

loved : the last to a common friend \*, whose virtues and science endeared him to his country, and whose removal from among us, we shall long have occasion to deplore.

These pages are, with peculiar propriety, inscribed to you. I know not that any person has paid so much attention to the subject which they involve : I know no one who places an higher value upon the question which I have ventured to discuss. Although, in the progress of my inquiry, I have differed from you, in one or two essential points, I cannot suppose that on that account the investigation of the question will be the less agreeable to you. I am confident, from my personal acquaintance with you, that you are anxious for the discovery of truth, and ardent to embrace it, in whatever form it may present itself. It is the jewel which all good and wise men are in pursuit of. It is the *punctum saliens* of science.

I regret, with you, Sir, the evanishment of so many of the tribes and nations of America. I regret, with you, the want of a zeal among our countrymen for collecting materials concerning the history of these people. I regret the want of the necessary endeavours to introduce among those of them who have escaped the ravages of time, [instead of the vices and the miseries of half-civi-

\* David Rittenhouse.