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3-4-1816

### Letter to George Chase

Dudley Chase

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#### Recommended Citation

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Dear George,

Wash<sup>n</sup> March 4<sup>th</sup> 1846  
K. Ch. 160304

As I had not rec<sup>d</sup> any letter of a very recent date from you, I had been perusing over again those from Hartford of 3<sup>d</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> of Jan<sup>y</sup>, thereby reviving each tender recollection, in aid of a full indulgence of those social affections, the medium of the most cordial felicity that poor humanity can enjoy. In this state of things yours of 26<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> arrived; and I am sure I need not describe to you the pleasure it afforded me, as your imagination & heart will do my feelings on that occasion, more justice than can my pen.

The fervor of your attachment to the honorable character of your Country, affords a very flattering presage of your future usefulness, should you pursue the patriotic course you have chosen. — It is no small consolation to the feelings of those who are rapidly passing off the stage of active life, to be assured that they will be succeeded by others who will ably and zealously promote & accomplish the honor & prosperity of their Country.

I have heard the sentiment advanced, "that Patriotism was but a name — a mere mask, assumed by rogues & knaves to impose on the weak & credulous"!! Cold and insensible must be the heart that could dictate such a sentiment. A consciousness of having violated the obligations of that noblest principle of human action would alone have prompted any man to make the expression. Yet the same person who suggested such an opinion acknowledged that Patriotism is the love of liberty was excusable in very young men, but he ~~that~~ <sup>thought</sup> any pretensions to such notions in persons of mature age were extremely ridiculous!! Such are the dogmas



of most of the cavaliers or malignant party in this Country.  
But enough of this - I can never touch on these subjects  
with moderation

I had rec<sup>d</sup> from your hon<sup>d</sup> Father an intimation of his  
intended visit to Newhaven, & the object of it - the con-  
secration of the Church in that place. His observations  
on the letter which I have written him, it seems, have  
excited a curiosity in you to learn their contents.  
Now, my Dear George, I cannot possibly inform  
you, for I really do not remember with sufficient  
accuracy. All I can say is that your father wrote  
me a letter in "very allegorical style, which pro-  
duced an answer in which I made such blun-  
ding pushes at his meaning & intentions, that I  
supposed it raised his virility to that pitch as to  
justify his observation to you. But as he has yet  
furnished me with no key to unlock the mystery  
of his allegory, I should only lengthen the comedy  
of errors were I to attempt to explain it to you; so I  
must sin be excused, & beg leave to refer you to  
him who will with pleasure explain, or submit  
to your inspection the letter itself.

I was much gratified with your description of the  
Church & the ceremonies of consecration - But I also  
laughed heartily, I assure you, at the speedy digestion  
on the beauty of the young ladies in which you en-  
tirely lost sight of your subject. The logic with  
which you fortified the position taken while engaged  
on that topic, was of a character peculiarly energetic.

To say nothing of the ingenious argument in regard to the  
theatrical solemnity which you say pervades public  
worship in St. England I must be allowed to quarrel  
most vehemently with your conclusion, viz, "that it is  
good policy to legalize vice & sin, rather than they



should assume a decent garb and "enter into the con-  
-gregation of the Lord". — However you apology  
that the that was a sudden one, & that you did not  
mean to stand censurable for its correctness, may  
possibly save you the reprimand you would  
otherwise have richly merited. Are you not  
sensible that legalising these improprieties and  
sins which Hypocrisy veils, would render the aid  
and friendship of that old & faithful Ally of the  
blue-light party of Connect<sup>tt</sup> wholly useless and  
unnecessary? That you thereby deprive them of the  
use & benefit of all those tricks & notions, little and  
great, which they bring into the moral & religious  
market, and for which they are so famous thro' the  
Land? No, no, let Theater be <sup>still</sup> suppressed in Connect<sup>tt</sup>;  
and let all their intrigues both amorous & political  
be carried on, as usual, under the garb of religion —  
Change not the steady habits and salomon usages of  
that exemplary State.

Thursday last I dined with Genl Mason on the beautiful  
island (Anacostan) in the Potomac. The Genl is of the <sup>most</sup> fine  
character & standing, and his Lady one of the most  
elegant & accomplished women in the country.  
There were 4, or 10 children who were all at home.  
The girls, healthy & beautiful, the sons robust  
and manly. The eldest son, about 20 years of  
age had just returned from France was a fine  
interesting young man as you will see in an eye.  
Of the children there were a pair of twin boys about  
seven years of age, so exactly resembling each other, that  
a difference in their dress, was the only means, by which  
they could be distinguished, by those who were not of  
the family. The island is extremely fertile, well culti-  
-vated, and contains about 100 acres of land. It



is over against Georgetown. The mansion house stands on an eminence in the midst of the island and commands on all sides an extensive view. The order, regularity & neatness to be seen every where, the judicious arrangement of the plants, walks and shrubbery, the fastidious taste and arrangement of the garden, were all calculated, notwithstanding the unpromising seasons of the year, to excite in the mind a love for rural beauty and the pleasures of retirement. One of the company at dinner was an old gentleman who was introduced to me by the name of Meigs, a Col<sup>l</sup> in revolution - very well. I took an opportunity to converse with him and found that he was the same man, who when a Major marched with Arnold up the Kennebec and down the river Chaudiere, was at the storming of Quebec, was one of the brave men who entered the town, and, on the failure of that part of <sup>the</sup> assaulting force under Montgomery, was taken prisoner. This is the same Major Meigs, of whom we have heard our neighbor Morris so often speak, and with whom, in the darkest times on the Kennebec, he shared his last breath.

It is out of my power to answer your question relative to the next President. Monroe and Crawford are the only persons at present talked of - The Virginians are not overbearing. The representatives from that State are the most indolgent of any who speak on the subject. Of the two candidates I have a chance to be some, and the comfort is, there is no making a bad one. Monroe is well known throughout the political world, and Crawford is among the first statesmen of his age, for honesty, talents & patriotism. It is generally supposed that Monroe will succeed, but I think it is uncertain. When more ascertained, I will inform you.

Uncle Dudley March 4. 1816. Wash<sup>g</sup>

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