of the physician instead of hunting for specifics to cure confirmed ulcers and tubercles as by magic. In that deplorable stage, nature I know sometimes, as by a miracle, performs the cure, art I believe seldom if ever. To be cured under a particular course of medicine is one thing. To be cured by that medicine is another. How long will the faculty impose on themselves and others by mistaking the non causa pro causa?[9] of w^{h} Morgagni will afford you many notable examples.

Observing y^{r} earnest desire to procure Frank's Epitome[10] I lost no time in making the necessary inquiry of all the principal booksellers here, foreign and domestic, also of some eminent practitioners in hopes of making you a present of y^{r} long'd for darling Frank along with this long letter, but to my grief and disappointment not one of them had ever seen the work. Latin you know is held cheap here and if a Latin author be not translated it is deemed of no note, or worthy importation but to sleep among cobwebs. English and French books alone the order of the day. But I shall still keep an eye to y^{r} request, and if the celebrated Frank can be obtained here you shall still have him. Have you tried Lackington, Callow, or Cadell in London? Theses here are in English and are at the students' option whether or not to publish. Of above 60 graduated last year I did not hear of one being published. This is deemed sound policy both for the professor and the candidates and may save many a secret blush. Formerly some were collected in vols. but the expense 'ere they reached you wou'd overbalance the utility and end in disappointment. The Edin^{r} and Lond^{n} Quarterly Reviews and Monthly Magazine will furnish you with all med^{l} miscellaneous novelties worth attention—also the Med^{l} and Chirurg^{l} Rev^{s}. If you cou'd form a med^{l} club or book society you wou'd get books to read cheaply. Beware

of purchasing many books w^{h} are exorbitantly dear and a deadweight when good and will not fetch above 1/3 of the original price. I observe with pleasure our worthy friend Frowd's P.S. to your last lett^{r} and am glad to hear so favorable an acc^{t} of his health. My best respects and I shall be glad to hear of his welfare at all times whether I am here or in England. I am truly sensible of the kindness of all my friends who so earnestly wish for my return and w^{h} entirely accords with my heart's desire, notwithstanding the perilous state of the times. A very extraordinary duel lately happened at Paris. M. de Grandpree jealous of an intrigue by M. Lepike with his mistress sent a challenge to the latter, and it was agreed to settle the combat in 2 balloons with their seconds that day month. Accordingly they ascended their cars loaded with blunderbusses. The multitude assembled expected only a balloon race. At the height of 200 yards M. Lepike fired and missed, immediately after M. Grandpree returned the fire and penetrated his adversary's balloon w^{h} fell and M. Lepike and his second were both dashed to pieces on a house top. M. Grandpree then mounted aloft and descended safe with his second, 7 leagues from the spot of ascension! Madame Blanchard is said since to have met with a fatal accident. The penal laws of Pennsylvania have long been uncommonly mild and now are about to banish all punishment even for murder and to substitute imprisonment for life, hence it is become proverbial that a man must have great interest to get himself hanged! Whether this is not carrying lenity to an excess time will show. But it is urged that capital crimes are now less frequent than under the former sanguinary code. The penal laws of England, it must be confessed, are far too sanguinary and demand a complete revisal. When you see Mr Frowd you are at liberty to communicate as much of this letter as you think meet. Wishing to ans^{r} y^{r} chief inquiries very fully you'll readily excuse my prolixity. With best wishes and respects to M^{rs} W[oodforde] and for y^{r} mutual happiness, I remain D^{r} D^{r} yr assured friend A. F.

P.S. As you say nothing of y^{r} mother [*sic*][11] or brother the painter[12] I doubt whether they are living. A.Fothergill.

[1] "A harmless thunderbolt". Pliny, *Historia naturalis*, 2.43.

[2] "I will speak daggers to her, but use none". *Hamlet*, III. 2. 414. Despite Fothergill's hopes, USA declared war on Britain in June 1812.

[3] "Enough and more than enough". See letter **88**.

[4] "A task full of [?]"

[5] S. Nitre is spirits of nitre; Rad. Senekae refers to Senekar (senegar) root; Serpentaria refers to Serpentaria root (Virginia snake root).

[6] See letter **71**, note 3.

[7] "It is praised by some, and blamed by others". Horace, *Satires*, 1.2.11.

[8] Alcornoque was the name the Spanish colonists gave to certain South American trees which resembled the alcornoque or cork tree of Spain. The alcornoque was exported as a bark not a root. It was used as a febrifuge in intermittent fevers.

[9] "Not-cause for cause".

[10] Presumably one of the many editions of Johann Peter Frank (1745–1821), *De curandis hominum morbis, epitome praelectionibus academicis dicata*, 3 vols., Pavia, B. Comini, 1792–94.

[11] See Introduction, p. xxiii.

[12] Samuel Woodforde, born 29 March 1763, was the youngest of the four children acknowledged by Heighes Woodforde. Samuel became a noted artist and RA, the most eminent member of the Woodforde family at that time, he died in 1817. See R. L. Winstanley, *Quarterly journal of the Parson Woodforde Society*, Spring 1973.

[N^{o}] 89 **90**

Lond: Jany 28th 1813

To D^{r} W[oodforde] and Mr Frowd,

To you my worthy correspondents I address this letter, to fill up the late chasm in our friendly communications and to resume our easy familiar chit chat upon paper, which distance still deprives us of the pleasure of holding in person. As we meddle not with party politics, nor obnoxious doctrines to church or state, nor the personal character nor private affairs of individuals, our social letters into whatever hands they may chance to fall, cannot be supposed to do much harm to any one. The incidents of our tedious uncomfortable and even perilous passage across the great Atlantic ocean, a voyage of more than 3000 and 30 miles in a crowded and leaky vessel, impaired my health so much that I feel the effects of it to this moment, and tho' after some weeks confinement within doors, I am now in a convalescent state, yet still am weak and unfit to bear fatigue of body or mind. To enter into particulars of that irksome voyage at present wou'd be too tedious and must be postponed to a future communication. In order to make one lett^{r} ans^{r} the place of 2 you'll both readily excuse my addressing you conjointly as heretofore, but particularly at this time for reasons already assigned. Altho' then, like a shipwreck'd mariner who has just escaped the perils of the deep, I joyfully hasten to inform you of my safe arrival once more in the metropolis of my native country, w^{h} places me as it were in the centre of intelligence, of science, of taste, and what is more, restores me to the bosom of my most intimate friends and relatives. Tho' alas many of 'em have been swept away, to my unspeakable regret. But why sh^{d} we bewail their loss as irreparable? They have indeed retired, but are only gone before. Having discharged the debt of nature w^{h} we all must pay in our turn, and whether we follow 'em a little sooner or later matters little, provided we one day happily meet again, as it is firmly hoped we shall, on a more friendly shore, and in an incomparably superior state of existence, and supreme felicity, w^{h} will transcend the utmost pitch that mortals can at present conceive. The present winter thus far has been moderate as to cold, my therm^{r}—never above 6 degrees under the freezing point, and very little snow or frost till a few days ago and that not severe. But thro' Dec^{r}—and to Jany 20 most hazy weather and the city enveloped with a thick gloomy fog, shutting out the sun and involving us in a long continued dreary comfortless night, no wonder catarrhs and dysenteric affections have been so prevalent, and w^{h} I have had my share. Extraordinary gazettes have again and again proclaimed the late victory gained by the Prussians as the most bloody, and most glorious, and most complete of any recorded, at least, in modern history.[1] Yet the expense of our army, navy, and military operations at home and abroad, with a national debt and heavy impending loan together with accumulating taxes hangs like a millstone about the neck of poor Britannia and that of her votaries the poor laborers, manufacturers, and mechanics. While peace stands aloof, and continues to withhold the olive branch from our longing eyes. Tho' our political horizon like that of our atmosphere is still dark and gloomy, yet this ought not to fill us with dismay and cause despondency, since present evils so called may ultimately prove blessings in disguise. Whatever may be the event, let us cheerfully resolve to endure misfortunes we cannot prevent and exert our best endeavours to soften the miseries of the sick the indigent and the afflicted and still cherish the hope

of seeing brighter days. In the present chequer'd state of existence men ought not to be so unreasonable as to expect unmixed pleasures, yet are such capricious mortals as to grow peevish, querulous and discontent unless they are perpetually basking in the sunshine of prosperity. May you my good friends reciprocally peruse this letter with mutual satisfaction and be therewith content, may you enjoy as much unmixed pleasure as may be consistent with y^{r} real happiness is the wish of y^{rs} sincerely

A. Fothergill

[1] Presumably this is a mistake for "Russians", and is a reference to Napoleon's retreat from Moscow.

[N^{o}] 90 **91**

Letter 90, and the last from my dear valuable and ever to be revered friend and patron.
N: George's Place 16 Blackfriars Road

April 8th 1813

Dear Sir,

Since your long letter of the 1st Instant reached me my complicated infirmities have [illegible] and redoubled upon me as to leave me, as it were, the mere skeleton of my former health and at the same time to divest of their usual interest all worldly objects, even such as have been considered important. A turn in affairs, however extraordinary it may appear, may be intended for a gracious purpose by the Supreme Ruler, to wean the mind at my advanced age from temporary affairs to objects of eternal duration and consequently of sincere and zealous inquiry and in which persons of all ages are deeply interested. If the importance of the object be duly considered the word in your case to which I think you refer more, far more than it deserves.

[Perhaps page(s) missing]

and anticipate c 1000 evils unlikely ever to result from it.

Should any nervous or hypochondriacal patient possibly urge the exercise of your best judgement on this case, what would you say?

Most doctors would laugh outright but this would be rude and inhumane. In a word what say your four very respectable practitioners who doubtless have considered the whole case with deliberation.

Why say they, one and all, continue your [illegible], perhaps the only requisite necessary to be continued.

This was precisely the case for the ailment, which was pain of the testicle seated probably in the cremaster muscle, arising from exposure to mild cold.

dear doctor, you will see how my strangely deranged hand writing betrays my present imbecility of body and mind and consequently how entirely disqualified to give advice on your case or even on my own.

May you and I and all of us under our afflictions learn patience, resignation to the Divine

Will, convinced that the beneficent, Ruler of the Universe will conduct everything for the best though perhaps not precisely as His prejudiced misguided children would wish.

Consult the divine books of Job, Psalms and above all the pre-eminent Gospel, Tracts and Histories.

Our correspondence dear doctor, I foresee must be suspended till brighter days arise.

My best wishes attend you and your fair partner and every branch of your family

A. F. Vale!

The anticipation of an awful change here alluded to, was after occasioned and deprived me of a most valuable, kind, affectionate friend.

92[1]

1

I beg Leave hereby to make my answers to and Reports on the Several Subjects of Inquiry respecting Ilchester Gaol this Day presented to me by the Commissioners appointed by his Majesty's Commission under the great Seal of the united Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland for the purpose of inquiring into the state of Ilchester Gaol. For the sake of Order and Perspicuity I have deemed it advisable to give my ans^{rs} in Obedience to the Particular Instructions delivered to me by Mr Coles.

1st You are closely to inspect and examine every Part of the Gaol especially as to its Ventilation public and private Apartments to the Culinary and other Offices, to the Infirmary and Surgery for the use of the Sick to the Quality of the Waters consumed in the Gaol and to the Condition of the Drains.

Ansr An Opinion will be given in these several Points by the following Observations.

1st Question—Whether the Height of the Boundary and Inner Walls occasion oppressive Heat or chilling dampness according to the Weather.

2

Ans^{r} I am of Opinion that the Height of the Boundary of the Inner Walls do not prevent a sufficient Ventilation, nor occasion oppressive Heat or unhealthy dampness.—2nd Whether the Air within the Gaol can be considered unwholesome and Conducive to disease.—Ans^{r} Certainly not from the great Attention paid to Cleanliness.

3rd Whether the Apartments are of sufficient size for the Comforts and Health of those who occupy them. Answer—

With the exception of the Debtors dining or Day Rooms (which I think are too small) I am of Opinion the size of all the Rooms, whether dining, sleeping or Cells adapted to both to the Comfort and health of Prisoners, or at least are certainly not likely to impede or injure their Health.—4th Whether the Wash-house and Laundry are or are not well calculated for the Purpose designed.

Ans^{r} They appear to be well fitted to the intended Purpose.

5th Whether the Wood Screens injuriously exclude Light and Air.

3

Ans^{r} I believe they do not.

6th Whether offensive Exhalations are likely to arise either from the Laundry or any other Part of the Gaol.

Ans^{r} I must observe that I perceived offensive Smells proceeding from the Privies, but from no other source.

7th Whether those Rooms that have been used for Infirmaries are sufficiently comfortable for that Purpose.

Ans^{r} The Rooms now appropriated for Infirmaries are in my Judgement unfit for the Purpose, and that the Jail stands in great need of an Infirmary.

8th Whether the Space of Ground allotted for an Infirmary is proper for that Purpose as also the Rooms proposed to be built thereon.

Ans^{r} I judge the space of the Ground intended for an Infirmary and the proposed dimensions of their Rooms both proper and sufficient.

9th Whether any of the Prisoners in the Jail are now or have been labouring under any disease arising from any vitiated Air of their Apartments.

Ans^{r} At this time I believe they are not, but dur=

4

=ing the Epidemic Fever in 1817 I am of opinion that injurious affects did arise from vitiated Air in consequence of the want of an Infirmary.

10th Whether the Courts allotted to Debtors for walking exercise are too limited for health, and whether those parts of it that have been cultivated as a Garden take up the whole of the Sunny parts.

Ans^{r} I believe that no injury whatever can arise from the present cultivated parts.

11th Whether the Chapel is sufficiently ventilated so as to prevent any risk being incurred in breathing polluted air, w^{h} may be occasioned by numerous Congregations, or whether the Chapel can in any, or in what manner be ventilated.

Ans^{r} I do not believe that any certain or positive ill effect can arise to the Prisoners during the short time which they remain in the Chapel, nor do I believe it can be better ventilated. For convenience and comfort however it is certainly too small.

12th Whether the Bathing Tubs used in the Jail are sufficient for the general health of the Prisoners and whether bathing in these Tubs is equally conducive to health as in bathing in either cold or warm Bathes properly constructed, and how often

5

for the necessary health of the Prisoners.

Ans^{r} Two or three thin Slipper Bathes wou'd certainly be better and more convenient than the Tubs in present use. It does not appear necessary to me to use either cold or warm bathing at any stated periods—the customery practice of bathing unclean Prisoners on their admission, being sufficient for the general welfare of the Prison.

13th How often change of Linen should be resorted to amongst the Prisoners as essential to their health.

Ans^{r} In a state of health a change of linen once a week is sufficiently often I consider the present appearance of the Prisoners and their general Health remarkably good.

14th Whether any of the Wells are contaminated by any of the Drains—Whether the Water of the River by rising above the Level of the Drains is likely to occasion any inconvenience either by causing Obstructions, so as to create any deleterious Matter running into the Wells or Otherwise and whether there are any other more Convenient or desirable Spots for digging Wells in the Jail than the present ones.

Ans^{r} For Information on these Points I must refer

6

to the Inquiries and Experiments of Sir G Gibbs and the Surveyors.

15th Whether the space of Ground on which the Jail stands is not sufficiently Capacious for the Health of the Prisoners and whether the present Site is high enough in Point of Salubrity.

Ansr I am of Opinion the present space of Ground is not sufficient and that more is required for the building of an Infirmary but I consider the Site of the Prison very advantageous in Point of Salubrity. The Situation is elevated and remarkably open, not surrounded by Trees, Hills, or any other Object that can impede or prevent a free Circulation of Air.

16th Whether any pernicious Effects are likely to arise from frequent Washing of the Floors and other parts of the Jail.

Ansr A Weekly washing of Floors, which is an established Practice is conducive to the Health of the Prisoners.

The general white washing which is had recourse to four or five times a Year is also well Calculated to purify the Air of the Jail.

For the space of 13 Years there have been 26

7

Deaths in the Jail. The Average Number of Prisoners in the last three Years is as follows, and also the Number of Deaths during the same. In 1818–408, in 1819 [–] 519, in 1820–478. I consider this statement of the mortality determines with Precision the Salubrity of the Jail of Ilchester being thereby Convinced that the number of Deaths among the Prisoners is not greater than what occurs to the same Number and Class of Persons living in their own Habitations.

I have resided 30 Years in the Neighbourhood of Ilchester and can testify that it is generally healthy and not subject to any endemic diseases. The Epidemic Fever of 1817 appeared in the adjacent Towns and Villages many Months before it discovered itself in the Jail and must therefore be Considered as an imparted disease.

The above Report founded on a personal and accurate Inspection and Observation of every external and internal Part of the Jail enables me on deliberate Reflection to affirm that the Situation, discipline and oeconomy of Ilchester Jail are well Calculated not only to preserve but to improve the Health of the Prisoners.

[1] This document is contained in the letterbook. It begins on a new page and is probably in a different hand. See Introduction, p. xxiii.