

Ever Dr. Brother,

Since my last to you I have entered the 65th year of my age with a greater prospect of health than I have enjoyed for several years past, but I am nevertheless mindful of my approaching dissolution, for altho' the vicissitudes of Fortune and the intervals of sickness and health are various and uncertain, yet the wheels of time move regularly on and each moment brings us nearer to our end. The cares necessary to our subsistence hang about us and keep us anxious and busy and greatly interrupt the more exalted duties of friendship, Piety and Devotion, but I nevertheless regret the want of more frequent opportunities to enquire after the welfare of my friends who still reside in my native Country and yourself in particular, I wish often to remind you that though absent in body I wish to be present in spirit speaking with my pen and endeavouring to strengthen the bands of friendship which might otherwise relax into a cold indifference... The calamities of war which seem to rage with uncommon fury in Europe and other distant Countries staining the annals of the times with blood and carnage are a galling consideration to my peaceful temper... And the raging fevers which so frequently infect our principal Towns and seem even to threaten depopulation fill me at times with melancholy reflections and turn my attention to that grand mystery which has puzzled the wise and learned in all the ages of the world, namely, to find out the original of evil. — Why is it that the allwise author of

nature suffers it thus to be... Why is it that there appears to be a greater proportion of moral and physical evil in the world than of good, and why do the human race in general incline to do evil rather than good even according to their own notions of virtue and vice... I have thus far indulged my speculations and hope I have not done amiss in mentioning these things, but cannot attempt a solution at this time... The ways of Providence are infinitely above our comprehension so that we ought not to refine when chartered to humble ourselves and learn to know that a cheerful acquiescence is our greatest wisdom. To use the expression of the Prophet I do not think that God afflicts willingly but that every national Calamity is intended to answer some valuable purpose and that when the end is answered the rod will be laid aside... I should be extremely glad of a letter from you to know how all friends are as I have been informed that the fever has not only raged in New York, this season, but has also made unusual advances into the Country... An epidemical fever has been attended with great mortality at Newbern, Edenton and Washington in this State but seems to abate of late... My domestic family have been healthy, but my Daughter Mary Ann & her family have been very sickly for three months past having been taken down one after another, but she herself who was the last is just recovering from an obstinate fever which lasted with but little intermission for 3 weeks. My family desire to be remembered to you and the rest of our relations.

J.

I still flatter myself with the thoughts of making you another visit which if I can bring about will give me the greatest satisfaction. The foregoing part of this Letter was written some months past but being disappointed in the conveyance which I at that time expected it has lain by me till now, when I unexpectedly met with a M^r Garman who tells me he lives on the south side of Long Island nearly opposite to Brookhaven and can deliver my Letters as he passes from New York home. Nothing remarkable has happened to us since writing the first part so that I have little to say as to the situation of our affairs here. It is a general time of health and as the Crops of Corn and other produce have been plentiful provisions are reasonable and the exportations very considerable. My wife talks much of you of late and sundry dreams she has lately had seems to encourage her to hope to see you here again, but I who put but little dependance in Dreams can only observe that I wish I had reason for such an hope. However if we do not see you I presume we may hope to hear from you and perhaps a little encouragement added to my own inclination may quicken my resolutions to undertake another pilgrimage to my native Land

and be assured that it would please me much better than a Voyage with Bonaparte to Egypt. If any of your Neighbours are friendly enough to enquire after me please to give my respects to them. My duty to all Relations without exception. And please to accept the respects of my family who together with myself are most respectfully yours. And now to change the scene once more from light to gloom. If this should prove my last I am till Death your ever loving Friend & Brother.

Beaufort
Feb. 24th 1800

Saml. Liffers

1800

Mr. John Jefferts

Forwarded by
Mr. J. Garman }

Hempstead

Recd 19th

March

Recd 3rd

