Case #3: Pickering Household
Dear Sir,

Sunday evening.

Mr. Gope has probably told you of the late condition of our foremost man. He has all along been sick at his stomach, and generally pulse rose, whatever the cause to quench these infinitesimal things. A little while ago he suddenly desired cold water—saying that his insides were burning and that he had a little to take up. She had refused a little to take up, but she refused, and the lady's maid brought her a little tea spoonful; but she refused to receive it in that manner, and drank up a small tea cup full, which has stood on her stomach. Her pulse was so low, Mr. Gope sent wine, which raised it, and every hour or two five drops of laudanum, in a little sugar and water, which she took up. She was a little more genial, but some wine taken with a little water made her sleep, and she fell. But the usual experiences, for drink—her common tea was given her. This she has found deadly, during her illness, if she holds to drink it. Her generally thins of eye, with violent tearing, and pillow growing. Since the five drops of laudanum have been given her she feels the box has not been repeated.

She appears to me in great danger. The whiteness of his eyes and the pain of his face make the face very weak, and a little yellow. Some sweet tea was given her in the forenoon, but she did not like it, and after what a very little tea

...
Sunday evening.

Dear Sir,

Mr. Coxe has probably told you of the low condition of our servant maid. She has all along been sick at her stomach, and generally pukes up whatever she drinks to quench her insatiable thirst. A little while ago she vehemently desired cold water – saying that her insides were burning up. I directed a little to be given her by tea-spoonfuls; but she refused to receive it in that manner, and drank up at once a small tea cup full, which has stayed on her stomach.....

She appears to me in great danger. The whites of her eyes & the skin of her face (no other part has been noticed) are a little yellow....
[Beginning at Arrow]

She has been constantly troubled with flatulency; and to that I attribute the severe pain in her stomach or bowls, of which she once complained, this afternoon.

I must pray you to advise me what to have done for her.

At times this afternoon, she has appeared a little flighty.

Yours very sincerely

T. Pickering

Doctor Rush
Friday evening Oct. 4th,

Dear Sir,

Our maid servant whom you saw yesterday appears to pass the last night very uncomfortably from a disturbing flatulence. But she is so apt to groan loudly, we make some allowance for her disposition. (My wife says the girl has heretofore been troubled with hysteric.) She complained last night the day of great sickness at the stomach. Just now she vomited and brought up matter strongly coloured with bile, and offensive to the smell. During the last 24 hours she has appeared very dry, drank plentifully of balm tea and camomile tea. This morning she drank some bohea tea and drank two small cups when she vomited just now. She groaned unusually but with great strength of lungs.
[Beginning at Arrow]

Friday Evening Oct. 4th

Dear Sir,

Our maid servant whom you saw yesterday appeared to pass the last night very uncomfortably – from a distressing flatulency. But she is so apt to groan loudly, we make some allowance for her disposition. (My wife says the Girl has heretofore been troubled with hysteria.) She complained last night & to-day of great sickness at the stomach. Just now she vomited, and brought up matter strongly coloured with bile, and offensive to the smell. During the last 24 hours she has appeared very dry, & drank plentifully of balm tea & camomile tea....
[Beginning at Arrow]

She took salts (after being bled yesterday) as you directed; and she says she has been severely purged. Notwithstanding which I thought you would order further purging, seeing her sickness at stomach continues, and especially since she has brought up bile: but I have done nothing, and wait your direction. If the flatulency continues, please to direct what shall be done to remove it....

Doctor Rush

J. Pickering
Letter #3: Thomas Pickering to Dr. Benjamin Rush, October 8, 1793

Tuesday Morning, Oct. 8th.

Glycerin was administered last night to my son Samuel the third before he had a stool, just as sunrise, the former having produced two discharges, with dark brown, small tumors, privy. In the evening, I administered a fourth which was followed by feverish small convulsions. This morning he has put out a little dark matter, but it was followed by another dark colored small stool. As soon as the glycerin operated, he was perfectly rational, and seemed better and better after every discharge.

The matter purged just now has apparently alarmed my wife. He has not spoken to me since two o'clock in the act of bleeding.

I cannot judge in this case—having had no experience. I consider this an the critical moment—pray you will have the goodness to hasten upon us this morning. My servants will go to your earing, if this will expedite upon you.

Your anxious friend,

Thomas Pickering
Tuesday Morning Oct. 8th

Dear Sir,

Glysters were administered last night to my son Edward – the third before he had a stool. Just at sunrise (the former having procured to discharges with dark brown small bumps & grans mixed with the glyster) I administered a fourth, which was followed by several small evacuations. This minute he has puked a little dark matter - & it was followed by another dark coloured small stool. As soon as the glyster operated, he was sensibly relieved, and seemed better and better after every discharge. The matter puked just now has exceedingly alarmed my wife. He has not puked before, save twice, each time in the act of bleeding. I cannot judge in this case – having had no experience. I consider this as the critical moment – I pray you will have the good-ness to hasten your visit this morning. My servant will go to call your carriage, if this will expedite your visit.

Your anxious & sincere friend

T Pickering

Doctor Rush
Letter #4: Thomas Pickering to Dr. Benjamin Rush (No Date)

Dear Doctor,

I am afraid all is one with Edward. While I was gone to see you this morning, he refused to take anything. I in answer to his mother’s impatience, said his throat was

I attempted just now to give him a

tea-potful of flavoured tea, but he spit it

out. Can any thing be done before you come

in? Can any thing be done by holding his nose

or in any other way, and what shall I attempt

to give him? - If it be necessary, I shall rubbing

with camphorated spirits, also his hands

and feet with the same in a reasonable manner. Will friction of this kind be agreeable

to him? - If he is very restless, will friction of

his feet be of any service? — Excuse

my questions of troubling. 

J. Pickering

Doctor Rush

If he has had only the one glass, I suppose

to agree (which was this morning) would it

be of any use? - If what she has con
Dear Doctor,

I am afraid all is over with Edward. Whilst I was gone to see you this morning, he refused to take any thing – and in answer to his mother’s importunity, said his throat was stopped. I attempted just now to give him a tea spoonful of flaxseed tea, but he spit it out. Can any thing be done before you call? Shall I try to force down any thing by holding his nose or in any other way, and what shall I attempt to give him? – His temples have been rubbed with camphorated spirits – also his hands & wrists – will friction of those kinds be useful? His legs and feet are agreeably warm. He is very restless withal. Will friction of his legs & feet be of any service? - Excuse my questions if trifling – Adieu!

T. Pickering

Doctor Rush

As he has had only the one stool I mentioned to you (which was this morning) wou’d a glyster be useful? - of what w[oul]d it consist?