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**A short
account of the
plague**

Mathew Carey

A SHORT
A C C O U N T
Presented by Dr. Adams
O F T H E
P L A G U E,
O R
M A L I G N A N T F E V E R

LATELY PREVALENT IN
P H I L A D E L P H I A :

WITH A STATEMENT OF THE
P R O C E E D I N G S
THAT TOOK PLACE ON THE SUBJECT IN DIFFERENT
PARTS OF THE
U N I T E D S T A T E S .

BY MATHEW CAREY.

PHILADELPHIA, PRINTED;

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M D C C X C I V .



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SHORT
ACCOUNT
OF THE
P L A G U E
OR
MALIGNANT FEVER
WHICH RAVAGED
PHILADELPHIA:
WITH A STATEMENT OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
AND THE CAUSE OF THE EPIDEMIC IN
PART OF THE
UNITED STATES

BY MATTHEW CARR.

PHILADELPHIA: PRINTED

BY DARRON AND MASTERS,
GRACEBURY STREET, LONDON AND
HOOD, BROADWAY;
AND J. BARNES, THE BOSTON STORE.

MDCCLXXV.

TO THE
AMERICAN
PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

GENTLEMEN,

WITH due deference, I presume to dedicate to you the following pages, in which I have endeavoured to give as faithful an Account as possible, of the dreadful Calamity we have just experienced.

I am, Gentlemen,

With esteem,

Your obedt. humble Servant,

MATHEW CAREY.



NUMBER XLVII.

District of Pennsylvania, to wit—

(L. S.) *BE it remembered, that on the fourteenth day of November, in the eighteenth year of the independence of the United States of America, Mathew Carey, of the said district, hath deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as author, in the words following, to wit :*

“ A short account of the malignant fever lately prevalent in Philadelphia, with a statement of the proceedings that took place on the subject in different parts of the United States. By Mathew Carey.” In conformity to the act of the congress of the United States, intituled, “ An Act for the encouragement of learning ; by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times thereinto mentioned.”

SAMUEL CALDWELL,
Clerk of the district of Pennsylvania.

P R E F A C E.

THE favourable reception given to the imperfect account of the fever which I lately published, and the particular desire of some of my friends, have induced me to undertake a more satisfactory history of it, in order to collect together, while facts are recent, as many of the most interesting occurrences as I could, for the information of the public.

I have not attempted any embellishment or ornament of style; but have alone aimed at telling plain truths in plain language. For the desultory plan of some part of the pamphlet, I have to offer the following apology; many of the circumstances and reflections towards the con-

elusion, which would have come with more propriety in the beginning, did not occur, until some of the first half sheets were not only written, but printed. I had no choice, therefore, but either to omit them, or place them somewhat out of order.

Most of the facts mentioned have fallen under my own observation. Those of a different description I have been assiduous to collect from every person of credibility, possessed of information.

I have heard more than one person object to the account of the shocking circumstances that occurred in Philadelphia, as portraying the manners of the people in an unfavourable light. If that be the case, the fault is not mine. I am conscious I have not exaggerated the matter. But I do not conceive it can have that effect; for it would be as unjust and injudicious to draw the character of Philadelphia from the conduct of a period of horror and affright, when all the "mild cha-
rites

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rities of social life" were suppressed by regard for self—as to stamp eternal infamy on a nation for the atrocities perpetrated in times of civil broils, when all the "angry passions" are roused into dreadful and ferocious activity.

MATHEW CAREY.

T

TO THE READER.

THIS Edition being printed in great haste, the publishers could not conveniently wait for any further information.— They gratefully acknowledge the readiness with which many of their friends have assisted them with genuine information, a continuance of which they earnestly intreat, that should there be a necessity for a second edition, the errors of this may be corrected, and the work enlarged.

London, 1st Mo. 4, 1794.

N. B. The notes printed in *italics* were not in the American edition.

A

SHORT ACCOUNT, &c.

BEFORE I enter on the consideration of this disorder, it may not be improper to offer a few introductory remarks on the situation of Philadelphia previous to its commencement, which will reflect light on some of the circumstances mentioned in the course of the narrative.

The manufactures, trade, and commerce of Philadelphia had, for a considerable time, been improving and extending with great rapidity. From the period of the adoption of the federal government, at which time we were at the lowest ebb of distress, our situation had progressively become more and more prosperous. Confidence, formerly banished, was universally restored. Property of every kind, rose to, and in some instances beyond, its real value: and a few re-

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volving years exhibited the interesting spectacle of a young country, with a new form of government, emerging from a state approaching very near to anarchy, and acquiring all the stability and nerve of the best-toned and oldest nations.

In this prosperity, which revived the hopes of four millions of people, Philadelphia participated in an eminent degree. New houses, in almost every street, built in a very neat, elegant style, adorned, at the same time that they enlarged the city. Its population was extending fast. House-rent had risen to a most extravagant height; it was in many cases double, and in some treble what it had been a year or two before; and, as is generally the case, when a city is thriving, it went far beyond the real increase of trade. The number of applicants for houses, exceeding the number of houses to be let, one bid over another; and affairs were in such a situation, that many people, though they had a tolerable run of business, could hardly do more than clear their rents, and were, literally, toiling for their landlords alone*. Luxury, the usual, and

* The distress arising from this source, was perhaps the only exception to the general observation of the flourishing situation of Philadelphia.

perhaps

perhaps inevitable concomitant of prosperity, was gaining ground in a manner very alarming to those who considered how far the virtue, the liberty, and the happiness of a nation depend on their temperance and sober manners. Men had been for some time in the habit of regulating their expences by prospects formed in sanguine hours, when every probability was caught at as a certainty, not by their actual profits, or income. The number of coaches, chariots, chairs, &c. lately set up by men in the middle rank of life, is hardly credible. And although there had been a very great increase of hackney chairs, yet it was hardly ever possible to procure one on a Sunday, unless it was engaged two or three days before. Extravagance, in various shapes, was gradually eradicating the plain and wholesome habits of the city. And although it were presumption to attempt to scan the decrees of Heaven, yet few, I believe, will pretend to deny, that something was wanting to humble the pride of a city, which was running on in full career, to the goal of prodigality and dissipation.

However, from November, 1792, to the end of last June, the difficulties of Philadelphia were extreme. The establishment of the bank of Pennsylvania, in embryo for the most part of that time, had arrested in the two other banks such

a quantity of the circulating specie, as embarrassed almost every kind of business; to this was added the distress arising from the very numerous failures in England, which had extremely harassed several of our capital merchants. During this period, many men experienced as great difficulties as were ever known in this city*. But the opening, in July, of the bank of Pennsylvania, conducted on the most liberal principles, placed business on its former favourable footing. Every man looked forward to this fall as likely to produce a vast extension of trade, But how fleeting are all human views! how uncertain all plans founded on earthly appearances! All these flattering prospects vanished like the baseless fabric of a vision.

In July, arrived the unfortunate fugitives from Cape Francois. And on this occasion, the liberality of Philadelphia was displayed in a most respectable point of light. Nearly 12,000 dollars were in a few days collected for their relief†.

Little,

* It is with great pleasure, I embrace this opportunity of declaring, that the very liberal conduct of the bank of the United States, at this trying season, was the means of saving many a deserving and industrious man from ruin.

† *“ A letter from William Young of Philadelphia, at that time to his correspondents in London, says, “ The Blacks have completely*

Little, alas! did many of the contributors, then in easy circumstances, imagine, that a few weeks would leave their wives and children dependent on public charity, as has since unfortunately happened. An awful instance of the rapid and warning vicissitudes of affairs on this transitory stage.

At this time, the destroying scourge crept in among us, and nipped in the bud the fairest blossoms that imagination could form. And, oh! what a dreadful contrast has since taken place! Many of our first commercial houses are totally dissolved, by the death of the parties, and their affairs are necessarily left in so deranged a state, that the losses and distresses which must take place, are beyond estimation. The protests of notes for a few weeks past, have been beyond all former example; for a great proportion of the principal merchants having left the city, and been totally unable, from the stagnation of business, and diversion of all their expected resources, to make any provision for payment, most of their notes have been protested, as they became due. The bank of the United

completely driven the Whites from Cape Francois, so that we have upon our Coasts 300 sail with unfortunate fugitives without money, and without the means of industry."

States, on the 15th of October, passed a resolve, empowering their cashier to renew all discounted notes, when the same drawers and indorsers were offered, and declaring that no notes should be protested, when the indorsers bound themselves in writing, to be accountable in the same manner as in cases or protest.

Besides what we have already suffered, we are menaced with another evil, which probably at any other period, would not very materially injure the city; but if it comes in addition to our present distress, will operate against us a very long time. I mean the removal of Congress. The meeting of this body is fixed for the first Monday in December; and it is not improbable that attempts will be made to prevent their next session being held here. Appeals will be made to their fears. Already the New York papers announce, "that as congress cannot meet agreeably to their adjournment, with any probability of safety in Philadelphia, under its present calamitous visitation, there can be no doubt of their adjourning to sit in New York, where the air is perfectly salubrious, the markets plentiful, and every conveniency ready for their accommodation*." If, at the time of their meeting, any trace of the disorder

* Columbian Gazetteer, October 17, 1793.

remains, the Philadelphians will not urge their stay here. But if it be, as there is every probability, absolutely extinguished, we place too much reliance on their justice to suspect that they will add to the stroke we have felt.

For these prefatory observations I hope I shall be pardoned. I now proceed to the melancholy subject I have undertaken.

The malignant fever, which has committed such ravages in Philadelphia, made its appearance here, about the end of July. Dr. Hodge's child, probably the first victim, was taken ill on the 26th or 27th of July, and died on the 6th or 7th of August. A Mr. Moore *, in Mr. Denny's lodging house, in Water-street, was seized on Friday, the 2d of August, and died on Sunday, the 4th. Mrs. Parkinson, who lodged in the same house, caught the disorder on the 3d of August, and died on the 7th.

On the origin of the disorder, there prevails a very great diversity of opinion. Dr. Hutchinson maintained that it was not imported, and stated, in a letter which he wrote on the subject to Captain Falconer, the health-officer of the

* This man had been walking along the wharfs, where the coffee lay, and at which the Sans Culottes was moored, in the morning; and on his return home, was so extremely ill, as to be obliged to go to bed, from which he never rose again.

port

port of Philadelphia, that " the general opinion " was, that the disorder originated from some " damaged coffee, or other putrified vegetable and animal matters." To this opinion, though he did not give it absolutely as his own, he seemed strongly to incline ; and mentioned, that at a wharf, a little above Arch-street, there was not only a quantity of damaged coffee *, extremely offensive, but also some putrid animal and vegetable substances. The doctor rested his opinion, that the disorder was not imported, on two circumstances, which prove to be mistaken, viz. that no foreigners or sailors were infected on the 27th of August, the time of writing, and that it had not been found in lodging houses. This opinion was so far from being just, that the second place in which it is known to have made its appearance, was a lodging house, and some of the earliest patients were French lads.

Dr. Rush is of the same opinion with Dr. Hutchinson, and says he has in his possession sufficient documents to prove that the disorder is not an imported one, but of native growth. As he has not yet communicated his proofs to the public, it is impossible to decide on them.

* The stench of this coffee was so excessively offensive, that the people in the neighbourhood could hardly bear to remain in the back part of their houses.

That

That it is an imported disorder, is the opinion of almost all the inhabitants of Philadelphia. However, there is much diversity of sentiment, as to the time and manner of its introduction. I shall state some of the various reports current, and let the reader judge for himself.

Some assert, that it was brought by *Il Constante*, Captain *Fiscovisch*, which arrived here from *Ragusa*, and *Martinico*, about the beginning of *May*. This is very unlikely, as the lower part of the city, where she lay, was free until the disorder spread there from the upper part.

Another opinion is, that it was introduced by the *Mary*, captain *Rush*, which arrived here on the 7th of *August*, with some of the *French*, emigrants from the *Cape*. But the existence of the disorder previous to her arrival, sets aside this opinion at once.

Others again say that a vessel from *Tobago*, which arrived here in *July*, lost nearly all her hands with a malignant fever. In the river, she shipped fresh hands, many of whom died. From her they believe the disorder spread. With respect to this report, I cannot aver any thing.

Another opinion is, that the privateer *Sans Culottes* *Marfellois*, with her prize, the *Flora*, which arrived here the 22d of *July*, introduced the fever. The privateer was in a foul, dirty condition—

condition—her hold very small—and perhaps as ill calculated for the accommodation of the great number of people that were on board, as any vessel that ever crossed the ocean. All her filth was emptied at a wharf between Arch and Race-street. A dead body, covered with canvass, lay on board the Flora, for some time, and was seen by Mr. Lemaigre and other gentlemen*.

Before I dismiss this part of the subject, it may not be amiss to mention, that many believe we have had two disorders in the city, introduced about the same time, the yellow fever, from the West Indies, and a species of pestilence from Marfeilles.

The mortality began about that part of Water-street, where the Mary, the Flora, and the Sans Culottes lay. For some time it was entirely confined to that place and its neighbourhood. Almost every death which occurred in the early stage of the disorder could be without difficulty traced to that street. By degrees, it spread, owing to the want of precaution, and to communication with the infected. It is

* Mr. Vanuxem has published a lengthy statement to prove that the disorder was not brought here by either of these vessels. Dr. Currie and Dr. Cathrall, who have taken great pains to elucidate the subject, assert there were sundry sick people on board, in opposition to Mr. Vanuxem's declaration. To their respective publications I beg leave to refer the reader.

said,

said, and generally believed, that the beds and bedding of those who died of the disorder, at first, before the alarm went abroad, were fold and spread it among the buyers.

Several persons were swept away before any great alarm was excited. The first deaths that attracted public notice, and struck terror among the citizens, were those of Peter Aston, on the 19th, of Mrs. Lemaigre, on the 20th, and of Thomas Miller, on the 25th of August. About this time began the removals from the city, which were for some weeks so general, that almost every hour in the day, carts, waggons, coaches, and chairs, were to be seen transporting families and furniture to the country in every direction. Business then became extremely dull. Mechanics and artists were unemployed; and the streets wore the appearance of gloom and melancholy.

The first official notice taken of the disorder, was on the 22d of August, on which day, the mayor of Philadelphia, Matthew Clarkson, esq. wrote to the city commissioners, and after acquainting them with the state of the city, gave them the most peremptory orders, to have the streets properly cleansed and purified by the scavengers, and all the filth immediately hawled away. These orders were repeated on the 27th, and similar ones given to the clerks of the market.

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ket. The 29th the governor of the state, in his address to the legislature, acquainted them, that a contagious disorder existed in the city; and that he had taken every proper measure to ascertain the origin, nature, and extent of it. He likewise assured them that the health-officer and physician of the port, would take every precaution to allay and remove the public inquietude.

The 26th of the same month, the college of physicians had a meeting, at which they took into consideration the nature of the disorder, and the means of prevention and of cure. They published an address to the citizens, signed by the president and secretary, recommending to avoid all unnecessary intercourse with the infected; to place marks on the doors or windows where they were; to pay great attention to cleanliness and airing the rooms of the sick; to provide a large and airy hospital in the neighbourhood of the city for their reception; to put a stop to the tolling of the bells; to bury those who died of the disorder in carriages, and as privately as possible; to keep the streets and wharfs clean; to avoid all fatigue of body and mind, and standing or sitting in the sun, or in the open air; to accommodate the dress to the weather, and to exceed rather in warm than in cool clothing; and to avoid intemperance, but to use fermented liquors,
such

such as wine, beer, and cider, with moderation. They likewise declared their opinion, that fires in the streets were very dangerous, if not ineffectual means of stopping the progress of the fever, and that they placed more dependence on the burning of gunpowder. The benefits of vinegar and camphor, they added, were confined chiefly to infected rooms, and could not be too often used on handkerchiefs, or in smelling bottles, by persons who attended the sick.

In consequence of this address, the bells were immediately stopped from tolling. This was a very expedient measure; as they had before been kept pretty constantly going the whole day, so as to terrify those in health, and drive the sick, as far as the influence of imagination could produce that effect, to their graves. An idea had gone abroad, that the burning of fires in the streets, would have a tendency to purify the air, and arrest the progress of the disorder. The people had, therefore, almost every night large fires lighted at the corners of the streets. The 29th, the mayor published a proclamation, forbidding this practice. As a substitute, many had recourse to the firing of guns, which they imagined was a certain preventative of the disorder. This was carried so far, and attended with such danger, that it was forbidden by the mayor's order, of the 4th of September.

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The number of the infected, daily increasing, and the existence of an order against the admission of persons labouring under infectious diseases into the alms-house, precluding them from a refuge there*, some temporary place was requisite, and three of the guardians of the poor took possession of the Circus, in which Mr. Ricketts had lately exhibited his equestrian feats, being the only place that could be procured for the purpose. Thither they sent seven persons afflicted with the malignant fever, where they lay in the open air for some time, and without proper assistance†. Of these one crawled out on the commons, where he died at a distance from any house. Two died in the Circus, one of whom was seasonably removed; the other lay in a state of putrefaction for above forty eight hours, owing to the difficulty of procuring any person to remove him. On this occasion occurred an instance of courage in a servant girl, of which at that time few men

* At this period, the number of paupers in the alms-house was between three and four hundred; and the managers apprehensive of spreading the disorder among them, enforced the abovementioned order, which had been entered into a long time before. They, however, supplied beds and bedding, and all the money in their treasury, for their relief, out of that house.

† High wages were offered for nurses for these poor people—but none could be procured.

were

were capable. The carter, who finally undertook to remove the corpse, having no assistant, and being unable alone to put it into the coffin, was on the point of relinquishing his design, and quitting the place. The girl perceived him, and understanding the difficulty he laboured under, offered her services, provided he would not inform the family with whom she lived. She accordingly helped him to put the body into the coffin, which was by that time crawling with maggots, and in such a state as to be ready to fall in pieces. It gives me pleasure to add, that she still lives, notwithstanding her very hazardous exploit.

The inhabitants of the neighbourhood of the Circus took the alarm, and threatened to burn or destroy it unless the sick were removed; and it is believed they would have actually carried their threats into execution, had a compliance been delayed a day longer.

The 29th, seven of the guardians of the poor had a conference with some of the city magistrates on the subject of the fever, at which it was agreed to be indispensibly necessary that a suitable house, as an hospital, should be provided near the city for the reception of the infected poor.

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In consequence, the same day, the guardians of the poor resolved to use their utmost exertions to procure such a house out of town, and as near thereto, as might be practicable, consistent with the safety of the inhabitants, for the poor who were or might be afflicted with contagious disorders, and be destitute of the means of providing necessary assistance otherwise; to engage physicians, nurses, attendants, and all necessaries for their relief in that house; to appoint proper persons in each district, to enquire after such poor as might be afflicted; to administer assistance to them in their own houses, and, if necessary, to remove them to the hospital. They reserved to themselves at the same time, the liberty of drawing on the mayor for such sums as might be necessary to carry their resolves into effect.

Conformably to these resolves, a committee of the guardians was appointed to make enquiry for a suitable place; and after strict examination, they judged that a building adjacent to Bushill, the mansion-house of William Hamilton, esq. was the best calculated for the purpose. And that gentleman being absent, and having no agent in the city, and the great urgency of the case admitting no delay, eight of the guardians, accompanied by Hilary Baker, esq. one of the city aldermen, with the concurrence of the governor

vernor, proceeded to the building they had fixed upon; and meeting with some opposition from a tenant who occupied it, they took possession of the mansion-house itself, to which, on the same evening, the 31st of August, they sent the four patients who remained at the Circus.

Shortly after this, the guardians of the poor for the city, except James Wilson, Jacob Tomkins, jun. and William Sansom, ceased the performance of their duties, nearly the whole of them having removed out of the city. Before this virtual vacation of office, they passed a resolve against the admission of any paupers whatever into the alms-house during the prevalence of the disorder. The cause of entering into this order, was, that some paupers, who had been admitted previous thereto, with a certificate from the physicians, of their being free from the infection, had nevertheless died of it. The whole care of the poor of the city, the providing for **Bushill**, sending the sick there, and burying the dead, devolved, therefore, on the above three guardians. It must give the reader great sorrow to hear, that two of them, James Wilson, and Jacob Tomkins, excellent and indefatigable young men, whose services were at that time of very great importance, fell sacrifices in the cause of humanity. The other, William Sansom, was

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likewise, in the execution of his dangerous office, seized with the disorder, and on the brink of the grave, but was so fortunate as to escape.

The consternation of the people of Philadelphia at this period was carried beyond all bounds. Dismay and affright were visible in almost every person's countenance*. Most people who could by any means make it convenient, fled from the city. Of those who remained, many shut themselves up in their houses, and were afraid to walk the streets. The consumption of gunpowder and nitre in houses as a preventative, was inconceivable. Many were almost incessantly purifying, scowering, and whitewashing their rooms. Those who ventured abroad, had handkerchiefs or sponges impregnated with vinegar or camphor, at their noses, or else smelling bottles with the thieves' vinegar. Others carried pieces of tar in their hands, or pockets, or camphor bags tied round their necks. The corpses of the most respectable citizens, even of those who did not die of the epidemic, were carried to the grave, on the shafts of a chair, the horse driven by a negro,

* "About this time the disorder appearing in the jail, all the French prisoners to the number of 130 were liberated. Such other of the prisoners as have been sick are sent to the hospital. It has been said, that the tongues of those affected became black as the disorder increased: and two felons in prison being apprised of this circumstance, blacked their tongues, and gained their liberty."

unattended

unattended by a friend or relation, and without any sort of ceremony. People shifted their course at the sight of a hearse coming towards them. Many never walked on the foot-path, but went into the middle of the streets, to avoid being infected in passing by houses wherein people had died. Acquaintances and friends avoided each other in the streets, and only signified their regard by a cold nod. The old custom of shaking hands fell into such general disuse, that many were affronted at even the offer of the hand. A person with a crape, or any appearance of mourning, was shunned like a viper. And many valued themselves highly on the skill and address with which they got to windward of every person they met. Indeed it is not probable that London, at the last stage of the plague, exhibited stronger marks of terror, than were to be seen in Philadelphia, from the 24th or 25th of August till pretty late in September. When people summoned up resolution to walk abroad, and take the air, the sick-cart conveying patients to the hospital, or the hearse carrying the dead to the grave, which were travelling almost the whole day, soon damped their spirits, and plunged them again into despondency.

While affairs were in this deplorable state, and people at the lowest ebb of despair, we cannot be
astonished

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astonished at the frightful scenes that were acted, which seemed to indicate a total dissolution of the bonds of society in the nearest and dearest connexions. Who, without horror, can reflect on a husband deserting his wife, united to him perhaps for twenty years, in the last agony—a wife unfeelingly abandoning her husband on his death-bed—parents forsaking their only children—children ungratefully flying from their parents, and resigning them to chance, often without an enquiry after their health or safety—masters hurrying off their faithful servants to Bushhill, even on suspicion of the fever, and that at a time, when, like Tartarus, it was open to every visitant, but never returned any—servants abandoning tender and humane masters, who only wanted a little care to restore them to health and usefulness—who, I say, can even now think of these things without horror? Yet such were daily exhibited in every quarter of our city.

These desertions produced scenes of distress and misery, of which few parallels are to be met with, and which nothing could palliate, but the extraordinary public panic, and the great law of self preservation, the dominion of which extends over the whole animated world. Many men of affluent fortunes, who have given employment and sustenance to hundreds every day
in

in the year, have been abandoned to the care of a NEGRO, after their wives, children, friends, clerks, and servants had fled away, and left them to their fate. In many cases, no money could procure proper attendance. With the poor, the case was, as might be expected, infinitely worse than with the rich. Many of these have perished, without a human being to hand them a drink of water, to administer medicines, or to perform any charitable office for them. Various instances have occurred, of dead bodies found lying in the streets, of persons who had no house or habitation, and could procure no shelter.

A woman, whose husband had just died of the fever, was seized with the pains of labour, and had nobody to assist her, as the women in the neighbourhood were afraid to go into the house. She lay for a considerable time in a degree of anguish that will not bear description. At length, she struggled to reach the window, and cried out for assistance. Two men, passing by went up stairs; but they came at too late a stage.— She was striving with death---and actually in a few minutes expired in their arms.

A woman, whose husband and two children lay dead in the room with her, was in the same situation, without a midwife, or any other person

to

to aid her. Her cries at the window brought up one of the carters employed by the committee for the relief of the sick. With his assistance she was delivered of a child, which died in a few minutes, as did the mother, who was utterly, exhausted by her labour, by the disorder, and by the dreadful spectacle before her. And thus lay in one room, no less than five dead bodies, an entire family, carried off in an hour or two. Many instances have occurred, of respectable women, who, in their lying-in, have been obliged to depend on servant women for assistance---and some had none but their husbands. Some of the midwives were dead---and others had left the city.

A servant girl, belonging to a family in this city in which the fever had prevailed, was apprehensive of danger, and resolved to remove to a relation's house, in the country. She was, however, taken sick on the road, and returned to town, where she could find no person to receive her. One of the guardians of the poor provided a cart, and took her to the alms house, into which she was refused admittance. She was brought back, and the guardian offered *five dollars* to provide her a single night's lodging, but in vain. And in fine, after every effort made

to provide her shelter, she absolutely expired in the cart*.

To relate all the frightful cases of this nature that occurred, would fill a volume. Let these few suffice. But I must observe, that most of them happened in the first stage of the public panic. Afterwards, when the citizens recovered a little from their fright, they became rare.

Great as was the calamity of Philadelphia, it was magnified in the most extraordinary manner. The hundred tongues of rumour were never more successfully employed, than on this melancholy occasion. The terror of the inhabitants of all the neighbouring states was excited by letters from Philadelphia, distributed by every mail, many of which told tales of woe,

* The following Extract of a Letter from Philadelphia, October 16, has appeared in several London Papers.

“ Among the most revolting circumstances attending this scourge, is the cruelty exercised against some who were, and many who were only supposed to be infected. Two or three persons, travelling in the stages to New York, being taken sick, were compelled, by their fellow passengers, to leave the stages, with their baggage. When on the road, wearied and distressed, they could procure no relief, nor shelter, but absolutely perished with sickness and hunger. On the Lancaster road, a similar instance occurred. There have been very many instances, in which as soon as a person was seized with the fever, he was immediately abandoned by friends and relations, and resigned to the care of perhaps a single negro.”

whereof

whereof hardly a single circumstance was true, but which were every where received with implicit faith. The distresses of the city, and the fatality of the disorder, were exaggerated as it were to see how far credulity could be carried. The plague of London was, according to rumour, hardly more fatal than our yellow fever. Our citizens died so fast, that there was hardly enough of people to bury them. Ten, or fifteen, *or more* were said to be cast into one hole together, like so many dead beasts*. One man, who could find his feelings easy enough, to be facetious on the subject, acquainted his correspondent, that the only business carrying on, was *grave digging*, or rather *pit digging* †. And at

* The following extract appeared in a Norfolk paper about the middle of September :

Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, to a gentleman in Norfolk, Sept. 9.

“ Half the inhabitants of this city have already fled to different parts, on account of the pestilential disorder that prevails here. The few citizens who remained in this place die in abundance, so *fast that they drag them away, like dead beasts, and put ten, or fifteen, or more in a hole together. All the stores are shut up.* I am afraid this city will be ruined : for nobody will come near it hereafter. I am this day removing my family from this fatal place.”

† From a New York paper of October 2.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Philadelphia, dated Sept. 23.

“ The papers must have amply informed you of the melancholy situation of this city for five or six weeks past.
Grave-

at a time when the deaths did not exceed from forty to fifty daily, many men had the modesty to write, and others, throughout the continent, the credulity to believe, that we buried from one hundred to one hundred and fifty *. Thousands

Grave-digging has been the only business carrying on; and indeed I may say of late, *pit-digging*, where people are interred indiscriminately in three tiers of coffins. From the most accurate observations I can make upon matters, I think I speak within bounds, when I say, eighteen hundred persons have perished (I do not say all of the yellow fever) since its first appearance.

* From the Maryland Journal, of Sept. 27th.

Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, dated Sept. 20th.

“The disorder seems to be much the same in this place, as when I last wrote you: about 1500 have fallen victims to it. Last Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, there were not less than 350 died with this severe disorder!!! As I informed you before, this is the most distressed place I ever beheld. Whole families go in the disorder, in the course of twelve hours. For your own sakes, use all possible means to keep it out of Baltimore.”

Extract of a letter from Philadelphia, of the same date:

“The malignant fever which prevails here, is still increasing. Report says, that above one hundred have been buried per day for some time past. It is now thought to be more infectious than ever. I think you ought to be very careful with respect to admitting persons from Philadelphia into your town.”

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were swept off in three or four weeks*. And the nature and danger of the disorder, were as much misrepresented, as the number of the dead. It was said, in defiance of every day's experience, to be as inevitable by all exposed to the contagion, as the stroke of fate.

The effects produced by these letters, were such as might be reasonably expected. The consternation spread through the several states like wild-fire. The first public act that took place on the subject, as far as I can learn, was at Chestertown, in Maryland. At this place, a meeting was held on the 10th of September, at which several resolves were entered into, which, after specifying that the disorder had extended to Trenton, Princeton, Woodbridge, and Elizabeth-town, on the post road to New York, directed, that notice should be sent to the owners of the stages

* From a Chestertown paper, of Sept. 10.

Extract of a letter from a respectable young mechanic, in Philadelphia, to his friends in this town, dated the 5th instant.

"It is now a very mortal time in this city. The yellow fever hath killed *some thousands* of the inhabitants. Eight thousand mechanics, besides other people, have left the town. Every master in the city, of our branch of business, is gone." The "*some thousands*" that were killed at that time did not amount to three hundred. The *authentic* information in this letter, was circulated in every state in the union, by the news papers."

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not to allow them to pass through the town, while there should be reason to expect danger therefrom; that a committee of health and inspection should be appointed, to provide for the relief of such poor inhabitants as might take the disorder, and likewise for such strangers as might be infected with it. They at the same time appointed seven persons as this committee, with power to call a general meeting in particular specified cases. In consequence of these resolves, the eastern shore line of stages was stopt in the course of a few days afterwards.

The alarm in New York was first officially announced by a letter from the mayor to the practising physicians, dated Sept. 11, in which he requests them to report to him in writing the names of all such persons as had arrived, or should arrive from Philadelphia, or any other place, by land or water, and were or should be sick; that such as should be deemed subjects of infectious diseases, might be removed out of the city. He notified them, that the corporation had taken measures to provide a proper place for an hospital, for such persons as might unhappily become subjects of the fever in New York. In this letter the mayor declared his opinion clearly, that the intercourse with Philadelphia, could not be lawfully interrupted by any

power in the state. The 12th appeared a proclamation from governor Clinton, which, referring to the "act to prevent the bringing, in " and spreading of infectious disorders," prohibited, in the terms of that act, all vessels from Philadelphia, to approach nearer to the city of New York, than Bedlow's island, about two miles distant, till duly discharged. The silence of this proclamation, respecting passengers by land, seemed to imply that the governor's opinion on the subject, was the same as that of the mayor.

The same day, at a meeting of the citizens, the necessity of taking some precautions was unanimously agreed upon, and a committee of seven appointed to report a plan to a meeting to be held next day. Their report, which was unanimously agreed to, the 13th, recommended to hire two physicians, to assist the physician of the port in his examinations of vessels; to check, as much as possible, the intercourse by stages; to acquaint the proprietors of the southern stages, that it was the earnest wish of the inhabitants, that their carriages and boats should not pass during the prevalence of the disorder in Philadelphia; and to request the practitioners of physic to report, without fail, every case of fever, to which they might be called

called, occurring in any persons that had or might arrive from Philadelphia, or have intercourse with them. Not satisfied with these measures, the corporation, on the 17th, came to a resolution to stop all intercourse between the two cities; and for this purpose guards were placed at the different landings, with orders to send back every person coming from Philadelphia; and if any were discovered to have arrived after that date, they were to be directly sent back. All persons taking in lodgers, were called upon to give information of all people of the above description, under pain of being prosecuted according to law. All good citizens were required to give information to the mayor, or any member of the committee, of any breach in the premises.

All these strict precautions being eluded by the fears and the vigilance of the fugitives from Philadelphia, on the 23d there was a meeting held, of delegates from the several wards of the city, in order to adopt more effectual measures. At this meeting, it was resolved to establish a night watch of not less than ten citizens in each ward, to guard against such as might escape them by day. Not yet eased of their fears, they next day published an address, in which they mentioned, that notwithstanding their utmost vigilance,

many persons had been clandestinely landed upon the shores of New York island. They therefore again called upon their fellow citizens to be cautious how they received strangers into their houses; not to fail to report all such to the mayor immediately upon their arrival; to remember the importance of the occasion; and to consider what reply they should make to the just resentment of their fellow citizens, whose lives they might expose by a criminal neglect, or infidelity. They likewise declared their expectation, that those who kept the different ferries on the shores of New Jersey and Staten island, would pay such attention to their address, as not to transport any person but to the public landings, and that in the day time, between sun and sun. The 30th they published a lengthy address, recapitulating the various precautions they had taken—the nature of the disorder—and the numbers who had died out of Philadelphia, without communicating it to any one. They at the same time resolved, that goods, bedding, and clothing, packed up in Philadelphia, should previous to their being brought into New York, be unpacked and exposed to the open air in some well-ventilated place, for at least 48 hours; that all linen or cotton clothes, or bedding, which had been used, should be well washed in several waters; and afterwards

terwards, that the whole, both such as had been, and such as had not been used, should be hung up in a close room, and well smoked with the fumes of brimstone for one day, and after that again exposed for at least twenty-four hours to the open air; and that the boxes, trunks, or chests, in which they had been packed, should be cleaned and aired in the same manner; after which, being repacked, and such evidence given of their purifications, as the committee should require, permission might be had to bring them into the city.

The 11th of October, they likewise resolved, that they would consider and publish to the world, as enemies to the welfare of the city, and the lives of its inhabitants, all those who should be so selfish and hardy, as to attempt to introduce any goods, wares, merchandize, bedding, baggage, &c. imported from, or packed up in Philadelphia, contrary to the rules prescribed by that body, who were, they said, deputed to express the will of their fellow citizens. They recommended to the inhabitants to withstand any temptation of profit, which might attend the purchase of goods in Philadelphia, as no emolument to an individual, they added, could warrant the hazard to which such conduct might expose the city. Besides all these resolves, they published daily
statements

statements of the health of the city, to allay the fears of their fellow citizens.

I did not choose to interrupt this account of the proceedings of the committee of health, to mention, in order of time, that the clergy of New York had a meeting, on the 16th of September, and unanimously agreed to set apart Friday, the 20th, as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer to Almighty God, for the preservation of their city, from the fever, and for the comfort and support of their brethren in Philadelphia, in the season of their distress. The Dutch Synod of New York had a meeting the first week in October, at which they agreed that those churches under their care, which had not yet observed a day of fasting and prayer, should devote the second Wednesday in November to that purpose.

The inhabitants of Trenton and Lambertton associated on the 13th of September, and on the 17th passed several resolutions to guard themselves against the contagion. They resolved that a total stop should be put to the landing of all persons from Philadelphia, at any ferry or place from Lambertton to Howell's ferry, four miles above Trenton; that the intercourse by water should be prohibited between Lambertton, or the head of tide water, and Philadelphia; and that
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all boats from Philadelphia, should be prevented from landing either goods or passengers any where between Bordentown and the head of tide water ; that no person whatever should be permitted to come from Philadelphia, or Kensington, while the fever continued ; that all persons who should go from within the limits of the association, to either of those places, should be prevented from returning during the continuance of the fever ; and finally, that their standing committee should enquire whether any persons, not inhabitants, who had lately come from places infected, and were therefore likely to be infected themselves, were within the limits of the association, and if so, that they should be obliged instantly to leave the said limits. The people of Jersey observed the 1st of October, as a day of fasting and prayer, for the same purpose as those of New York.

The 12th of September, the governor of Maryland published a proclamation, subjecting all vessels from Philadelphia to the performance of a quarantine, not exceeding forty days, or as much less as might be judged safe by the health officers. It further ordered, that all persons going to Baltimore, to Havre de Grace, to the head of Elk, or, by any other route, making their way into that state from Philadelphia, or
any

any other place known to be infected with the malignant fever, should be subject to be examined, and prevented from proceeding, by persons to be appointed for that purpose, and who were to take the advice and opinion of the medical faculty in every case, in order that private affairs and pursuits might not be unnecessarily impeded. This proclamation appointed two health officers for Baltimore.

The people of Baltimore met the 13th of September, and resolved that none of their citizens should receive into their houses any persons coming from Philadelphia, or other infected place, without producing a certificate from the health officer, or officer of patrol; and that any person who violated that resolve, should be held up to public view, as a proper object for the resentment of the town. The 14th, a party of militia was dispatched to take possession of a pass on the road, about two miles from Baltimore, to prevent the entrance of any passengers from Philadelphia without license. Dr. Worthington, the health officer stationed at this pass, was directed to refuse permission to persons afflicted with any malignant complaint, or who had not been absent from Philadelphia, or other infected place, at least seven days. The western shore line of Philadelphia stages was stopped about the 18th, or 19th.

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The 30th, the committee of health resolved that no inhabitant of Baltimore, who should visit persons from Philadelphia, while performing quarantine, should be permitted to enter the town, until the time of quarantine was expired, and until it was certainly known that the persons he had visited were free from the infection; and that thenceforward no goods capable of conveying infection, that had been landed or packed up in Philadelphia, or other infected place, should be permitted to enter the town—nor should any baggage of travellers be admitted, until it had been exposed to the open air such length of time as the health officer might direct.

The 25th of September, the inhabitants of Havre de Grace, resolved that no person should be allowed to cross the Susquehannah river at that place, who did not bring a certificate of his not having lately come from Philadelphia, or any other infected place; and that the citizens of Havre would embody themselves to prevent any one from crossing without such certificate.

At Hagerstown, on the 3d of October, it was resolved, that no citizen should receive into his house any person coming from Philadelphia, supposed to be infected with the malignant fever, until he or she produced a certificate from a health officer; that should any citizen contravene
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the above resolution, he should be cut off from all society with his fellow citizens; that the clothing sent to the troops then in that town, should not be received there, nor suffered to come within seven miles thereof; that if any person from Philadelphia, or other infected place, should arrive there, he should be required instantly to depart, and in case of refusal or neglect, be compelled to go without delay; that no merchant, or other person, should be permitted to bring into the town, or open therein, any goods brought from Philadelphia, or other infected place, until permitted by the committee; and that the citizens of the town, and its vicinity, should enrol themselves as a guard, and patrol such road and passes as the committee should direct.

The governor of Virginia, on the 17th of September, issued a proclamation, ordering all vessels from Philadelphia, the Grenades, and the island of Tobago, to perform a quarantine of twenty days, at the anchorage ground, off Craney island, near the mouth of Elizabeth river.

The corporation of Alexandria stationed a lookout boat, to prevent all vessels bound to that port, from approaching nearer than one mile, until after examination by the health officer.

The people of Winchester placed guards at every avenue of the town leading from the Patomac,

tomac, to stop all suspected persons, packages, &c. coming from Philadelphia till the health officers should inspect them, and either forbid or allow them to pass.

The legislature of Massachusetts happened to be actually in session, at the time the alarm spread; and they accordingly passed an express act for guarding against the impending danger. This act directed that the selectmen in the different towns should be authorized to stop and examine any persons, baggage, merchandize, or effects, coming, or supposed to be coming into the towns respectively, from Philadelphia, or other place infected, or supposed to be infected; and should it appear to them, or to any officers whom they should appoint, that any danger of infection was to be apprehended from such persons, effects, baggage or merchandize, they were authorized to detain or remove the same to such place as they might see proper, in order that they might be purified from infection; or to place any persons so coming, in such places, and under such regulations as they might judge necessary for the public safety. In pursuance of this act, the governor issued a proclamation to carry it into effect, the 21st of September.

The selectmen of Boston, on the 24th, published their regulations of quarantine, which ordered,

dered, that on the arrival of any vessel from Philadelphia, she should be detained at, or near Rainsford's Island to perform a quarantine not exceeding thirty days, during which time she should be cleansed with vinegar, and the explosion of gunpowder between the decks and in the cabin, even though there were no sick persons on board; that in case there should be sick on board, they should be removed to an hospital, where they should be detained till they recovered, or were long enough to ascertain that they had not the infection; that every vessel, performing quarantine, should be deprived of its boat, and no boat suffered to approach it, but by special permission; that if any person should escape, he should be instantly advertised, in order that he might be apprehended; that any persons coming by land from Philadelphia, should not be allowed to enter Boston, until twenty-one days after their arrival, and their effects, baggage, and merchandize should be opened, washed and fumigated with vinegar and repeated explosions of gunpowder. In the conclusion, the selectmen called upon the inhabitants to use their utmost vigilance and activity to bring to condign punishment any person who should be so daring and lost to every idea of humanity, as to come into the town from
any

any place supposed to be infected, thereby endangering the lives of their fellow men.

The governor of Rhode Island, the 21st of September, issued a proclamation, directing the town councils and other officers, to use their utmost vigilance to cause the law to prevent the spreading of contagious disorders to be most strictly executed, more especially with respect to all vessels which should arrive in that state from the West Indies, Philadelphia, and New-York; the extension to the latter place was owing to the danger apprehended from the intercourse between it and Philadelphia.

The 28th of September, the governor of North Carolina published his proclamation, requiring, the commissioners of navigation in the different ports, and the commissioners of the different towns in the said state, to appoint certain places, where all vessels from the port of Philadelphia, or any other place where the malignant fever might prevail, should perform quarantine for such number of days as they might think proper.

The inhabitants of Charleston do not seem to have been far behind their neighbours, in their apprehensions or their cautions. The 8th of October they had a meeting, at which they resolved, that no vessel from the river Delaware, either directly or after having touched at any other port

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of the United States should be permitted to pass Charleston bar, till the citizens have again assembled, and declared themselves satisfied that the disorder had ceased in Philadelphia. If any vessel, contrary thereto, should cross the bar, his excellency should be requested to compel it to quit the port, and return to sea. Before this meeting, vessels from Philadelphia had been obliged to perform quarantine; but by what regulation, I cannot ascertain.

The governor of Georgia, on the fourth of October, published a proclamation, ordering all vessels from Philadelphia, which should arrive in Savannah river, to remain in Tybee creek, or in other parts at like distance from the town, until the health officer of the port should on examination, certify, that no malignant or contagious disease was on board. All persons contravening this proclamation, were to be prosecuted, and subjected to the pains and penalties by law pointed out.

The people of Augusta, in that state, were as active and vigilant as their northern neighbours, to guard against the threatening dangers.

While our citizens were thus proscribed in several cities and towns—hunted up like felons in some—and debarred admittance and turned back in others, whether found or infected—it is with extreme satisfaction I have to record a conduct

totally different, which cannot fail to make an indelible impression on the minds of the people of Philadelphia, and call forth the most lively emotions of gratitude.

A respectable number of the inhabitants of Springfield, in New Jersey, met the first day of October, and after a full consideration of the distresses of our citizens, passed a resolve, offering their town as an asylum to the people flying from Philadelphia, and directing their committee to provide a suitable place as an hospital for such of them as might be seized with the prevailing malignant fever.

I have been informed, by a person of credit, that the inhabitants of Elizabeth town have pursued the same liberal plan, as those of Springfield; but have not been able to procure a copy of their resolves or proceedings on the subject.

An asylum has likewise been offered to Philadelphians, by several of the inhabitants of Elkton, in Maryland; and the offer was couched in terms of the utmost sympathy for our sufferings.

The instances of this kind, through this extensive country, have been very few; but they are therefore only the more precious, and ought to be held up to public approbation. May they operate on people, at a future day, in similar cases of dreadful calamity—and teach them to temper their caution with as much humanity and

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tenderness to the distressed fugitives, as prudence will allow—and not involve in one indiscriminate proscription the healthy and infected.

In the mean time, the situation of affairs in Philadelphia, became daily more and more serious. The three guardians of the poor for the city, who, as I have said, continued to act, were quite oppressed with the labours of their office, which increased to such a degree, that they were utterly unable to execute them. The number of diseased persons became very great. Owing to the general terror, nurses, carters, and attendants could hardly be procured. Thus circumstanced, the mayor of the city, on the 10th of September, published an address to the citizens, announcing that the guardians of the poor, who remained, were in distress for want of assistance, and inviting such benevolent citizens as felt for the general distress, to lend their aid. In consequence of this advertisement, a meeting of the citizens was held at the city hall, on the 12th of September, at which very few attended, from the universal consternation that prevailed. The state of the poor was fully considered; and ten citizens, Israel Israel, Samuel Wetherill, Thomas Wistar, Andrew Adgate, Caleb Lownes, Henry Deforest, Thomas Peters, Joseph Inskeep, Stephen Gerard, and John Mason, offered themselves to assist

list the guardians of the poor. At this meeting, a committee was appointed to confer with the physicians who had the care of Bushill. This committee reported next evening, that the hospital was in very bad order, and in want of almost every thing.

The 14th, another meeting was held, when the urgent necessities of the sick being fully considered, it was resolved to borrow 1500 dollars of the bank of North America, for the purpose of procuring suitable accommodations for the use of persons afflicted with the prevailing malignant fever. At this meeting, a committee was appointed to transact the whole of the business relative to the relief of the sick, and the procuring of physicians, nurses, attendants, &c. This is the committee, which, by virtue of that appointment, has from that day to the present time, watched over the sick, the poor, the widow, and the orphan. It is worthy of remark, and may encourage others in times of public calamity, that this committee consisted originally of only twenty-six persons, men taken from the middle walks of life, and of the moderate pitch of abilities; of these four, Andrew Adgate, Jonathan Dickinson Sargeant, Daniel Offley, and Joseph Inskoop, died, the two first at an early period of their labours—and four never

ver attended to the appointment. " The heat and burden of the day" have therefore been borne by eighteen persons, whose exertions have been so highly favoured by Providence, that they have been the instruments of averting the progress of destruction, eminently relieving the distressed, and restoring confidence to the terrified inhabitants of Philadelphia. It is honourable to this committee, that from the time of their organization to the present, they have lived together in more harmony than is generally to be met with in public bodies of equal number.

Never, perhaps, was there a city in the situation of Philadelphia at this period. The president of the United States, according to his annual custom, had removed to Mount Vernon, with his household. Most, if not all of the other officers of the federal government were absent. The governor, who had been sick, had gone, by directions of his physicians, to his country seat near the falls of Schuylkill---and nearly the whole of the officers of the state had likewise retired.---The magistrates of the city, except the mayor, and John Barclay, esq. were away, as were most of those of the liberties. Of the situation of the guardians of the poor I have already made mention. In fact, government of every
kind

kind was almost wholly vacated, and seemed, by universal consent, to be vested in the committee.

On the 15th, the committee resolved, that three members of their board should attend daily at the city hall, to receive applications for relief, to provide for the burial of the dead, and the conveyance to Bushhill of all persons labouring under the fever, who might be willing to go there. This order was soon rescinded, it being found necessary for all the members to attend at the hall.

This day, a circumstance occurred, to which the most glowing pencil could hardly do justice. Stephen Gerard, a wealthy merchant, a native of France, touched with the wretched situation of the sufferers at Bushhill, voluntarily and unexpectedly offered to superintend that hospital. The surprise and satisfaction, excited by this extraordinary effort of humanity, can be better conceived than expressed. Peter Helm, a native of Pennsylvania, actuated by the like benevolent motives, offered his services in the same department. Their offers were accepted, and the same afternoon they entered on the execution of their dangerous and praiseworthy office*.

To

* “ *There were two Sailors brought to the hospital with the fever, no physician being at hand, and assistance immediately*

To form a just estimate of the value of the offer of these men, it is necessary to take into full consideration the general consternation, which at that period pervaded every quarter of the city, and which made attendance on the sick be regarded as little less than a certain sacrifice. Uninfluenced by any reflexions of this kind, without any possible inducement but the purest motives of humanity, they came forward, and offered themselves as the forlorn hope of the committee. I trust that the gratitude of their fellow citizens will remain as long as the memory of their beneficent conduct, which I hope will not die with the present generation*. While I am on this subject, let me add, that from the time of undertaking
this

ately necessary, Gerard made them drink plentifully of strong Centaury Tea, which effected their restoration. The Committee have published a request to the country to furnish the hospital with a large quantity of Centaury.

* Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Boston, to his friend in Philadelphia, dated 25th September last.

" This will be handed to you by citizen Robert, a French physician and a gentleman of merit, he had engaged and paid half of his passage to France when he learned the progress of the dreadful disease which rages in your city; without hesitation he has given up the money he had paid, to fly to the assistance of his fellow creatures. I hope his exertions will be crowned with success. I beg you will introduce him to some of your friends. He comes from the Manilla, in the East Indies,

this office to the present, they have attended uninterruptedly, for six, seven, or eight hours a day, renouncing almost every care of private affairs. They have had a laborious tour of duty to perform—to encourage and comfort the sick—to hand them necessaries and medicines—to wipe the sweat off their brows—and to perform many disgusting offices of kindness for them, which nothing could render tolerable, but the exalted motives that impelled them to this heroic conduct.

On the 16th, the managers of Bushhill, after personal inspection of the state of affairs there, made report of its situation, which was truly deplorable. It exhibited as wretched a picture of human misery as ever existed. A profligate, abandoned set of nurses and attendants (hardly any of good character could at that time be procured,) rioted on the provisions and com-

dies, where the unhealthiness of the climate has afforded him the opportunity of being well acquainted with such diseases. On his passage from hence to his own country he was taken by the British, and lost a handsome property---present my respects to your family, I wish to hear that none of them have been hurt by this disease."

The authenticity of the foregoing extract may be ascertained by applying at the office of the Federal Gazette.

M. Robert resides at No. 124, North Third Street, the house lately occupied by Citizen Duplaine, now Consul of France at Boston.

forts

forts, prepared for the sick, who (unless at the hours when the doctors attended) were left almost entirely destitute of every assistance. The dying and dead were indiscriminately mingled together. The ordure and other evacuations of the sick, were allowed to remain in the most offensive state imaginable. Not the smallest appearance of order or regularity existed. It was, in fact, a great human slaughter-house, where numerous victims were immolated at the altar of riot and intemperance. No wonder, then, that a general dread of the place prevailed through the city, and that a removal to it was considered as the seal of death. In consequence, there were various instances of sick persons locking their rooms, and resisting every attempt to carry them away. At length, the poor were so much afraid of being sent to Bushhill, that they would not acknowledge their illness, until it was no longer possible to conceal it. For it is to be observed, that the fear of the contagion was so prevalent, that as soon as any one was taken sick, an alarm was spread among the neighbours, and every effort was used to have the sick person hurried off to Bushhill, to avoid spreading the disorder. The cases of poor people forced in this way to that hospital, though labouring under only common colds, and com-

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loss of four very active members, in quick succession, appalled them. That the mortality would have been incomparably greater, but for their active interposition, is beyond doubt; as most of those who went to Bushhill, and died there, would have otherwise died in the city, and spread the contagion: and the dead bodies would have remained putrifying in deserted houses in every part of the city, and operated as dreadfully as the plague itself. In fact, at the time they entered on the execution of the dangerous office they undertook, there were found several bodies that had lain in this state for two, three, and four days.

In the progress of the disorder, the committee found the calls on their humanity increase. The numerous deaths of heads of families left a very large body of children in a most abandoned, forlorn state. The bettering house, in which such helpless objects have been usually placed heretofore, was barred against them, by the order which I have already mentioned. Many of these little innocents were actually suffering for want of even common necessaries. The deaths of their parents and protectors, which should have been the strongest recommendation to public charity, was the very reason of their distress, and of their being shunned as a pestilence. The children of a
family

family once in easy circumstances, were found in a blacksmith's shop, squalid, dirty, and half starved, having been for a considerable time without even bread to eat. Various instances of a similar nature occurred. This evil early caught the attention of the committee; and on the 19th of September, they hired a house in Fifth-street, in which they placed thirteen children. The number increasing, on the 3d of October, they procured the Loganian library, which was generously given up by John Swanwick, Esq. for the purpose of an orphan house. A further increase of their little charge, rendered it necessary to build some additions to the library, which are now finished, and are nearly half as large as that building. At present, there are in the house, under the care of the orphan committee, above eighty children, and about forty are out with wet nurses. From the origin of the institution, one hundred and sixty children have fallen under their care, of whom seven are dead, all of whom, except one, were sucking children; and about thirty have been delivered to their relations or friends. There are instances of five and six children of a single family in the house.

Another duty soon attracted the attention of the committee. The flight of so many of our citizens, the consequent stagnation of business, and

the almost total cessation of the labours of the guardians of the poor, brought on among the lower classes of the people, a great degree of distress, which loudly demanded the interposition of the humane. In consequence, on the 20th of September, a sub-committee of distribution was appointed, to furnish such assistance to deserving objects as their respective cases might require, and the funds allow *. This was at first administered sparingly, owing to the confined state of their finances. But the very extraordinary liberality of our fugitive fellow citizens, of the citizens of New York, and of those of various towns and townships, encouraged the committee to extend their views. And frequent impositions being attempted on them, they, on the 14th of October, called to their assistance a number of respectable characters in the different parts of the city and liberties, to seek out and give recommendations to deserving objects in distress. These gentlemen have undertaken this troublesome office, which they execute with so much circumspection, as to defeat the arts of impostors. At present, there are about twelve hundred people relieved weekly, most of whom have consider-

* They had, in addition to the first loan from the bank of North America, borrowed 5000 dollars from the same institution, making in the whole 6500,

able

able families, some of four, six, and eight persons. The number, therefore, depending on the committee for assistance, is probably above four thousand. The gradual revival of business promises to rescue some of these people speedily from the humiliation of a dependence on public charity; and the organization of the guardians of the poor will make provisions for the remainder.

From this time, the proceedings of the committee went on in a regular, uniform tenor, every day like the past, without any thing remarkable occurring, worth recording. For above five weeks of the time they have been employed, the most dreary prospects appeared before them. The number of persons to be removed to Bushill daily, was for a long time from twenty to thirty—and the number to be buried by their carters, was often equal. These two circumstances, the removals to the hospital, and the persons buried from the city-hall, were regarded as the barometer, by which to judge of the state of the disease; and in general they were a just one.

The week, beginning Sunday the 27th of October, proved for the most part cold and raw*.

* Extract of a letter dated Abington, 10th month, October 15, 1793.

“ There has been such a severe drought in this part, and in the city of Philadelphia for above two months past, that
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Nötherly winds generally prevailed. Thursday and Friday, there was a considerable fall of rain. A visible alteration has already taken place in the state of affairs in the city. Our friends return in crowds. Every hour, long-absent and welcome faces appear—and in many instances, those of persons, whom public fame has buried for weeks past. The stores, so long closed, are opening fast. Some of the country merchants bolder than others, are daily venturing in to their old place of supply. Market-street is almost as full of waggons as usual. The custom-house, for weeks nearly deserted by our mercantile people, is thronged by citizens entering their vessels and goods—the streets, too long the

there are a number of the creeks dried up; particularly the one running through Leedom's Meadow: you may walk along them, where there was usually two or three feet water. There are likewise a great number of the pumps in the city dry; so that in case of fire, the consequences would be dreadful indeed. Both for want of hands, and water to extinguish it."

From another letter we read :

"The mortality was greatest in proportion to the number of sick, in the beginning; but as the numbers increased so as to exceed one hundred per day," (see meteorological table,) the disorder was not so mortal, which gave hopes, that a change usually expected about the time of the equinox, would bring us a providential relief; but these rains and this change were looked for in vain for six weeks after the usual time of their coming.

abode

abode of gloom and despair, have assumed the bustle suitable to the season. The arrival in the city of our beloved president, gives us a flattering prospect of the next session of Congress being held here. And, in fine, as every thing, in the early stage of the disorder, seemed calculated to add to the general consternation; so now, on the contrary, every circumstance has a tendency to revive the courage and hopes of our citizens. But we have to lament, that the same spirit of exaggeration and lying, that prevailed at a former period, and was the grand cause of the harsh measures adopted by our sister states, has not ceased to operate; for at the present moment, when the danger is entirely done away, the credulous of our citizens still absent, and of the country people, are still alarmed by frightful rumours, of the disorder raging with as much violence as ever; of numbers carried off, a few hours after their return; and of new cases daily occurring. To what design to attribute these shameful tales, I know not. Were I to regard them in a spirit of resentment, I should be inclined to charge them to some secret, interested views of their authors, intent, if possible, to effect the entire destruction of our city. But I will not allow myself to consider them in this point of light—and will even suppose they arise from a
proneness

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pronefs to terrific narration, natural to some men. But they fhould confider, that we are in the fituation of the frogs in the fable—while thefe tales, which make the hair of the country people ftand on end, are fport to the fabricators, they are death to us. And I here affert, and defy contradiction, that of the whole number of our fugitive citizens, who have already returned, amounting to fome thoufands, not above two are dead—and thefe owe their fate to the moft shameful neglect of airing and cleaning their houfes, notwithstanding the various cautions published by the committee. If people will venture into houfes in which infected air has been pent up for weeks together, without any purification, we cannot be furprized at the confequences, however fatal they may be. But let not the catastrophe of a few incautious perfons operate to bring difcredit on a city containing above fifty thoufand people.

At the time of writing thefe lines, the 10th of November, the committee look forward with pleasure to the moment of furrendering up their trust to a town meeting of their fellow citizens, the conftituents by whom they were called into the extraordinary office they have filled. To them they will give an account of their ftewardship in a time of diftrefs, the like of which heaven

ven avert from the people of America for ever. They hope a candid construction will be put upon their conduct---and that it will be believed that they have acted in every case that has come under their cognizance, according to the best of their judgment.

The sympathy for our calamities displayed in various places, reflects the highest honour on their inhabitants, and demands our warmest gratitude. The inhabitants of Gloucester country in New Jersey, have the honour of being first in this laudable race. So early as the 30th of September, they had a considerable sum collected, with which they purchased a quantity of provisions for the use of the hospital at Bushhill. They have from that time regularly continued copious supplies twice a week. From a few citizens of Philadelphia, near Germantown, there have been received two thousand dollars; from others near Darby, fourteen hundred; from New York, five thousand; from a person unknown, five hundred; from Bucks' county sixteen hundred; from Delaware county twelve hundred; from Franklin county nearly five hundred; from Boston sundry articles, estimated at twenty-five hundred; and from sundry other persons and places, contributions equally liberal and honourable.

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The disorder raged with increased violence, as the season advanced towards the mild fall months. In the month of September, the mortality was much greater than in August; and still greater in October, to the 25th, than in September. What is very particularly worthy of attention, is, that though all the hopes of the citizens rested on cold and rain, especially the latter, yet the disorder was extinguished with hardly any rain, and a very moderate degree of cold. The 26th may be set down as the day when the virulence of the fever expired. The deaths afterwards were mostly of those long sick. Hardly any persons have since taken it. That day was as warm as many of the most fatal ones in the early part of the month. To account for this is perhaps above our power. In fact, the whole of the disorder, from its first appearance to its final close, has set human wisdom and calculation at defiance.

Rarely has it happened, that so large a proportion of the gentlemen of the faculty have sunk beneath the labours of their very dangerous profession, as on this occasion. In little more than a month, exclusive of medical students, no less than ten physicians have been swept off, doctors Hutchinson, Morris, Linn, Pennington, Dodds, Johnson, Glentworth, Phile, Graham,
and

and Green. Hardly one of the practising doctors that remained in the city, escaped sickness -- some were three, four, and five times confined.

To the clergy it has likewise proved very fatal. Exposed, in the exercise of the last duties to the dying, to equal danger with the physicians, it is not surprising that so many of them have fallen. Their names are, the Rev. Alexander Murry, of the protestant episcopal church.—the Rev. F. A. Fleming, and the Rev. Laurence Graefsl of the Roman catholic—the Rev. John Winkhaufe, of the German reformed—the Rev. James Sproat, of the presbyterian—the Rev. William Dougherty, of the methodist church—and three preachers of the Friends society, Daniel Offley, Huson Langstroth, and Charles Williams. Seven clergymen have been in the greatest danger from this disorder, the Rev. R. Blackwell, Rev. Joseph Pilmore, Rev. William Rogers, Rev. Christopher V. Keating, Rev. Frederic Schmidt, the Rev. Joseph Turner, and the Rev. Robert Annan; but they have all recovered.

Among the women, the mortality has not by any means been so great, as among the men*.

* In many congregations, the deaths of men have been twice as numerous as those of women.

nor among the old and infirm as among the middle-aged and robust.

To tipplers and drunkards, and to men who lived high, and were of a corpulent habit of body, this disorder was very fatal. Of these, many were seized, and the recoveries were very rare.

To the *filles de joie*, it has been equally fatal. The wretched debilitated state of their constitutions, rendered them an easy prey to this dreadful disorder, which very soon terminated their miserable career.

It has been dreadfully destructive among the poor. It is very probable, that at least seven eighths of the number of the dead, were of that class*. The inhabitants of dirty houses have severely expiated their neglect of cleanliness and decency, by the numbers of them that have fallen sacrifices. Whole families in such houses have sunk into one silent, undistinguishing grave.

The mortality in confined streets, small allies, and close houses, debarred of a free circulation of air, has exceeded, in a great proportion, that in the large streets and well-aired houses. In

* "A letter from Nicholas Wain to his friend in London, says, my Blacksmith lost thirteen out of his family."

some



Some of the allies, a third or fourth of the whole of the inhabitants are no more. In 30 houses, the whole number in Pewter Platter Alley, 32 people died: and in Market-street, in 170 houses, only 39. The streets in the suburbs that had the benefit of the country air, especially towards the west part of the city, have suffered little. Of the wide, airy streets, none lost so many people as Arch, near Water-street, which may be accounted for by its proximity to the original seat of the disorder. It is to be particularly remarked, that in general, the more remote the streets were from Water-street, the less they experienced of the calamity.

From the effects of this disorder, the French settled in Philadelphia, have been in a very remarkable degree exempt. To what this may be owing, is a subject deserving particular investigation. By some it has been ascribed to their despising the danger. But, though this may have had some effect, it will not certainly account for it altogether; as it is well known that many of the most courageous persons in Philadelphia, have been among its victims. By many of the French, the prevalence and mortality of the disorder have been attributed to the vast quantities of crude and unwholesome fruits brought

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to our markets, and consumed by all classes of people*.

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* From the Federal Gazette, October 12th 1793.

“ IT may be worthy the attention of the citizens of Philadelphia, at this distressing crisis, how far the adoption of the French mode of living is connected with the preservation of the health any of them at present enjoy, or of warding off the epidemic disease which rages in the midst of us. Certain it is, that our allies, at present resident in the city, escape in a very extraordinary manner that fatal malady which is daily sweeping away so many of the natives---to what can this be owing but to the very different modes of living of the two descriptions of persons? The French eat less meat and more soup than the Americans---they drink no brandy, or other spirits, and no strong wines---they dilute even their beer with water---and use neither black nor green teas---they eat vegetables and fruit, and light soup is perpetually and invariably the principal article of their diet. The effects are visible---a chearful equal mind, and a constant flow of spirits---neither anticipating evil, nor depressed when sickness comes; knowing that they are constantly in the best habit to derive relief and assistance from the slightest medical aid. I take it for granted as a fact, that few, very few, of our allies resident in the city have fallen victims to the present epidemic.

There is another subject, which appears to me of great importance to be attended to as far as possible, and that is, finding employ for the labouring class of citizens---their usual exercise is of the utmost consequence to the preservation of their health. Deprived of employ, their customary accommodations, supplies and conveniences are in a great measure cut off; this induces a most fatal depression of spirits; but this is not perhaps the greatest evil---the sudden transition from the active scenes in which they have moved, and which kept their minds easy, and bodies in a due state of perspiration, to a languid

The effect of fear in predisposing the body for this and other disorders, and increasing their malignance, when taken, is well known. The following exception to the general rule, for the truth of which I pledge myself, is curious and interesting. A young woman, whose fears were so very prevalent, as not only to render her unhappy from the commencement of the disorder, but even to interfere with the happiness of the family with whom she lived, had to attend on seven persons, all of whom were in a very dangerous state, and one of whom died. Her attendance was assiduous and unremitted for nearly three weeks. Yet she has never been in the slightest degree affected.

At an early stage of the disorder, the elders of the African church met, and offered their services to the mayor, to procure nurses for the sick, and to assist in burying the dead. Their offers were accepted; and Absalom Jones and Richard Allen undertook the former department, that of furnishing nurses; and William Gray the interment of the dead. The great demand for nurses afforded an opportunity for imposition, which was eagerly seized by some of the vilest of the blacks. They extorted *quid and unemployed situation, must be attended with pernicious effects. These effects are daily more and more apparent in the melancholy and daily addition to the number of patients in the hospital.*

two, three, four, and even five dollars a night for attendance, which would have been well paid by a single dollar. Some of them were even detected in plundering the houses of the sick. But it is wrong to cast a censure on the whole for this sort of conduct, as many people have done. The services of Jones, Allen, and Gray, and others of their colour, have been very great, and demand public gratitude.

When the yellow fever prevailed in South Carolina, the negroes, according to that accurate observer, Dr. Lining, were wholly free from it. "There is something very singular in the constitution of the negroes," says he, "which renders them not liable to this fever; for though many of them were as much exposed as the nurses to this infection; yet I never knew one instance of this fever among them, though they are equally subject with the white people to the bilious fever.*" The same idea prevailed for a considerable time in Philadelphia; but it was erroneous. They did not escape the disorder; however, the number of them that were seized with it, was not great; and, as I am informed by an eminent doctor, it "yielded to the power of medicine in them more easily than in the whites."

* Essays and Observations, vol. II. page 407.

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Those who reflect on the many revolting cases of cruelty and desertion of friends and relations which occurred in Philadelphia, however they may regret, cannot be surpris'd, that in the country, and in various towns and cities, inhumanity should be experienced by Philadelphians from strangers. The universal consternation extinguish'd in people's breasts the most honourable feelings of human nature ; and in this case, as in various others, the suspicion operated as injuriously as the reality. Many travellers from this city, exhausted with fatigue and with hunger, have been refused all shelter and all sustenance, and have fallen victims to the fears, not to the want of charity, of those to whom they applied for relief. Instances of this kind have occurred on almost every road leading from Philadelphia. People under suspicion of having this disorder, have been forced by their fellow travellers to quit the stages, and perished in the woods without a possibility of procuring any assistance. At Milford, in Delaware state, a waggon-load of goods from Philadelphia, was actually burned ; and a woman, who came with it, was tarred and feathered*.

* I am informed that a respectable merchant in this city can vouch for the truth of this circumstance.

There is one fact respecting this disorder, which renders it probable, that the exercise of the duties of humanity towards the fugitive Philadelphians, would not have been attended with the danger universally imagined. In defiance of all the resolutions entered into by the inhabitants of various towns, many of our infected citizens evaded their vigilance, and took refuge among them, and in only one or two cases is it known that they communicated the disorder—and even in these not mortally. Three persons from Philadelphia died of this disorder, in one house at Woodbury, in New Jersey; they had been attended during their illness by the family, none of whom caught the infection. Six or seven died at Darby, as many at Germantown, and eight at Haddonfield, without communicating it to any of the inhabitants. A man from Philadelphia, of the name of Cornell, died in New York, about two days after his arrival. The place of his death was a boarding house, in which were a number of boarders, one of whom slept in the same bed with him. Two of the family only were slightly affected—but not in such a degree as to require medical aid. Three other infected persons from our city, who, when discovered, were removed to Governor's island, died there, and no one took the
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the disorder from them. A man died at one of the principal taverns in Baltimore, of the same disorder. Many people had visited and attended him during the whole of his illness, without injury. No person was affected but his doctor, whose indisposition was not of long continuance. A great number of similar instances have occurred at Burlington, Bordenton, Lamberton, Princeton, Brunswick, Woodbridge, Newark, Lancaster, and various other places, and in no case, except those at Baltimore and New York, has the infection spread.

The terror that prevailed in Philadelphia, and which was spread through the continent, arose from the fatality of the disorder at first, very few of those who took it then having escaped. This, with all deference to the medical gentlemen, arose probably from their being unacquainted with it. That this was the case, is candidly acknowledged by several of the most eminent among them. The fact is, that the terror was at no time greater, than about the end of August, at which period, the deaths did not very far exceed the usual number in that month. When the mortality raged most dreadfully, from the middle of September to the middle of October, the public were much less alarmed, owing to the occurrence of several recoveries, and their becoming callous by the
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force of habit. During this time it was, that all the sponges, smelling bottles, handkerchiefs steeped in vinegar, camphor bags, &c. disappeared.

The state of the police and of society in Philadelphia, appears to no small advantage, when we consider one circumstance. Notwithstanding the absence of the magistrates, and the immense value of property left unprotected through the fears of the owners, and the deaths of the persons left to take care of it, we have as yet heard of only one or two burglaries committed.—Another was attempted, but the plunderers were discovered and taken. A hardened villain from a neighbouring state, formed a plot with some negroes to plunder houses. He was a master rogue, had digested a complete system, and formed a large partnership for the more successful execution of his schemes. However he was soon seized, and the company dissolved.

The jail of Philadelphia is under such excellent regulation, that the disorder made its appearance there only in two or three instances, although such abodes of misery are the places where contagious disorders are most commonly generated. When the yellow fever raged most violently in the city, there were in the jail one hundred and six French soldiers and sailors, confined by order of the French consul, besides eighty convicts, vagrants,

vagrants, and persons for trial; all of whom, except two or three, remained perfectly free from the complaint. Several circumstances have conspired to produce this salutary effect. The people confined are frequently cleansed and purified by the use of the cold bath—they are kept constantly employed—vegetables form a considerable part of their diet—in the yard, vegetation, flourishes—and many of them being employed in stone cutting, the water, constantly running, keeps the atmosphere in a moist state, while the people of Philadelphia have been uninterruptedly parched up by unceasing heat. Elijah Weed, the late jailor, caught the disorder in the city, in the performance of the paternal duties towards his daughter, and died in the jail, without communicating it to any of the people confined. I hope I shall be pardoned for paying a tribute to the memory of this valuable citizen, under whose government of the jail, and with whose hearty co-operation, most of the regulations in that institution have been effected, which, with the successful experiments made in England, prove that jails may be easily converted from sinks of human depravity and wretchedness, into places of reformation; so that, instead of rendering the idle vagrant, confined merely on suspicion, or for want of friends to protect him, obdurate, wicked,

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wicked, and ripe for rapine and spoil, the profligate and abandoned may leave them in a situation to become useful members of society. For the honour of human nature, it ought to be recorded, that some of the convicts in the jail, a part of the term of whose confinement had been remitted as a reward for their peaceable, orderly behaviour, voluntarily offered themselves as nurses to attend the sick at Bushhill, and have in that capacity conducted themselves with so much fidelity and tenderness, that they have had the repeated thanks of the managers. Among them are some who were formerly regarded, and with justice, as hardened abandoned villains, which the old system was calculated to make every tenant of a jail, who remained there a few weeks. According to the same summary system, these men's lives would have been long since offered up as an atonement to society for the injury they had done it. That is, in plain English, because society had suffered one injury by rapine, it was necessary it should suffer another by law. But by the improved plan, they and great numbers of others are restored to society and usefulness once more. So much better, although not quite so easy, is it to reform men, than to butcher them under colour of law and justice,

In the summer 1791, the yellow fever prevailed in New York, in a part of Water-street; and in proportion to the sphere of its action was as fatal there as it has been here. It began in August, and continued to the middle of September, when it totally disappeared, and has never since visited that place. This should ease the fears of many amongst us, who, always viewing the black side of every thing, terrify people with their prognostications, that we shall have it again next spring or summer. All the symptoms were full as dangerous and alarming in New York, as in Philadelphia. Many persons died in three days; "stupor, delirium, yellowness, the black vomit, and death, rapidly succeeding each other."* It spread no farther at that time, than the one street, although no precautions, as far as I can learn, were taken to prevent its extension. The same species of disorder raged in this city in 1762, with great violence. It disappeared in the month of November, and has not from that time until this year visited Philadelphia.

The summer and fall of this year have been unhealthy in many parts of the union, as well as in Philadelphia. At Lynn; in Massachusetts, I

* Letter from a physician in New Ynrk, to his friend in New Jersey, Federal Gazette, Sept. 21, 1793.

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have been informed, but have no means of ascertaining the truth or falsehood of the report, that a malignant fever not unlike ours prevailed in August. In many of the towns of Virginia, fevers and agues have been much more prevalent and dangerous than they have been at former periods. Georgetown and its vicinity, which are in general very healthy, lost, in the course of a few weeks in summer, an unexampled number of people by the flux, which disorder has raged with great violence in many other places. The influenza has spread generally through the union, and been very fatal. It has been twice in Vermont, where likewise the putrid sore throat has carried off numbers. At Harrisburg and Middletown, in this state, the flux and a putrid fever have been extremely destructive, and swept away, I am credibly informed, a fifteenth part of the inhabitants. Delaware state, particularly Kent county has suffered much from fall fevers, which have produced a very great mortality. And various other places have experienced a mortality, very uncommon, and which, but for the calamity of Philadelphia absorbing public attention every where, would have created great alarms and uneasiness.

Although the proceedings of many people in Philadelphia have been strongly tinctured with
cruelty,



cruelty, and a total direktion of every principle of humanity, yet the general conduct has not been so revolting as in London during the plague. In that city, when a house was known to have an infected person in it, it was fastened up, and a guard placed at the door, to prevent any one from coming out, until after a quarantine of 40 days; and if, during that time, any other was infected, a new quarantine was imposed. Thus entire families fell sacrifices to an order, equally senseless and cruel; and by these means, dead bodies lay often for weeks together in the most dreadful and noxious state of putrefaction. Such revolting orders existed not in Philadelphia. However, there have been various instances of houses being left to the care of a servant or two, who fell sick, and having no means of communicating their distresses to the neighbours, perished for want of assistance.

I have learned with great pleasure, that a few landlords, commiserating the distresses of their tenants, have come to the very humane resolution of remitting the payment of rents during the prevalence of the disorder. Were they to enter into resolutions generally to do the same, it would reflect honour on them. But there are some whose hardened hearts know no compassion, and who will have " the pound of

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" flesh—

"flesh—the penalty of the bond." Indeed, when the disorder was at the highest stage, some landlords seized the small property of poor roomkeepers, who were totally unable to pay their rent. One man wrote to the committee, informing them that the poverty of his tenants rendered it impossible for them to pay him; he therefore begged the committee would, as they were appointed to relieve the poor, pay the arrearages due to him! Another person, a wealthy widow, produced recommendations for some poor roomkeepers, her tenants; and the committee gave them each a small sum. As soon as they had received it, she seized the money and their clothes!

As I have been obliged to note a variety of horrid circumstances, which have a tendency to throw a shade over the human character, it is proper to reflect a little light on the subject, wherever justice and truth will permit. Amidst the general desertion that prevailed, there were to be found many illustrious instances of men and women, some in the middle, others in the lower spheres of life, who, in the exercise of the duties of humanity, exposed themselves to dangers, which terrified men, who have hundreds of times faced death without fear, in the field of battle. Some of them, alas! have fallen in the good
cause!

cause! But why should they be regretted! never could they have fallen more gloriously. Foremost in this noble groupe stands Joseph Inskoop, a most excellent man in every of the social relations, of citizen, brother, husband, and friend—To the sick and the forsaken, whether he was acquainted with them or not, has he devoted his hours, to relieve and comfort them in their tribulation. Numerous are the instances of men restored, by his kind cares and attention, to their families from the very jaws of death. In various cases has he been obliged to put dead bodies into coffins, when no other person could be had to perform that office. Andrew Adgate's merit in the same way, was conspicuous, and of the last importance to numbers of distressed creatures, bereft of every other comfort. Of those worthy men, Wilson, and Tomkins, I have already spoken. The Rev. Mr. Fleming and the Rev. Mr. Winkhaufe, exhausted themselves by a succession of labours, day and night, attending on the sick, and ministering relief to their spiritual and temporal wants. Of those who have happily survived their dangers, and are preserved to their fellow citizens, I shall mention a few. They enjoy the supreme reward of a self-approving conscience; and I readily believe, that in the most secret recesses, remote from the

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public eye, they would have done the same. But next to the sense of having done well, is the approbation of our friends and fellow men; and when the debt is great, and the only payment that can be made is applause, it is surely the worst species of avarice, to withhold it. We are always ready, too ready to bestow censure---and, as if anxious lest we should not give enough, we generally heap the measure. When we are so solicitous to deter by reproach from folly, vice, and crime, why not be equally disposed to stimulate to virtue and heroism, by freely bestowing the well-earned plaudit? The Rev. Henry Helmut's merits are of the most exalted kind. His whole time, during the prevalence of the disorder, was spent in the performance of the works of mercy, visiting and relieving the sick, comforting the afflicted, and feeding the hungry. Of his congregation, some hundreds have paid the last debt to nature, since the malignant fever began; and, I believe, he attended nearly the whole of them. To so many dangers was he exposed, that he stands a living miracle of preservation. The Rev. C. V. Keating and the Rev. Mr. Ustick have been in the same career, and performed their duties to the sick with equal fidelity, and with equal danger. The venerable old citizen, Samuel Robeson, has been like a
good

good angel, indefatigably performing, in families where there was not one person able to help another, even the menial offices of the kitchen, in every part of his neighbourhood. John Connelly has spent hours beside the sick, when their own wives and children had abandoned them. Twice did he catch the disorder---twice was he on the brink of the grave, which was yawning to receive him---yet, unappalled by the imminent danger he had escaped, he again returned to the charge. I feel myself affected at this part of my subject, with emotions, in which I hope my reader will participate. And, as a human being, I rejoice that it has fallen to my lot, to be a witness and recorder of a magnanimity which would alone be sufficient to rescue the character of man from obloquy and reproach.

Shall I be pardoned for passing a censure on those, whose mistaken zeal led them, during the most dreadful stages of this calamity, to crowd some of our churches, and aid this frightful enemy in his work of destruction? who, fearful lest their prayers and adoration at home would not find acceptance before the Deity, resorted to churches filled with bodies of contagious air, where, with every breath, they inhaled noxious miasmata? To this single cause, I am bold in ascribing a large proportion of the

mortality --And it is remarkable, that those congregations, whose places of worship were most crowded, have suffered the most dreadfully, Will men never acquire wisdom? Are we yet to learn that the Almighty architect of the heavens and the earth does not require "temples made with men's hands?" that going to a place of worship, against the great law of self-preservation, implanted in indelible characters by his divine hand, on the breast of every one of his creatures, constitutes no part of the adoration due to the maker and preserver of mankind? That a "meek and humble heart" is the temple wherein he delights to be worshipped? I hope not---I hope the awful lesson some of our congregations hold forth on this subject, by a mortality out of all proportion to their numbers, will serve as a memento at all future times, in the like critical emergencies!

Of the number of citizens who fled away, it is difficult to form any accurate estimate. In the city, from Vine to South-street, which has been surveyed by a man employed by the committee, of 21,000 inhabitants, the number of absent people is stated to be 8600. But as this business was several weeks performing, considerable variations must necessarily have taken place. The emigration was not finished in those

streets

frets examined in the early part of his progress; and towards the latter part, the emigration had been already considerable. Allowing one to balance the other, and the removals in the liberties to have been equal to those in the city, we shall probably not err much when we estimate the number who left the city at about 17,000. This is not so many as I supposed when I last wrote on the subject *, at which time I estimated them at 23,000. Which of the two is accurate, or whether either of them is so, I leave the reader to determine.

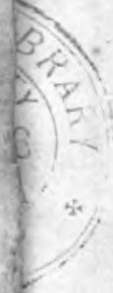
Some of those who remained in the city, have, for reasons not very easy to justify, been in the habit of reproaching those who fled, with criminality, as deserters, who abandoned their posts †. I believe, on the contrary, that as the nature of our government did not allow the arbitrary measures to be pursued, which, in despotic countries would probably have ex-

* Independent Gazetteer, October 26.

† If they were guilty of a crime, it brought its own punishment; as I am fully convinced that those who were absent, and a prey to the anxiety caused by the frightful reports current, suffered more than those who remained. I speak from experience. In a few days absence, when the disorder had not reached its summit, I heard more terrific accounts of it, than in as many weeks in Philadelphia, when it raged most violently, and carried off from eighty to a hundred daily.

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nd. 2



tinguished the disorder at an early period—it was the duty of every person to avoid the danger, whose circumstances and situation allowed it. The effects of the desertion were moreover, salutary*. The sphere of action of the disorder was diminished. Two or three empty houses arrested the disease in its progress, as it was slowly, but surely travelling through a street, and probably rescued a neighbourhood from its ravages. We shall long have to mourn the severe loss our city has felt, in being bereft of so many valuable citizens: and had the 17,000 who retired, been in the city during the prevalence of the disorder, and lost as large a proportion of their number, as these did who remained, we should, instead of 4000 dead, have lost nearly 6000; and perhaps had to deplore in the number, another Clow, a Kay, a Lea, a Sims, a Dunkin, a Strawbridge, men of extensive business, whose loss will be long felt—a Pennington, a Glentworth, a Hutchinson, a Serjeant, a Howell, man endowed by heaven with eminent abilities—a Fleming, a Graefsl, a Sproat, men of exalted piety and virtue—a Wilson, an Ad-

* Perhaps had all our citizens remained, we should have had famine added to our calamity; whereas we had plentiful markets during the whole time. The prices, too, were in general not far beyond what they are usually at the same season of the year.

gate,



gate, a Baldwin, a Carroll, a Tomkins, citizens of most estimable characters. Let those, then, who have remained, regard their long-absent friends, as if preserved from death by their flight, and rejoice at their return in health and safe y--- let those who have been absent, acknowledge the exertions of those who maintained their ground. Let us all unite in the utmost vigilance to prevent the return of this fell destroyer, by the most scrupulous attention to cleansing and purifying our scourged city---and let us join in thanksgiving to that Supreme Being, who has, in his own time, stayed the avenging storm, ready to devour us, after it had laughed to scorn all human efforts.

I omitted to inform the reader in the proper place, that Dr. Deveze and Dr. Benjamin Duffield have gratuitously and with the utmost punctuality, attended at Bushhill hospital nearly from the organization of the committee to the present time.

Committee

Committee for relieving the sick and distressed,
appointed by a meeting of the citizens of Phi-
ladelphia, summoned by advertisement in the
public papers, Sept. 13, 1793.

Chairman.

Matthew Clarkson.

Secretary.

Caleb Lownes.

Treasurer.

Thomas Wistar.

Managers of Bushill hospital.

Stephen Girard. Peter Helm.

Orphan Committee.

Israel Israel. James Kerr.
John Letchworth. J. Sharfwood.

Committee of distribution.

Israel Israel. James Kerr.
John Haworth. Jacob Witman.
James Swaine. J. Letchworth.
Mathew Carey. J. Sharfwood.

Thomas Savery. Samuel Benges.

*Superintendent of the burials of the dead and
removal of the sick.*

Samuel Benges.

Distributor of supplies.

Henry Deforest.

Committee of accounts.

James Sharfwood. John Connelly.

Committee on the publication of letters.

Caleb Lownes. Mathew Carey.

Deceased members.

A. Adgate. Daniel Offley.

J. D. Sargeant. Joseph Inkeep.

2

Amount of the Interments as collected from the several Books kept by Clergymen, Sextons, &c. from August 1st, to November 9th, 1793.

Time of Burial.	
August	325
September	1442
October	1999
November (to the 9th)	118
Jews no time mentioned in the returns,	2
Baptists ditto	50
Methodists ditto	32
Free Quakers* ditto	39
German part of St. Mary's Congregation ditto	30
	4037

Where Buried.		
Protestant Episcopalians	{ Christ Church	173
	{ St. Peter's	109
	{ St. Paul's	70
Presbyterians	{ First	73
	{ Second	128
	{ Third	107
	{ Scotch	12
	{ Seceders	33
Roman Catholics	{ St. Mary's	251
	{ German part of do.	36
	{ Trinity	54
Friends		373
Free Quakers		39
German	{ Lutherans	641
	{ Calvinists	261
Moravians		13
Swedes		75
Baptists		50
Methodists		32
Universalists		2
Jews		2
Kensington		169
Porter's field, including the new ground		1334
		4037

* A very small sect formed of those who were denied the Society of Friends, during the late American War, for taking up arms, and violating the testimony of that society against Wars.

Thus we have an account of *four thousand burials* in the city of *Philadelphia*—exclusive of the great numbers that died in the country, who had left the city.

“ This calamity, we conceive, has been nearly, if not quite, as fatal, in proportion to the numbers, as the Plague in London, in 1665 and 6; for if we compute that thirty thousand persons remained in town, and that of these, upwards of four thousand died, it will approach to *one seventh* of the whole in about three months; which is nearly equal to all that died in *London* in a *whole year*!!

“ We leave it to the learned to trace the cause of this pestilence, some of whom insist it was imported; others, that it was generated by a long, hot, and dry summer: we take it to be the putrid bilious fever of the tropical climates, remembered here by elderly people twice, under the name of the yellow fever, and once, during the late war, by the name of the camp fever, when it did not spread much among the inhabitants, but was confined principally to the soldiers. One of our family had it in the year 1778 in Virginia; and recognizing the symptoms, has, since his late illness, had recourse to the letters he then wrote to his family, and finds it described exactly as he experienced on the present occasion; so that there is no doubt, on his mind, of its being the same disease.—Our private opinion is, that it was imported from the West Indies, but was much more general, and spread more rapidly owing to the season, which had disposed our bodies to receive infections of any kind.

“ It is enough, however, for us to know, that the means of humbling a people, are abundant in the hands of the Arbitrer of nations, and that we believe this was a judgement on a highly favoured city, for its many excesses; yet mixed with mercy: and we hope it may have a good effect on our lives and conversations.”

LIST

L I S T

OF A FEW OF THE

INHABITANTS OF PHILADELPHIA,

Who have died since the first of August, 1793.

A

Andrew Adgate
Mrs. Adgate
Robt. Allifon, æt. 82
James. Alder
Mary Allen, ætatis 73
— Amand
Tho. P. Anthony
Mrs. Annan
Peter Alton, wife and
child James
Alexander Anderfon
John Alston
Caleb Attmore

B

George Baker
Daniel Baldwin
Edward Barrington
J. J. De Barth
Cornelius Barnes and
two sons
Adam Bausch
Mary Berry, æt. 75
Claudius A. Bertier
Samuel Bettel
Nathaniel Blodgett
Thomas Boone
William Bingham
David Bacon's wife
Isaac Buckby (hatter)

Mary Brooks
Sufannah Burden
William Blake
John Biggs
Patrick Burne
Benjamin Bostock
Andrew Boshard, wife
and mother
Joseph Budd, and wife,
(Hatter)
John Barns
Mrs. Budd, and two
servants
Mr. Barnwell
Mrs. Barnwell
Joseph Bark
General Broadhead
Joseph Bispham
Jane Biddle, of O. B-s
John Barnes
Moses Bartram's son
Mathew Barker
Peter Beck
George A. Barker

C

Mr. Chace
Thomas Carnes
David Clarke
James Calbraith, jun.
Charles Carrol

Joshua

Joshua Cresson	Mr. Dawes, sail-maker
Thomas Clifford and one of his family	Henry Debergen, wife and son
Peter Cave's wife	Mrs. Davidson, col- lege
Hannah Cadwalader	Mr. Davidson, school- master
John and Abraham Cad- walader of Abingdon	Henry Darrach, gro- cer
Jacob Catherall	John Darrach, hatter, and 3 of the family
John Craig	Sally Dorsey, and ser- vant man
Mathew Conard	John Davis
Frederic Christian	Letitia Davis
Andrew Clow	— Dougherty method. minister
James Craig, sen.	Esq, at Harper and Esq's
Benj. Chew, jun.	Ann Evans
Abraham Carlisle	John Edmonson
Philip Clampfer	E
Mr. Coburn	Rowland Evans
Mrs. Coburn	Mr. Engle
Joseph Cockran	John Ent, (bank U.S. and three sons
John Cotrenger	Josiah Elfreth, join- er Front-street
Richard Courtney	Isaac Elliot
Mrs. Courtney	Benjamin Enk, wife and aunt, two sons and maid servant
Joseph Cooper, jun.	James Emlen's wife
Adgate Craig	Joseph Elam
John Cameron	F
Benjamin Catherall, jun.	Francis Finlay
Matt. Clarkson's wife	Samuel Fisher (hatter)
Col. Comeyng's wife	David Flickwir, and 5 of his family
James Cresson's son	Nich. Forberg, æt. 73
Caleb Cresson's wife	Mrs.
D	
Thomas Devonald	
Elizabeth Dickinson	
John Davis	
John Dunkin	
Joseph Dean	
F. X. Dupont, F. Con.	
John Dickinson	
Dr. John Dodds	

Mrs. Ferguson	John Hall
Barnabas Fearis	Jacob R. Howel
David Franks	Jacob Howell
Major D. Franks, jun.	Adam Hubley
U. S.	Michael Hay, wife,
— Fleming, Romish	and three children
minister	Parry Hall, and sister-
George Fudge, wife	in-law
and daughter	Mrs. Hensman, daugh-
Jabez Fisher	ter, four grand chil-
C. French's daughter	dren, and a maid
Peter Field's wife	servant, all out of
Mr. Fielder	one house
Philip Fenton	J. D. Hamelin
Isaac J. Folwell	Reuben Haines, sen.
Tench Francis	William Hassel
Joseph Francis	John Hockley
G	William Hays,
Richard Gardiner	H. Heatley
Nathaniel Glover	Richard Humphreys, sen.
James Gilchrist	Jacob Hiltzaimer
Dr. P. S. Glentworth	James Hill, and wife
Joseph Gaven	John Henry, goldsmith
John Guest, sen.	Jacob S. Howel
Dr. — Graham	J. Howel's servant maid
Jacob Graff	Dr. Hutchinson and
John Gill	— Ball, his ap-
Mrs. Gribble	prentice
James Galagher	John Hopper
Peter Galagher	Mr. Harwood, mer-
Morris Goff, and wife	chant
and daughter	Moses Homberg, and
George Guest,	five lodgers
John Guest's young man	Mrs. Holland
Dr. Greenman	Azariah Horton
— — — Graeisl (Romish	Charles Heatley's wife
mini'ter	Frederick Hayley's wife,
Ten of Godfrey Gibbler's	2 nieces, and 3 appren-
family	tices
S. Grifcomb & daughter	Margaret Haines's
Haydock Garrigues	James Hendrick, cut-ler

Joseph Hewling and, servant maid	Catherine Lemaigre
Oliver C. Hull drug-gift	Dr. John Lynn
Philip Hall, butcher	Abraham Lott
William Hannah	Huson Langstroth
Richard Hicks	James Lapfley
Oliver P. Hull	Samuel Lobdell
Hannah Humphries	Isaac Lewis
Elizabeth Horner	Alex. Lawrence, sen.
Tho. Harrison's five men	Alex. Lawrence jun.
Caleb Hoskins	Thomas Lea and son
J. Hutchinson, Burlington	Sampson Levy
David Hickman	Mordecai Lewis's 2 sons
Tho. Hewlings, Burlington	Agnes Lownes
Benjamin Holton	Tho. Leaming Esq.
Joseph Hopkins	— Lubert, druggist
I	William Lewis, lawyer
Joseph Inskcep	Abraham Liddons's wife
Owen Jones, æt. 84	Mr. Lee and wife
E. Jones, æt. 64	— Lunnock, trunk-maker
Mary Jones	Thomas Lightfoot
Samuel Johnson	Lewis Long, Fr. teacher
Robert Johnson	Charles Ling and wife
Samuel Jobson, copperfm.	Joseph, Wm. & Susannah Letters
K	M
Mrs. Keppel.	Joseph Mercier
Christ. Kucher, wife and child	Anna Mercier
Philip Kucher	Rev. Dr. Murray
David Kay	Susan. Milnor, æt. 80
Joseph Knight, wife and child	Abigail Morris
Michael Kunele	Benjamin Morrell
Michael Kefsler, joiner	Jacob Morgan
Mr. Kuhl	Hannah Morgan
Mr. Kip	Isaac Miller
Caleb Kimler, school mast.	Richard Mafon
L	Thomas M'Cormick
John H. Lombaert	Abraham C. Mafon
	John Morton
	Catharine

Catharine Mallowney	N
John Morrison	Will. Nichols, æt. 73
Elizabeth Morris	John M'Nair
Anne Mullen	Patty Norris
Peter Miercken	O
Martin M'Dermot	Thomas O'Hara
John Morgan	Daniel Offley
Thomas Miller	Benj. Olden's wife daughter and apprentices
Patrick Moore	P
Samuel Morris's son Tho.	James Pickering
Sam. Morris, son of Sam.	Dr. Frederic Phile
Anthony S. Morris	Sidney Paul
Dr. John Morris and wife	Mr. Peters and two sons
James Moore, Lombard-street	Vincent M. Pelofi
Tho. Miller's wife and three children	Matthew Parker
Joseph Merion, wife and three daughters	Benjamin Pitfield
Stephen Maxfield's wife, and two children	Elizabeth Pratt
William M'Dougall	Samuel Penn
Thomas M'Kear	Dr. John Pennington
Joseph Marsh, ship carpenter, all his children and family	Samuel Powell
Michael Mincer and child	Alexander Penman
John Mayo	Robert Patton
Isaac I. Miller	Isaac Parrish's two sons and daughter Ann
Peter Mukel, butcher	Benj. Poultney, wife and daughter
Anthony P. Morris, and wife	James Paul
Hester and Sarah Miffin	Michael Prageurs
John Manly	Thomas Palmer, Grocer
S. Meridith, (widow)	John Peter, sen. Baker
Joseph Matlock	Jacob Parke, iron-mouger
Richard Miller	John Pearson
Joseph Moore	R
John Maule, (Radnor)	George Rainsford
	Hannah Rogers
	Ja. Read, & daugh. Sarah
	John Richardson
	W. Ralston, son & daugh. Rachael

Rachael Ralston	John Stuckard, wife and daughter
James Reid	Peter Stuckard, wife and daughter
John Rudolph	John Smith, son, daughter and man
Mr. Roedle, taylor, and his daughter	John Stephens, sadler, and six of the family
Mrs. Reed	John Strawbridge and wife
Robert Roberts, and girl	Michael Shubert and two of his children
James Rowan	Jacob Shoemaker
Hugh Rofs, wife and four children	James Stars's 3 daughters
Samuel Richard's wife	Henry Shaw
Daniel Richards	William Star
Dr. Rush's wife, two daughters, a son, and two apprentices and assistant	Mrs. Stokes
Joseph Richardson, jun.	William Stein
John Rofs	John Smith wife, 3 children, and servants
Samuel Rhoades	Mrs. Servofs
Sarah Rodman	Thomas Sprogle
S	Capt. Sharpe
Jonathan Shoemaker	Lawrence Swope, and wife
William Shipley	John Seall
Fred. W. Starman	Samuel Shoemaker,
Woodrop Sims	John Swanwick
Joseph Shoemaker	Thomas Shoemaker, son of Jonathan
John Stokes	— — Shoemaker and wife
Samuel Swan	Mr. Stemel
Townsend Speakman	Mr. Stephenson
Anna Sewell, æt. 67	Dr. Stall
William Sellers	John Sunnocks
Jonathan D. Sargeant	Thomas Stretch
Rev. Dr. Sproat	Dr. Say's wife & daughter
William Sproat	Long William Smith
Mary Sproat	William Stiles
Nancy Sproat	T
Rebecca Smith	John Todd, sen. and wife
Philip Schneider	John
Charles Syng, wife and boarder	

John Todd, jun.	John Wigton, wife and two daughters
Joseph Tatem	Mary Willing.
Peter Thompson, sen.	Joseph Whitehead
Samuel Taylor	Mr. Wetherby and wife
William Tharp	John Wighton's wife and two daughters
Isaac Taylor and wife	Michael Waitman
Thomas Topliff	Fred. Wing's wife and child
Jacob Tryan	— Winkhouse, Dutch Protestant Minister
Jacob Tomkins, jun.	Pelatah Webster's wife
John Thomson's servant maid	— Walker, (grocer) son wife and daughter
Joseph Thomas	Joseph Wright, wife, child, and maid
Captain Town	Dr. Wifflington
Jacob Tomkins, jun.	Samuel Wetherall
Enoch Taylor, wife and 2 daughters	Mrs. Williams
Robert Thomas, Burlin	Mrs. Wallace, Dr. Rufh's sister
Dean Timmons	Mr. Walker, Birmingham
Daniel Trotter, jun.	Abigail Wilfon
V	Mary Wilfon
Mr. Vanhorne	James Whiteall's wife
Captain Valeen's daughter	Elijah Weed, jailor
Richard Vandegriff	Jane Warner
W	Joseph Wood
John Wood	Mary Walton
Charles Williams	Cha. Wiefs
James Wortfall	James Willfon
Mrs. Webster	Y
James Watkins	Agnes Young
John Wharton	Z
James Wilkinson	Ann Zane
Eleanor Watfon	
Peter Webber	
William Whiteside	
Mrs. Willet	
William Waring	
Warner Washington	

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS,

MADE IN PHILADELPHIA, BY

DAVID RITTENHOUSE, ESQUIRE:

TO WHICH IS ADDED

The number of Persons interred Daily.

1793 August	Barometer.		Thermometer.		Wind.		Weather.		Buried.
	6 A. M.	3 P. M.	6 A. M.	3 P. M.	6 A. M.	3 P. M.	6 A. M.	3 P. M.	
1	29 95	30 0	65	77	WNW	NW	cloudy,	fair,	9
2	30 1	30 1	63	81	NW	SW	fair,	fair,	8
3	30 5	29 95	62	82	N	NNE	fair,	fair,	9
4	29 97	30 0	65	87	S	SW	fair,	fair,	10
5	30 5	30 1	73	90	SSW	SW	fair,	fair,	10
6	30 2	30 0	77	87	SW	W	cloudy,	fair,	8
7	30 12	30 1	68	83	NW	W	fair,	fair,	12
8	30 1	29 95	69	86	SSE	SSE	rain,	rain,	5
9	29 8	29 75	75	85	SSW	SW	cloudy,	fair,	11
10	29 9	29 9	67	82	W	SW	fair,	fair,	6
11	30 0	30 0	70	84	SW	WSW	cloudy,	cloudy	7
12	30 0	30 0	70	87	W	W	fair,	fair,	5
13	30 5	30 0	71	89	SW	W	fair,	fair,	11
14	30 0	29 95	75	82	SW	SW	rain,	rain,	4
15	30 0	30 1	72	75	NNE	NE	rain,	cloudy,	9

