

Navy Yard Washington
12th December 1849

My dear Sir,

It is with deep regret that I learn that the last painful operation has been unsuccessful, and that your breathing has not been improved; yet, I confidently indulge the hope, that you will soon find yourself much better than you at present suppose you are. A large mass of the tumor was removed, more from in its consistence and in its adhesions, than I had anticipated. The inflammation following its forcible tearing away, has produced an induration [sic] which still continues, and I agree with you, that a portion of the polypus was left behind, which has inflamed & enlarged thus increasing the obstruction and prevents you “blowing your nose”. This will subside, and I think you will soon find yourself much better than you now are- but now is the proper time to use the injection of tanmin. Yesterday I saw Dr Hall and he strongly urges the daily use of the astringent injection. I hope you will give it a trial. The result of this last operation is to me a subject of much mortification- Several months ago I visited the anatomical rooms here and carefully opened two subjects to get a clear and thorough knowledge of the parts involved in the operation, I consulted our best surgical authorities, and I was itching for an opportunity to take the instruments in hand, to make a radical cure of the case, and, when at the moment of consummation my unfortunate fall disabled me.

All surgical writers agree that such a polypus as annoys you is curable, and my great desire was to rid you of it, and that we shall yet accomplish.

Our most successful surgeon in America, in the treatment of P- is Dr Rhea Barton of Phila- I have seen him operate frequently, and so far as I know, always with success- He used to tell us in his lectures that his first success in practice, and his early reputation as surgeon, was owing to his successful operations on P- where others had failed. He is however one of the best operative surgeons living and I would be glad if in one of your visits to Phila- you would get him to examine your case. I presume you know him personally; at all events, you will find him a very different man from his brother William.

It would be advisable not to trouble your case with instruments for some time, but I would be very glad if Dr Barton could see it.

When I come on to L (I do not know when that may be) I will carry on instruments to examine it, but should you wish it, I will come on at any time with the greatest pleasure.

My shoulder is still almost useless but the pain & inflammation have subsided, yet I write with much inconvenience.

A speaker will probably be selected today, and Forney[‘]s prospects are thought good- Brown[‘]s high note of yesterday is felt by the Whigs to be a severe rebuke to Genl T. I was present in Forney[‘]s room a few days ago when Grund vowed the warmest friendship & eternal support to you- G. tried to explain, why he left you at one time- Forney told him, frankly, that he and his friends in Phila. had determined at one time to denounce him (Grund) publicly, but, that he (F-) had been prevented by yourself – G. replied that such magnanimity made him forever yr [your] friend- but that must pass only for it is worth. Forney, Grund & myself were the only persons present.

With great respect & esteem I am your

Obedient servant

J. M. Foltz



LancasterHistory

Hon J. Buchanan

On reverse, in different handwriting:

12 Dec: '49. Dr. J.M. Foltz

18 Dec: answ'd

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Lancaster**History**