John Jay to Dr. Benjamin Rush

Sir:

Such has been the state of my official business and of that which arose from my long neglected private affairs, that ever since the removal of Congress to this place I have been obliged to trespass on my usual punctuality in private correspondences. Hence it happened that I have so long denied myself the pleasure of replying to your friendly letter of the 16th January. Accept my warmest acknowledgments for the kind and very obliging manner in which you mention my services abroad; and permit me to congratulate you on the success of the application to Congress on behalf of Dickenson College, which you appear zealously to patronize. I consider knowledge to be the soul of a republic, and as the weak and the wicked are generally in alliance, as much care should be taken to diminish the number of the former as of the latter. Education is the way to do this, and nothing should be left undone to afford all ranks of people the means of obtaining a proper degree of it at a cheap and easy rate.

I thank you for the pamphlet you sent me; there is good sense and just reasoning in it. I wish to see all unjust and all unnecessary discriminations everywhere abolished, and that the time may soon comewhen all our inhabitants of every colour and denomination shall be free and equal partakers of our political liberty. I am, sir, with great respect and esteem, your most obedient servant,

John Jay.