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Benjamin Rush to John Coakley Lettsom, Philadelphia 28 September 1787 (excerpts)

... To the influence of Pennsylvania chiefly is to be ascribed the prevalence of sentiments favorable to African liberty in every part of the United States. You will see a proof of their operation in the new constitution of the United States. In the year one thousand seven [*sic*] hundred and eight there will be an end of the African trade in America. No mention was made of *negroes* or *slaves* in this constitution, only because it was thought the very words would contaminate the glorious fabric of American liberty and government. Thus you see the cloud which a few years ago was no larger than a man's hand, has descended in plentiful dews and at last cover'd every part of our land. . . .

Our new fœderal government is very acceptable to a great majority of our citizens, and will certainly be adopted immediately by *nine*, and in the course of a year or 18 months by *all* the States. When this shall happen, *then* to be a citizen of the United States *with all its consequences* will be to be a citizen of the freest, purest and happiest government upon the face of the earth. It contains all the theoretical and practical advantages of the British constitution without any of its defects or corruptions. While the nations of Europe have waded into order thro seas of *blood* you see we have travelled peaceably into order only thro' seas of blunders. . . .

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